Towards Leadership Democracy
The changing balance of power in three
Finnish political parties 1983–2012
VESKA KOSKIMAA

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The changing balance of power in three Finnish political parties 1983–2012

ACADEMIC DISSERTATION
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This dissertation studies a classic topic in political science: the distribution of power within political parties. The topic’s relevance is tied to two factors. First, how power is dispersed among various organizational ‘faces’ affects what agendas parties pursue. Traditionally party activists have been conceived to be politically more orthodox than the leaders, who as operating professional politicians also tend to be interested in holding offices. Second, power dispersion also reflects the degree to which party organizations are democratic (i.e. how parties pursue their objectives). The ideal of internally democratic parties as “extensions” of representative democracy has been cherished in 20th century political thought.

According to the popular cartel party theory (Katz & Mair 1995; 2002) the balance of power in Western parties shifted from activist organs towards parties’ “public faces” (party leaders, MPs, ministers) in the last quarter of the 20th century. The change was caused, the theory claims, by five major developments in parties’ operating “environments”: 1) the weakening of social class structures and traditional political participation, 2) the emergence of public party subsidies, 3) the “governmentalization” of national-level political practices, 4) the mediatization of politics and finally 5) the internationalization of politics, which increased its complexity.

This study submitted this rarely tested theory to rigorous scrutiny in the Finnish context, which provides a good “laboratory” as it corresponds well with the theory’s demands. All “environmental” changes are present in Finland’s recent history – often rather pronouncedly. Therefore, a power transfer from party activists to public “faces” should have occurred.

The study challenged the cartel theory with a competing hypothesis. Cartel theory’s underlying logic rests on the traditional environmental adaptation model of party change, which claims that when parties’ competitive context changes, parties adapt in a functional manner. As a result, party organizational structures that entail specific power distributions become alike. The alternative hypothesis is built on an institutional logic. Its central claim is that a) different types of elites form parties, therefore their initial organizational choices differ, and b) because of consolidating path dependent logics the initial choices become rather fixed. So c)
instead of facing easily malleable organizational structures, the adapting party leaders might encounter severe resistance that builds on activist efforts to maintain the existing power distribution. The extent of change depends on the party’s existing distribution of power and the direction of external pressures (i.e. which party ‘face’ they favor). In some parties activists could be strong enough to resist all changes to the direction that was proposed above.

To contrast these competing hypotheses the study tracked the over time development of power distributions in three parties that differ in terms of initial power distribution. The National Coalition Party (NCP), which corresponds to the elite-centered electoral party model, was conceived as the most likely case to change as the pictured “environmental” pressure supports its “genetics”. The Social Democratic Party (SDP), which corresponds to the representative membership party model acted as the medium case while the Green League, a representative of the activist-driven democratic process party model was considered as the least likely case to change due to its tendency to disperse power widely to the grassroots.

To improve the empirical study of intra-party power (a notoriously elusive concept) the study undertook a comprehensive methodological review. The analysis found that while most of the traditional sources of intra-party power (the formal powers of party actors, material resources and important leadership positions) are sufficiently covered by existing methods, actual decision-making capacities have been overlooked. To fill the gap, the study developed a method based on process-tracing important intra-party decisions and applied it to intra-party processes during government formation at various time points.

The study discovered a two level development, which reflects a mediating hypothesis that situates between functional (parties converge) and institutional (parties remain dissimilar) models. In a party type-specific adaptation parties develop into same direction but simultaneously hold on to their type-specific characteristics. At the uppermost level of analysis the Finnish parties have arguably adapted to “environmental” pressures and appointed more power to their public “faces” during the past 35 years. The clearest indications of this development are: 1) the “etatization” of party resources whose allocation also increasingly favors parliamentary parties and leaderships (also within central party organizations), 2) the normalization of MP-status in leading party positions and 3) the emergence of highly leader-centric (even ‘presidentialized’) intra-party decision-making practices.

However, on a more proximate level – i.e. closer to party activists – the study found continuing traces of institutionalized party type-specific characteristics,
which in the right conditions may stir resistance. The permanence of historical power distributions was clearest in the formal powers of party actors, which have changed very little over the years. In some parties activist organs remain stronger, and activists penetrate deeper into leadership organs. The in-depth analysis of decision-making processes also revealed that despite the widespread emergence of leader-centric practices party leaders might still face opposition if their conduct deviates too much from the party’s traditional style. As expected, resistance potential is strongest in historically member-dominated parties and weakens as we move towards more elite-dominated traditions.

Nonetheless, the big picture suggests a turn to leadership democracy. In party level this is characterized by a strongly parliamentarized resource allocation and the emergence of leader-centric practices, which rest on the tight amalgamation of professionalized national-level party elites. The new system builds on the complex requirements of contemporary political practice. Parties are leader-centric because the political reality in which they operate demands it. The situation is problematic, because at the same time party linkages to the citizenry have weakened and their popular legitimacy has been undermined. To consider how to restore the linkage without destroying the essential autonomy of party leaders the study ends by exploring the possibility of more direct party membership participation, especially through party leadership contests.

**KEYWORDS:** political parties, party leadership, party organization, party change, intra-party democracy, intra-party power

Kartellipuolueeteorian (Katz & Mair 1995; 2002) mukaan valtatasapaino on 1900-luvun jälkimmäisellä neljänneksellä siirtynyt länsimaissa puolueaktiivien toimielimitä kohti puolueiden ”julkisia kasvoja” (puoluejohtajat, kansanedustajat, ministerit). Teorian mukaan siirtymään ovat johtaneet seuraavat muutokset puolueiden toimintaympäristössä: 1) luokkayhteiskunnan ja sen perustalle rakentuva perinteisen poliittisen salalistuneen heikentymen, 2) yleistyminen yleistyminen, 3) kansallisten poliittisten prosessien ”hallitusvaltaistuminen”, 4) politiikan mediavetoistuminen sekä 5) poliittisia käytäntöjä monimutkaistaman politiikan kansainvälistyminen.

Tässä tutkimuksessa tätä empiristen aineistojen kautta vain harvoin tarkasteltua teoriaa testataan Suomen kontekstissa. Suomi soveltuu hyvin ”laboratorioksi”, sillä kaikki teorian mukaiset ”ympäristötekijät” ovat olleet läsnä Suomen poliittisessa lähihistoriassa – usein vieläpä varsin korostuneella tavoin. Mikäli teoria todella toimii, tulisi yllä kuvatun valtasuuryhtymän näkyä myös suomalaisissa puolueissa.

vältämättä kohtaakaan helposti muovattavissa olevaa organisaatiota, vaan mahdollisesti voimakastakin, olemassa olevan valtarakenteen ylläpitämis-pyrkimiykseen perustuvaa vastustusta. Olemassa oleva valtatasapaino ja ”ympäristön” aiheuttamien paineiden suunta vaikuttavat muutosten kokonaistasoon. Puolueaktiivien vaikutus voi olla niinkin vahva, että kuvatun kaltainen kehitys estyy kokonaan.

Tutkimuksessa on tarkasteltu valtatasapainon muutoksia kolmessa suomalaisessa, historiailliselta valtajakaumaltaan toisistaan poikkeavassa puolueessa kuvattujen hypoteesien vertaamiseksi. Eliittivetoisesta vaalipuolueemallista ponnistavaa Kansallista Kokoomusta on tarkasteltu sen ”perinnön” vuoksi todennäköösiimpänä mukautujana. Jäsenistöpainotteinen, mutta kerroksittaiselle edustamiselle perustava Sosialidemokraattinen Puolue (SDP) toimi välitapauxena ja aktivivistivetoimen, osallistuvan demokratian ihanteille rakennettu Vihreä Liitto nähtiin häviäntä tavallisesti mukautujana.

Puolueen sisäistä valtajakaumaa on perinteisesti pidetty hankalana tutkia. Alan empiiristä tutkimusta kehitteäkseen tutkimus tuotti myös perinpohjaisen menetelmällisen arvion. Arvion pohjalta paljastui, että vaikka perinteiset tutkimusmenetelmät kattavat varsin hyvin useat puoluevallan perinteiset tekijät (puoluietoimijoiden muodolliset valtaoikeudet, materiaaliset resurssit, johtopaikat), tosiasiallisen vallankäytön tutkimus on suurelta osin jäänyt huomioimatta. Siksi tämä tutkimus kehitti tärkeisiin puoluepäätoimiin johtavien prosessien rekonstruoimiseen perustuvan menetelmän, jota sovellettiin puolueiden sisäisten hallitusneuvotteluprosessien kuvaamiseen sekä yliajalliseen vertaamiseen.

Tutkimuksessa havaittiin kahden tason kehitys, jota voidaan kuvata päähypoteesien välillä sijoittuvalla puoluietoimikkoaineksessa mukautumisen mallilla, missä puolueet voivat kehittyä samansuuntaisesti säilyttäen silti ominaispiirteensä. Tarkasteltaessa puoluekehitystä yleisimmällä tasolla on kiistatonta, että suomalaispuolueet ovat mukautuneet poliittisessa toimintaympäristössä tapahtuneisiin muutoksiin ja niiden julkiset ”kasvot” ovat selkeästi vahvistuneet kuluneen 35 vuoden aikana. Tämän kehityksen selkeimpia merkkejä ovat: 1) lähes kokonaan ”valtiollistuneet” puolueeresurssit, joiden jakaantuminen hyödyttää enenevää määrin parlamenttiryhmiä ja puoluejohtoja (myös puolueiden keskusorganisaatioiden sisällä), 2) kansanedustajataustaisuuden korostuminen puolueiden johtopaikoilla ja 3) puolueiden päätöksentekoprosessien johtajavalistuminen.

Siirryttäessä syvemmälle tutkimus havaitsi kuitenkin myös selkeitä merkkejä perinteisten puoluietoimikkoaineksen ominaispiirteiden säilymisestä. Yllä kuvatuista tendensseistä huolimatta nämä ominaispiirteet voivat oikeissa olosuhteissa hanka-
loittaa puoluejohdon toimintaa vielä tänäkin päivänä. Valtarakenteiden pysyvyys oli selkeintä puolue-elinten muodollisissa toimivaltaoikeuksissa, jotka ovat muuttuneet vain vähän. Tietyissä puolueissa ne takaavat edelleenkin aktiiveille voimakkaita vastakeinoja julkaisia ”kasvoja” vastaan. Toisinaan puolueaktiivit osoittivat myös yleistrendistä poikkeavaa halukkuutta asettua puolueen johtaviin elimiin. Myös päätöksentekoprosessien syväänalyysi antoi viitteitä siitä, että johtavaltaisen käytännön vakiintumisesta huolimatta puoluejohtajat voivat puolueen perinteistä tyyliä vastoin toimissaan kohdata vastustusta. Odotusten mukaistesti aktivistien vastarintapotentiaali kasvaa sitä mukaa mitä jäsenperustaisemmasta traditioista puolue ponnistaa.

Eroista huolimatta on selvää, että kehitys on vienyt kohti puoluejohtajavetoista demokratiaa. Puoluetasolla tämä näkyy voimakkaasti parlamentarisoituneiden resurssien lisäksi myös johtavaltaisissa käytännöissä, jotka pohjautuvat kansallisen tason puolue-eliittien kiinteään yhteensulautumiseseen. Uusi järjestelmä rakentuu puolueiden monimutkaistuneen toimintaympäristön vaatimuksien pohjalle. Tämä on ongelmaa, koska samanaikaisesti puolueet ovat menettäneet otettaan kansalaissuhteen ja niiden toiminnan yleinen oikeutus on laskusuunnassa. Tutkimuksen lopuksi pohditaan, voitaisiinko yhteys kansalaisiin palauttaa suoran puoluedemokratian menetelmillä (erityisesti suorilla johtajavaaleilla) vaarantamatta puoluejohtajien toiminta-autonomiaa.

**ASIASANAT:** poliittiset puolueet, puoluejohtajat, puolueaktiivit, eduskunta-ryhmät, puoluetyö
This book, albeit formally a product of a “mere” four and a half years of intensive work, builds on my entire academic career. During this period I have had the pleasure of meeting several brilliant people whose influence has – directly or indirectly – affected this work. The story begun during the autumn term of 2006, when I decided (after being sweet-talked by a bearded senior academic, who’ll be addressed later) to seek an intern position at the department of political science at the University of Turku, where I was studying back then. During that summer, despite the lobotomizing chores that made my previous work in a factory line feel like a space expedition, I started – again, under heavy influence of inspiring senior academics who will be named later – to entertain seriously the possibility of a career in political science. Although I moved to Tampere that summer, the acquaintances I made in Turku proved highly important.

Upon arriving in Tampere, I found that the final examiner of my bachelor’s thesis, Professor Tapio Raunio, had secured tenure there. Somewhat surprisingly – after my horrendous thesis (sorry about that) – I was directed into his Master’s seminar group. This encounter, which started with my feeble experiments on deliberative democracy and parliamentary debates (sorry about those, too), built the basis for a long and fruitful cooperation. Professor Raunio who supervised this work subtly yet determinedly tamed the wishy washy philosopher in me and challenged me to think scientifically, to put emphasis on clear argumentation and solid evidence. I’m eternally indebted for this foundation – which hopefully reflects in these pages – as well as for his excellent concrete advice in relation to this thesis. Thank you!

By early 2008 I had managed to decide the topic of my master’s thesis. While the labor took way longer than it should have (sorry about that, Ministry of Education) the topic became a dear one: it is also the central theme of this thesis. Although my decision to study parties’ internal power dynamics stemmed from a genuine effort to find the most important question of politics, the topic had an earlier inspiration – that same jovial, bearded man who lured me into the intern position a few years before. Dr. Rauli Mickelsson not only gave me the initial push to this professional trajectory, his work on Finnish political parties also had a huge impact.
on my interests and thinking. Although the future of the Finnish academia looks currently somewhat bleak, I’m extremely grateful for Rauli for pointing out my true passion and encouraging me to pursue it. Thank you!

I met my third important Turku-bound connection in the autumn of 2008, when Dr. Kimmo Elo and Dr. Lauri Rapeli (for whom I had provided copying services as an intern) hired me to the research assistant (and later project researcher) position in their three-year project on political knowledge. Aside from endowing my first full-time professional position, our tight conclave became a forum for endless exhilarating discussions that consolidated my ambition (and confidence) to pursue a PhD in political science. I’m extremely grateful to you guys for this, thank you! Since those days, Lauri has been my scientific big brother who has allowed me to tag along in his projects and networks, and listens patiently to my crazy ideas. Lauri’s continuing encouragement is one of the most important factors that has brought me here. So thank you, again! I would also like to thank other members of the department (especially Maija Setälä, Kaisa Herne, Matti Wiberg, Hannu Nurmi, Juha Vuori, Antti Pajala, Mika Harju-Seppänen, Jussi Kinnunen, Mari Niemi, Erkka Railo and Ville Pitkänen) for making my stay in Turku such a pleasant experience. I hope that our paths will cross again.

When the project ended in the summer of 2011, it was finally the time for this book. Two things helped to kick start the project. The first was a 3-year PhD scholarship from the Finnish Cultural Foundation, which allowed me to begin my work immediately and continue it uninterruptedly for a long time. I want to express my sincere gratitude for the Finnish Cultural Foundation for this single largest grant that made this work possible. The second factor that gave my project structure and support from the beginning was the ‘Political power in Finland’ Academy research project into which I was inducted. The project’s meetings gave me the first arena to present my ideas and receive feedback from the best in Finnish political science. Big thanks to everyone who participated (Tapio Raunio, Ilkka Ruostetsaari, Guy-Erik Isaksson, Eero Murto, Åsa von Schoultz, Mari Niemi, Maija Mattila, Jaakko Nousiainen, Dag Anckar, Hannu Nurmi, Anne Kovalainen and Seppo Tiihonen)! I’m especially grateful for Professor Emeritus Heikki Paloheimo who acted as a project leader, and Professor Emeritus Lauri Karvonen with whom I shared the sub-project on political parties. Thank you for having faith in my work, for your endless support, and for your scientific guidance!

In 2013, I was granted a great opportunity to study party politics in the United States. I’m extremely grateful to the Fulbright Center and the University of Tampere (who paid a half of the stipend) for making it happen. I spent the spring
term of 2014 in the University of Houston, TX, under the guidance of Professor Susan Scarrow who is one of the world’s leading party scholars. Her expertise and superb pedagogical skills greatly enhanced my grasp on party research. Thank you so much for this, Susan! Another beneficial part of my visit was the chance to taste the proud and professional atmosphere that lives within the American political science community. I’m especially grateful to the U of H’s tight-knit graduate student community (especially Leonardo Antenangeli, Freke Ette, Scott Hofer, Yeaji Kim, Markie McBrayer, Jonathan Solis, Matthew Ward, and Lucas Williams) for this experience, which greatly enriched my sense of meaning towards the study of politics. I also want to thank Professor Justin Kirkland for teaching me how to theorize properly. Everything has seemed so much clearer ever since.

The final leg of this journey took place under the auspices of the Degree Programme in Politics, School of Management, University of Tampere, from where I received a salaried doctoral student position in 2014. First of all, I want to thank the School of Management for providing me with the resources to finalize this study. In more scientific terms, I want to thank the participants of the political science research seminar, which gave me a frequent opportunity to harass talented people with my occasionally confusing prose. I owe a special thank you for Professor David Arter, whose infinite vigilance and critical mind has hugely improved this work. I would also like to give a separate thank you to professors Ilkka Ruostetsaari, Kaisa Herne, and Elina Kestilä-Kekkonen for their many useful comments. I also had a pleasure to be a part of an active PhD student community, which made my trips to Tampere such pleasant occasions (extra kudos to my frequent lunch compatriots Marko Juutinen, Mikko Poutanen and Hyeon Su Seo). I reserve a special acknowledgement for my office mate and brother in heavy metal arms, Michael Herman, who has not only been there for valuable mental support, but who has also been extremely helpful in discussing my research and language problems. Thanks man – you will be rewarded!

I was very honored to have this work examined by two great party scholars, Ruud Koole (Leiden University) and Lars Svåsand (University of Bergen). Thank you so much for your extremely insightful and supportive reviews. I can only hope that my work will reach the level of your expertise some day.

Without one special group of people this study would not have been possible. I’m extremely grateful for the assistance and collegial spirit, which I found from the party archives and party offices. I especially want to thank Hannele Toropainen and Riku Keski-Rauska from the Archives of the Organizations of the National Coalition Party, Veikko Rytkönen and Tellu Laukkanen from The Labour Archives
and Risto Kankaanpää who oversees the Green League’s archive. In addition, I want to thank all my interviewees: without you the final product would have been much weaker. Sincere thanks for your candid engagement.

Lastly, I want to make a few acknowledgements on a more personal basis. First, I’m extremely indebted to my great friends who have not abandoned me during these long years when I put significantly more effort into this work than our relationships. You know who you are; I promise make this up to you. I especially want to thank my dear friend Dr. Jarkko Harju (VATT Institute of Economic Research) for assisting me on all things statistical and for providing me with years of close collegial support. I’m also forever indebted to my great parents Pekka and Kaija Koskimaa who never tried to restrict my wild mind, whether the question was about sacrificing a promising soccer career for a punk rock band or a stable career for this adventure. I hope this work makes you proud.

Finally, I want to dedicate this work to my love, my best friend and the co-signatory of our mortgage, Lotta Palin. I can’t even image how burdensome it must have felt to see a close one so enamored and consumed by such a foreign subject – for such a long time. Yet you never let go of your patience and soothing calmness, which made this process so much easier for me. Although you will probably never put me in a similar situation, I hope that in the future I can deliver even half of the support you have given to me. Thanks love. I’ll promise to put things in perspective now.

Oulunkylä, Helsinki, October 6th 2016

Vesa Koskimaa
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1 POWER WITHIN PARTIES: FROM MASS REPRESENTATION TO LEADERSHIP DOMINANCE?

This thesis focuses on a classic problem in political science: the distribution of power within political parties. Several recent studies have hypothesized that in Western parties the balance of power has been shifting towards the top echelons during the past few decades (Katz & Mair 2002; Poguntke & Webb 2005; Scarrow et al. 2000). This study examines whether this development has taken place in Finnish parties. As parties’ internal power distribution affects how parties operate (Panebianco 1988, 42–45; Lawson 1990) and what they pursue (Tavits 2011, 922), changes in power distributions are closely linked to more general developments in representative democracy in which parties constitute the essential delegatory linkage between the masses and the state (Müller 2000). Thus, these observations and reflections, albeit directly dealing only with intra-party power, expand further – to the functioning of the Finnish representative democracy in the wake of the new Millennium.

The Finnish political landscape has changed dramatically in recent decades. From being an isolated, agriculturally dominated and poor country that was marked by its deep ties with its great eastern neighbour Soviet Union Finland has quickly developed into an affluent, highly educated and tech-heavy state, which due to its rapid accession to the European Union after the collapse of Soviet Union has integrated deeply into the international community and globalizing economy. Since early 1980’s Finland has also experienced a major institutional reform, a transition from a presidentially dominated semi-presidential government to a parliamentary, party-led constitution. It has been suggested that these rapid and substantial changes in parties’ operating context have pushed them towards more professional, ‘parliamentarized’ and leader-centric operational practices. (Paloheimo 2005;

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1 The distribution of intra-party power was a principal topic in studies that according to Von Beyme (1985, 1) and Montero and Gunther (2002, 2) marked the birth of modern political science, most notably Moisei Ostrogorski’s (1902) ‘Democracy and the Organization of Political Parties’ and Robert Michels’ (1968[1911]) ‘Political Parties: A Sociological Study of the Oligarchical Tendencies of Modern Democracy’.
This thesis sets out to investigate this claim more thoroughly by engaging in in-depth over time analysis of selected Finnish parties’ internal power distributions. The research period extends over the most tumultuous era of change, from the early 1980’s to early 2010’s. This chapter sets the background canvas for the upcoming analysis by disclosing: 1) the general reasons that motivate the study of intra-party power (‘why?’), 2) theoretical debates and previous studies that have motivated the research questions (‘what?’) and 3) the research design that has directed the selection of cases and methods (‘how?’). The presentation is intentionally brief, only meant to give the reader an idea of what is being studied, why and from which kind of analytic viewpoint. All questions will be dealt more thoroughly in the forthcoming chapters.

1.1 Why study intra-party power distribution?

Before delving any deeper into Western parties’ organizational challenges, some reasons need to be given why, in the first place, intra-party power should be considered as an important object of study. A two-step answer is advanced: 1) political parties are essential for the proper functioning of representative democracy and 2) the structure of their internal organization (i.e. intra-party power distribution) dictates how they exercise this crucial position. Essentially, the narrower the distribution of power is, the smaller is the group that formulates national policies.

1.1.1 No democracy without political parties

In the course of 20th century, parties have established themselves as essential components of representative democracy. Their emergence in the late 19th century was greeted with suspicion as they tended to limit the autonomy of parliamentary representatives (Manin 1997, 193–206). In the interwar period parties were also blamed for tearing up ‘nations’ by exploiting class cleavages. Gradually, however, they begun to receive approval. (Müller 2000, 309.) Already in the early 1940's one prominent student of party politics famously declared that ‘modern democracy is unthinkable save in terms of the parties’ (Schattschneider 1942, 1). Although parties’ institutionalization in the latter half of the century made them appear as
‘non-distinctive, technocratic, aloof and centrist’ (Enyedi 2014, 194–195), leading some observers to demand more direct modes of political participation (Barber 1984) and others to highlight alternative social movements (Lawson & Merkl 1988, 3), by the end of the century parties’ role as ‘a necessary evil for the functioning of democracy’ had become self-evident (Bardi et al. 2014a, 152; Luther & Müller-Rommel 2002, 3; Montero & Gunther 2002, 2–3; Ignazi 2014, 160). Today, representative democracy – as we know it – cannot function without political parties.

Their indispensability stems from a set of functions that makes representative democracy possible. Put broadly, parties 1) aggregate a multitude of interests into coherent political programs and 2) produce a set of political leaders that 3) pursue these programs in a government (Ignazi 1996, 551–553). Parties provide ‘the central mechanism to make the constitutional chain of political delegation and accountability work in practice’ by structuring opinions and conduct in every relevant step of the parliamentary chain of command. Elections without parties would be meaningless, as the resulting complexity would make accountability very difficult. Likewise, although constitutions tend to limit parties’ power over individual MPs, in reality they need to work in concert. And when parties enter the government, they do so as a team – according to a premade plan, not as a group of individuals. Practical political accountability would become very hard without parties’ structuring effect. (Müller 2000, 310–312, 330.) As these tasks have not been seriously challenged (Yanai 1999, 5–7) parties’ pre-eminence in Western governments seems unavoidable (LaPalombara 2007, 143). Their ability to structure politics is thus essential.

1.1.2 Does democracy need internally democratic parties?

While parties are usually able to provide such structured opinions, it must be remembered that within parties ‘there is bound to be disagreement before the actual decision is taken, as well as on its later application in practice’ (Daald 1983, 21). In other words: parties are heterogeneous communities and therefore in order to be able to reduce complexity in public domain they need to first reduce complexity within. What to include into the electoral program? Who should represent the party in elections? With

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2 Müller (2000, 310–312) adds that although the issue is normatively questionable, parties frequently interfere with the implementation process too by ‘infiltrating’ their loyalists to the state administration via patronage schemes.
whom may the party coalesce? These are all questions that demand unambiguous answers, that is, binding decisions on behalf of the whole party community. How these decisions are made depends on the dispersion of intra-party power. As Kay Lawson (1990, 108) has noted: ‘what parties do within the broader arena is determined not merely by the conditions they find there, but also, and perhaps most significantly, by what they have been doing - and how they have been doing it - in the relative privacy of their homes’ (Lawson, 1990, 108). In another passage worth quoting at length Tavits (2011, 922) elaborates that ‘parties’ internal power distribution is important for understanding the dynamics of party behavior. Knowing which party subunits or individuals are more influential or more independent can give us clues about party policy choices, position taking, electoral campaigns and performance, interparty relations, coalition decisions, representational linkage types, restructuring attempts, and the like’. In short: when you know who is calling the shots, you get a pretty good idea of what shots are being called.

What makes the study of intra-party power distribution generally interesting is that it can be also conceptualized in terms of intra-party democracy (IPD) (Cross & Katz 2013). Theoretically, the range of sources for party decisions runs from exclusive leadership groups to all-encompassing membership referendums. As counterintuitive as it may sound, wide participation does not automatically increase the quality of democracy more generally. Desirability of IPD essentially depends on which features of democracy one favours. The proponents of competitive democracy who emphasise parties’ ability to produce clear options for voters generally disfavour IPD. They argue that ‘too much’ democracy can make party leadership inefficient as it hinders the ability to contour the electorate’s desires. Moreover, as party activists may be ideologically more extreme (according to May’s (1973) law of curvilinear disparity), too inclusive decision-making methods can skew a party’s position away from median voter preferences. The existence of dual agency – the activists and the mass of voters – is prone to blur the clarity of alternatives, which in this school of thought is considered as the basis of democratic accountability. (Teorell 1999, 365–366; Scarrow 2005, 3–4.)

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3 This school of thought builds on the ideas of Schumpeter (1942), Schattschneider (1942) and Downs (1957). According to Schattschneider’s (1942, 60) famous quote ‘Democracy is not to be found in the parties but between the parties’.

4 ‘Too much’ intra-party democracy might also work against other democratic virtues. For example inclusive candidate selection processes have been shown to produce less representative candidate lists than exclusive selection procedures (Rahat et al. 2008, 673)
Fairly often, however, IPD is conceived positively and the parties at least try to appear as inclusive (Cross & Katz 2013, 5–7). The democratization of Western societies put democracy on a pedestal by making it the only legitimate form of government in human associations, including parties (Duverger 1967[1951], 133–135). Normally, the proponents of IPD subscribe to the democratic ideal that emphasises its procedural virtues, i.e. the idea that the democratic process is a source of good in itself. As IPD expands the ‘demos’, the process becomes more legitimate. (Scarrow 2005, 3–4.) Also, extended citizen involvement can be expected to improve the quality of party output and this should also be desirable for parties, as ‘more capable and appealing leaders’ and ‘more responsive policies’ lead to ‘greater electoral success’ (Ware 1987b, 25–26; Scarrow 2005, 3). It has been argued that especially in contemporary times, when citizens’ awareness, competence and willingness to engage in politics has increased, IPD can provide a desirable extension for traditional ‘conclave democracy’ (Kittilson & Scarrow 2003, 59).

These debates have existed for a long time (see Scarrow 1999a) and they are unlikely to vanish in the near future. They were not reviewed in order to underline any definitive stance to one direction or another, but rather to point out that regardless of whether one believes that democracy needs democratic parties or not, intra-party power distribution is a valuable object of research. If one prioritizes the clarity of political options, one can reveal obstacles that prevent party leaders from attaining their full potential. This is what Moisei Ostrogorski (1902) was doing when he described the functioning of the Birmingham caucus that limited Liberal MPs’ autonomy in the Westminster in late 19th century. Conversely, if one champions the primacy of democratic procedure, the study of IPD provides a way to unearth its hindrances. This is what Robert Michels (1968[1911]) did when he revealed the impotence of seemingly democratic procedures in some socialist parties.

Michels was deeply and openly committed to IPD (Teorell 1999, 363). His well-known successors (Duverger, Neumann, Kirchheimer, Epstein, Sartori, Panebianco and Katz and Mair) have been subtler. Nonetheless, as Carty (2013, 25–26) has noted, ‘[A]lthough nominally cast as matters of structural anatomy, party models are, at their heart, concerned with the fundamental question of intra-party democracy’ (similar argument appears in Cross & Blais 2011, 128). Thus, whatever one’s normative viewpoint might be, the question is important for all students of
Today, amidst the collapse of the membership-based party politics (Biezen & Poguntke 2014), the question is perhaps more pertinent than ever.5

1.2 The ‘story’: from mass representation to leadership dominance

Indeed, the revitalization of these questions is not a surprise if they are viewed in the context of Western parties’ post-war developments. In a very general level, this journey first took them from stability that was based in effective mobilization of well-structured masses into electoral flux and organizational decline that seemed to seriously undermine parties’ relevance. With help from the state machinery, however, parties lifted themselves into an unrivalled monopoly position and as a result, it has been argued, they have become dominated by their public figureheads.

1.2.1 The diminution of grassroots linkage and the party decline

Parties gained favourable recognition after the Second World War. Their efforts against non-democratic regimes generated positive conceptions, and democracy – understood as multipartism – experienced a strong lift in the aftermath of the collapse of authoritarian rulers. During this ‘golden age of parties’, conflicting ideologies, well-structured ‘opinion camps’ and class-based mass mobilization blossomed. Thus, it was especially ‘golden’ to parties that organized in the mass party style.6 (Ignazi 2014, 161.) In late 1950’s, a professional outlook replaced the

5 IPD has received increasing attention in recent years. A vast number of edited volumes and monographs that cover its general character and measurement (Cross & Katz 2013, Vom De Berge et al. 2013), candidate selection (Hazan & Rahat 2010), leadership selection (Cross & Blais 2012; Pilet & Cross 2014) and leadership more generally (Pilet & Cross 2015) as well as intra-party policy making processes (Gauja 2013) and party members role in contemporary parties (Scarrow 2015) have been published recently. Predominantly this recent wave of IPD studies focuses on ordinary party members direct participation rights, which begun to increase in the turn 1990’s, at the same time when parties membership’s declined heavily (Mair 1994; Scarrow et al. 2000; Cross & Katz 2013). Another, more traditional way to conceptualize IPD views party as pyramidical ‘miniature representative democracy’ whose leaders are accountable to the members, usually via delegatory organs that are selected in party congresses (Scarrow 2015, 179). This study focuses on this latter view and understands IPD as membership delegates’ power to affect intra-party affairs. The theoretical framework that is utilized in this study posits direct and representative forms of IPD against each other as the former may weaken the latter (Mair 1994, see below).

6 Mass party is another of Maurice Duverger’s (1967[1951]) classic party types. In contrast to the other dominant type, the weakly structured, narrow and elite-centred cadre party mass parties were
heated ideological concerns. However, while parties’ bureaucratization raised some criticism, they ‘had inherited and maintained high levels of participation […] and the political system was sustained by extensive, diffuse popular trust’. (Enyedi 2014, 194-195). Still in late 1960’s it was widely believed that strong ties to voters via mass membership organization was a necessary precondition for democratic development (Dalton & McAllister 2007, 139).

In the 1970’s, the linkage between the voters and the parties begun to show signs of erosion. Besides an ideological matter, it was speculated that the phenomenon might also be attached to ‘organizational dissatisfaction’, that is, the parties’ reduced ability to mobilize their traditional electoral cohorts. It was feared that if the parties lost their role as ‘active intermediaries’ between citizens and the state, Western party systems would ‘de-align’ and parties’ special role in representative politics would eventually diminish. (Mair 1983, 425–429.) As the 1980’s went on and ‘pervasive electoral instability’ (that is, increased electoral volatility) sustained at the inter-party level, Mair (1989, 176-179) suggested that we might indeed be witnessing ‘a crisis of party’: as parties had become more ‘remote and distant’, perhaps the ‘organisational link between the party and the voter has been eroded’.

This worry turned into the so-called party decline thesis that popularized in the turn of the 1990’s.7 In short, it claimed that due to serious challenges the Western parties faced in the latter quarter of the century, they lost touch with the citizenry. As parties’ linkage function (i.e. collection of interests, mass mobilization, education, etc.) was still considered important, the decline undermined the legitimacy of the whole idea of party-based representation and, thus, parties per se. A few coinciding macro-processes were generally seen as causes of the decline. They appear frequently in the theories of intra-party power change, too. Firstly, it was argued that Western modernization processes weakened collective identities and provided the citizens with more tools (wealth, cognitive capabilities, etc.) to manage their lives outside of the party communities. Secondly, it was pointed out that parties’ ‘de-ideologization’ and professionalization had reduced them into an ‘insulated social caste’ that was more interested in governing than voicing the citizens’ interests. And thirdly, as the results of de-ideologization (that is, ‘promiscuous coalition-building strategies’) generalized, the importance of elections

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7 According to Blondel (2002, 233) party decline was not in any way a new topic in party studies, but only in 1970’s sufficient evidence that supported it begun to surface and 1990’s fears became more general.
begun to wane. (Enyedi 2014, 194; Bardi et al. 2014a, 152; Montero & Gunther 2002, 4–5.) As a corollary, many saw that parties’ linkage function could be served better by other social movements and direct contacts between politicians and citizens (Montero & Gunther 2002, 1). Thus, parties were often deemed as redundant relics from the past times (Daalder 1992, 281–282).

Understandably, the idea of a total decline of political parties and party democracy roused critical attention. The meaning of the term was debated, as well as the empirical evidence that supported it. Ignazi (1996, 550–551) identified three ‘structural-organizational’ factors that were generally connected to it: 1) decrease in party memberships, 2) party identification and 3) increase in electoral volatility (also in Webb 1995, 302; Mair 1997, 127–131). While the first studies on party memberships returned somewhat ambiguous results (Selle & Svåsand 1991; Katz & Mair 1992), later developments strongly indicated that the mass membership had indeed been a passing feature of party politics (Mair & Van Biezen 2001; Whiteley 2011; Van Biezen et al. 2012). The development of other ‘linkage’ factors has also supported the decline thesis – again, especially later when widespread decrease in party attachment (Dalton & Wattenberg 2000; Dalton 2004) and increases in volatility (Drummond 2006) were confirmed with more reliable over time data.

However, instead of interpreting this as a general decline of political parties, scholars soon realized that the crisis mostly concerned one specific party dimension: their existence as large, all-encompassing membership organizations. Thus, the thing that was actually declining was the dominant party model of the ‘golden ages’ that had built its power on these attributes, the mass party. Because it was often treated as the ‘yardstick’ for what parties should look like, its problems were mistakenly treated as problems of party an sich. This, then, brought up the idea that instead of viewing parties from a single viewpoint (for example through their linkage with the citizenry) they should be viewed from alternative angles. (Mair 1994, 4–6; Webb 1995, 314–319; Ignazi 1996, 550–553.) Doomsday prophets also forgot parties’ great abilities to survive (Mair 1997, 89, Yanai 1999). While they arguably lost something in the way, parties maintained their positions in the

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8 Interestingly, it appears that the somewhat pompous nature of the decline thesis helped to improve party studies in the longer run. First it turned attention towards party adaptation (Katz & Mair 1992; 1993a; 1994), which then raised the more general question of party change (for example Harmel & Janda 1994, Harmel & Svåsand 1997; Harmel 2002). Eventually, the emphasis turned from mass-based indicators into party leaderships (for example Katz & Mair 2002; Poguntke & Webb 2005; Pilet & Cross 2015).

9 Both Crotty (1991, 140–142) and Daalder (1992) have pointed out that ‘party crisis’ arguments were often wrought under – potentially unacknowledged – normative appreciations.
electoral, parliamentary and governmental arenas (Müller 2000, 330–331). Their power in the overall governmental configuration (i.e. as highest bearers of state power) did not diminish.

1.2.2 The ‘etatization’ of political parties and the strengthening of their public ‘faces’

In fact, it can be argued that the ‘decline’ actually strengthened the parties, because their adaptive measures have tended to increase their autonomy. Firstly, as Enyedi (2014, 195) has pointed out, the erosion of societal linkage also means that parties are now less bound by their constituencies. As class-based channels of representation eroded, party leaderships gained more autonomy in communications by establishing direct connections to voters and in policies by replacing bottom-up linkage with polling-based techniques (Bardi et al. 2014a, 153). Coincidentally, the incentives to invest in membership activities have decreased (Whiteley 2011, 36). Secondly, to make up for the resource loss that resulted from the waning memberships, parties penetrated into the state apparatus, which provided them with new resources and independence from the societal linkages. The replacement of voluntary appropriations with public subsidies increased parties’ financial autonomy significantly. (Mair 1994; 7–12; Katz & Mair 1995; Mair 1997, 126–139; Blyth & Katz 2005; Biezen & Kopecky 2014.) The third strengthening factor is the gradual consolidation of the necessity of parties. Although citizens in contemporary Western mass publics tend to be highly sceptical towards parties, a sense of their indispensability is equally well established (Dalton & Weldon 2005, 947). As a result, parties now enjoy a monopoly in the political market (as ‘purveyors’ of policy input in the state-level politics, that is) (Ignazi 2014, 163–166). Moreover, parties have changed from the ‘golden ages’ sectional and power hungry mobs into a ‘regular, indispensable systemic role’ (Yanai 1999, 6). They have transformed from voluntary private associations into ‘public utilities’ (Biezen 2004) and while alternative models of political representation continue to emerge (on the most prominent example, deliberative democracy, see Gutman & Thompson 2004), no one seriously considers their replacement in the representative government’s most fundamental tasks. Such an absolute indispensability yields great power.10

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10 This is not to say of course that Western parties’ current situation is entirely unproblematic. As Ignazi (2014, 161–162) highlights, while their strength has become enormous, parties are often considered illegitimate. This gap has raised worries of counter movements, especially from the new radical right (Katz & Mair 1995; Ignazi 1996). However, at least in the first decade of the new
These developments have raised serious expectations in regard to parties’ internal power dynamics. In the paper that provides the main hypothesis for this study, Richard Katz and Peter Mair (2002)\(^\text{11}\) – following their influential cartel party model (Katz & Mair 1995) – presented a macro historical overview of intra-party power developments in Western parties. The paper argued that since the turn of the 1970’s, the balance of intra-party power has gradually shifted from party actors that represent the interests of party members into upper, publicly operating party echelons. These changes, they claimed, result from a general transformation in Western parties operating ‘environment’. The ‘environmental’ pressures that have conditioned party change include the de-alignment of class society, the ‘etatization’ of parties (i.e. the ‘governmentalization’ of party work and the growing state-centeredness of their incomes and other resources), the mediatisation of politics and later, the internationalization of politics (Katz & Mair 2009, 754).

According to Katz and Mair (1995; 2002), the transformation diminished the relevance of parties’ ground organizations, which are nowadays sustained mainly for historical reasons. More importantly, Katz and Mair claimed that parties’ internal representative organs in the national level – units, which in the past exerted significant influence over party leaderships and parliamentary parties – also lost political relevance and ‘relegated’ into supportive ‘media agencies’. The party leaders’ allegiances turned from the activists towards the general public. The organizational ‘face’ that nowadays forms the most important locus of party activities and power, is the national party elite (party’s public ‘face’) that lives of the elections and manages national ‘high politics’ in the national parliaments and governments. According to Katz and Mair (2002, 122), it has assumed a ‘more or less undisputed position of privilege within the party organization’.

These characterizations that took inspiration from several older party theories (especially those of Kirchheimer 1966, Epstein 1967 and Panebianco 1988, see next chapter) as well as from Katz and Mair’s empirical work (1992, 1993a, 1994, see below) resonated well with the more general moods of the time. In their study of parliamentary party groups (PPGs), Heidar and Koole (2000b, 259–265) highlighted the emergence of the parliamentary party complexes; the large, well resourced, professional and cohesive parliamentary groups that in a highly

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11 While the basic organizational characteristics of a cartel party were already depicted in the original paper (Katz & Mair 1995, 17–21) this study has preferred this one instead as it focused solely on the issue of power change and thus provided more depth.
mediatised and volatile electoral climate produce autonomy for themselves on the expense of extra-parliamentary party organizations (EPO) that previously played an important preparatory role, which yielded them significant intra-organizational power. In addition, Heidar and Koole noted that the connections between EPO leaders, PPGs and party’s ministerial groups had tightened over time and this, in turn, tended to weaken PPGs in relation to the party leaders and ministers. In a similar vein, another well-known assessment of contemporary European party politics, Poguntke and Webb’s (2005, 1, 5–10, 13–17) ‘presidentialization’ thesis claimed that the power in advanced democracies was concentrating around head executives in a ‘presidential’ fashion – even in parliamentary regimes. Within parties, Poguntke and Webb claimed, ‘presidentialization’ entails a grave diminution of sub-leaders (activist representatives in the highest EPO organs) powers and general personalization of leadership power. Presidentialization does not, however, univocally lead to the diminution of PPGs’ autonomy (see also Webb et al. 2011, 2–3).

While these accounts differ to some extent on which component of the public ‘face’ has become dominant (‘presidentialized’ EPO leadership, parliamentary party or ministerial group), all seem to agree that the EPOs’ central representative units that connected the party members to the party elites in earlier periods have significantly weakened. Such a change, if it were to happen, would seriously undermine the possibilities for intra-party democracy – at least in the traditional mass party sense of the term that understands IPD as a stratified delegation that flows from the ordinary members to their representatives in intra-party organs (including party leaders) that control parties’ public officials (parliamentary representatives, ministers) (see Gibson & Harmel 1998, 635–638; Müller 2000, 317–319; Blyth & Katz 2005, 37).

12 It should be already noted that not everyone bought Katz and Mair’s ideas. Koole (1996, 518) pointed out that it seems unlikely that lower level organizational actors would just mysteriously back off from national matters as they tended to affect local elections too. Moreover, as most of the delegates in national party organs are selected locally, it seems strange to think that their influence would somehow evaporate. In similar vein Kitschelt (2000, 152–166) pointed out that because there are now fewer activists that are of ‘higher quality’ (due to increases in education and democratic emancipation), there’s no a priori reason to assume that intra-party resistance would just automatically wane off. Instead, argued Kitschelt, it may become stronger. Kenneth Carty (2004, 21) also pointed out in his franchise party model that while leaders might be more powerful than ever, they have also become more fragile as they need to simultaneously feed many crossing demands. These viewpoints are compelling. They have motivated the counter hypothesis that is developed in the next chapter.

13 As was already pointed out, the delegation-based representation is not the only form of democracy, not in wider publics nor in parties. Direct measures, which have been traditionally juxtaposed against representation, exist too. (Scarrow 1999a.) Somewhat paradoxically, parties
Such a development would move parties closer to the Schumpeterian (1942) leadership party model, whose democratic character lays in its capacity to produce leaders for public offices. Such a model might be able to produce alternative opinions for voters (in line with the competitive model of democracy) but its internal conduct and societal linkage would seriously depart from the ideals that have been widely cherished in the 20th century. However, instead of interpreting this as a another crisis of democracy, we might also be witnessing a more general metamorphosis of representative government, a transition from solidly structured party democracy into a more ‘fluid’, scattered and incoherent ‘audience democracy’, which should still be able to maintain most of the fundamental attributes of representative government (see Manin 1997).

1.2.3 Party power change: the empirical record

Before crafting the research questions and explaining the research design, a short review of what we know about the pictured phenomenon in empirical terms is in order. While the story of the rising ascendancy of public party ‘face’ no doubt resonates well among the observers of party politics, the empirical evidence to back it up is actually relatively modest. Moreover, the findings of the recent intra-party candidate and leadership selection processes begun to open for wider member groups in Western parties in late 20th century (for example Bille 2001; Pennings & Hazan 2001; Scarrow et al. 2000; Kittilson & Scarrow 2003; Kenig 2009a; Kenig 2009b; Cross & Blais 2011; Cross & Blais 2012) – during the ‘decline’. Reacting to the apparent paradox Peter Mair (1994, 15–17) argued that ‘democratization’ could be just party leaders’ ploy to surpass the bigger threat, the activist delegates in intra-party decision-making organs. According to Mair by appointing hazy measures to ordinary passive members the leadership could gain more legitimacy and autonomy while avoiding real resistance. Mair also noted that formal empowerment does not automatically lead into actual power as intra-party decisions can be rigged in many ways. Katz and Mair repeated these arguments later in many occasions (Katz & Mair 1995, 20–21 and Katz & Mair 2002, 126–129). While Mair’s pessimistic view gained support (for example Hopkin 2001 and Katz 2001) more positive accounts on the effect of party ‘democratization’ were also given. Firstly, according to Scarrow (1999b, 358) the impetus to introduce direct democratic measures within parties has not been just a ploy but also leadership’s genuine effort to react to changed participatory demands. While leaders of modern electoralist parties have strong incentives to maximise their autonomy, they also want to balance the apparent upward transfer of intra-party power (Scarrow et al. 2000, 130–133). While this may not exclude the possibility to use direct measures for a leader’s advantage, ‘democratizing’ signals a general change away from closed ‘corporatist’ dynamics towards more open practices (Kittilson & Scarrow 2003, 74–75). IPD continues to be a hotly debated issue (for a wide range of views see Cross & Katz 2013). As this study focuses on representative intra-party democracy (RIPD), it will not engage with the direct form of IPD any further on this occasion. However, it will return to the idea in the concluding chapter after the evidence on alleged erosion of RIPD has been assessed.
power studies show a much less unambiguous picture of the current situation in European parties. Some studies suggest almost contrary developments.

Empirically, Katz and Mair’s theory leans onto their international comparative project, which in the turn of 1990’s set out to document the ‘nuts and bolts’ of organizational developments since 1960’s in 12 Western democracies (Katz & Mair 1994, vi). Instead of being a deductive test of a well-specified theory it was a relatively ‘open’ data-collating project from where their theories emerged inductively (Katz & Mair 2009, 753–754; Katz & Mair 2012, 107). While Katz and Mair (2009, 756) have claimed that in terms of power change their findings were ‘uncontested’, the summary of their main findings presents a less certain picture.14

Mair (1994, 4–6, 9–13) pointed out first that in contemporary democracies most parties join governments in recurring intervals and this has opened them a possibility for state subsidies, which have increased parties’ total incomes and led to increases in party staffs. But while the parliamentary party group staffs had increased quite significantly and faster than the other party ‘faces’ staffs, the central party offices had not ceased to grow and in most cases they in fact continued to be stronger. Mair also speculated on a tendency to hire professionals into the party offices15. As this may signal their ‘depoliticization’, it might also mean that central parties are weakening. However, Mair also noted that this might also reflect central offices’ increased autonomy and, thus, their strengthening. All in all, then, observed changes in party resources hardly gave conclusive evidence on the ‘undisputed’ power position of the public party. The second empirical measure tapped public officials’ ‘control’ over the parties’ central leadership units. It revealed that in some parties, the MPs had indeed gained more pronounced status over the years, but Mair hurried to underline that the evidence was ‘far from consistent’ and thus

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14 For the sake of clarity this study (like Katz and Mair 2002, 122) have separated the theory of power change (Katz & Mair 2002) from the cartel theory that described reasons and consequences for the ‘etatization’ of parties (Katz & Mair 1995). For cartel theory the project generated a wealth of convincing evidence. Mair (1994, 7–12) depicted several previously unknown features of modern party politics that highlighted parties’ widespread penetration into state apparatus, such as their incorporation into state legislation, their increased possibilities for patronage and the generalization of state subsidies. However, while especially the latter might bear ramifications for intra-party balance of power, we don’t know how and to whose benefit the funds are distributed (Katz & Mair 2002, 123). Moreover, the ‘etatization’ of parties does not automatically lead into intra-party power shifts.

15 As such measures do not appear in the data handbook (Katz & Mair 1992) this information probably stemmed from country specialists’ qualitative accounts or from theoretical considerations (in relation to professionalization Katz and Mair often cite Panebianco’s (1988) theoretical work). Whatever the case is, anecdotal references hardly ‘prove’ anything definitive about central parties’ ‘depolitization’. 
‘difficult to interpret unequivocally’. This measure did not provide any ‘uncontested’ conclusions either. Finally, the evidence on the decline of parties’ ground organizations was also not too convincing. Aside from the fact that membership decline had at this point mainly taken place in relative terms (that is, in member/voter ratios, which had mainly decreased due to the enlargement of electorates) and in half of the studied parties absolute numbers had actually increased, many country studies reported that the party members had been given new, direct participatory means. Without the exception of membership decline that became more evident during the 1990’s (Mair & Biezen 2001), these were the same observations that Katz and Mair bolstered their thesis with (Katz & Mair 2002, 123–127). While these observations certainly provided enough ‘weak signals’ for theorizing, they hardly warranted concluding, as an indisputable fact, that the public party ‘face’ had assumed an ‘undisputed position of privilege’ in all Western parties.16 While Heidar and Koole’s (2000b) more scattered evidence showed signs of emerging parliamentary party complexes, they also found clear cross-country and inter-party differences.

It appears that only one study has attempted to assess such organizational changes after the early 1990’s in a cross-temporal and cross-national context. In his recent effort André Krouwel (2012, ch. 6) charted a plethora of variables to test parties transformation towards more professional and self-sufficient, less member-dependent and more parliamentary-oriented party organizations. Some of Krouwel’s findings corroborated previous suspicions: up until the 2010’s, the membership’s relevance in total party incomes has continued to decline (more or less, into oblivion) while the share of public subsidies from the total income has increased and in most places makes up the most of party incomes. Financially, parties have become more or less independent from their members. Like Mair (1994), Krouwel compared the central and parliamentary party offices overall staff levels, too. However, while he presented some new information – the central offices had continued to grow until 2000 in Ireland and UK and the parliamentary offices too until mid-1990’s in Denmark – he mostly restated Katz and Mair’s

16 The author of this study has not been able to determine whether Katz and Mair (2002) intended their thesis as a theory or an empirical assessment. While some empirical evidence is presented along with more general considerations, the article proceeds to develop an ideal-type that appears to characterize all contemporary party organizations. While Katz and Mair (2002, 129–130) disclaim that no parties ever fully correspond with such ideal types and that it is very possible that parties diverge from this model, they nevertheless underline that parties in public offices are increasingly favoured. Because of empirical inadequacies (see above) and close resemblance to the cartel party model (which quite clearly is intended as a theory) it has been treated as a theory too.
(1992, 1994) findings: both offices were growing, the parliamentary offices a bit faster. Krouwel also restated Mair’s argument that the central party offices have evolved into leaderships’ PR tools. However, he did not provide any new evidence on the matter and therefore this statement rested, like before, on theoretical assumptions and/or anecdotal evidence.\textsuperscript{17} As of what comes to the changes in parties’ internal decision-making procedures, Krouwel corroborated that the processes of candidate and leadership selection had ‘democratized’ since the 1990’s. As was already pointed out, similar observations about the emergence of more direct measures of IPD have been made in many recent studies (Bille 2001; Pennings & Hazan 2001; Scarrow et al. 2000; Kittilson & Scarrow 2003; Kenig 2009a; Hazan & Rahat 2010; Cross & Blais 2011; Cross & Blais 2012; Pilet & Cross 2014; Pilet & Cross 2015; Scarrow 2015). Unlike Mair, however, Krouwel (2012, 255–259) was not certain what this means: while the ‘democratization’ can be considered as leaderships’ ploy to surpass mid-level elites and gain more autonomy (Mair 1994, 15–17; also Poguntke & Webb 2005), submitting the party leaders under a very wide scrutiny seems to operate against the cartel model’s leader-centric spirit.\textsuperscript{18}

Either way, while Krouwel managed to corroborate a few issues that might relate to the alleged power change – parties’ financial independence can now be considered as a well-founded fact – he did not give any ‘uncontested’ answers to Katz and Mair’s (2002) hypothesis. While the public ‘face’ undoubtedly benefitted from financial independence, it does not automatically lead to the mid-elites’

\textsuperscript{17} Professionalization of central party office – i.e. its occupational transition from mass party oriented networking tasks to ‘electoral-professional’ assistance of the public leadership – is an often made claim. It was probably popularized by Panebianco (1988) in his ‘electoral-professional’ party model that took several cues from Epstein’s (1967) seminal studies. The popularity of the idea has increased in past two decades. It has been argued, for example, that party leaders are nowadays surrounded by a group of ‘handpicked campaign, media and policy specialists’ (Farrell & Webb 2000, 119–121) and that parties employ various new methods inspired by modern IT to ‘sell their ‘products’ (Gibson & Römmle 2009, 265–266). However, while it seems perfectly reasonable that parties aim to use best possible campaign techniques, it is more uncertain to which extent such tasks have surpassed traditional party work in the overall scheme of things. As Farrell and Webb (2000, 102) pointed out, focus on campaign methods has tended to leave more structural changes in parties aside. It seems that without one exception that focused on finances (Nassmacher 2009) studies on over time changes in intra-organizational resource preferences do not exist.

\textsuperscript{18} Whatever the right interpretation might be, it needs to be underlined that tendency to reduce IPD to candidate and leader selection is far too limited a view. It fails to notice several other important decisions that parties also decide on, for example, on party programs (and, thus, policy commitments, see Gauja 2013) and – in multiparty systems – one of their most important decisions is whether to join in or abstain from a coalition government. The point is that if memberships are empowered in leadership selection but at the same time mid-elites powers in other tasks are not reduced, party leaderships might in fact surrender themselves to wider interference than before.
voluntary surrender (as Koole 1996 and Kitschelt 2000 have pointed out). Thus, it really seems, like Loxbo (2013, 538; citing Teorell 1998, 340–341; Kitschelt 2000, 174) has recently stated, that ‘most accounts on the erosion of intra-party democracy are based on anecdotic evidence, whereas in-depth empirical analysis – in particular comparisons over time – is lacking’. Karvonen (2010, 10) levelled similar criticism against Poguntke and Webb’s (2005) more qualitative effort, which according to him draws overconfident conclusions on the basis of predominantly secondary evidence, which at times was ‘bordering on the anecdotal’. Considering that the in-depth study of intra-party power is a laborious exercise (Heidar 1984, 12–15), it is quite possible that the hypothesis remains untested in a level of comprehensive cross-country comparison.

It is not a surprise, then, that most post-1990 studies on intra-party power are situated in more limited spatial and temporal contexts. While they may not be able to reveal large-scale transformations, their closer proximity to the studied phenomenon can point out more nuanced features. These are important, because Katz and Mair’s (2002, 114, 130–131) thesis – albeit accompanied with caveats about differing party environments and developmental trajectories – argues for a general trend. Against this background, it is interesting to note that most post-1990 studies on intra-party power found either variation between party types, pervasive patterns of change (that divert from the expectations of the theory) or evidence of continuing intra-organizational power dispersion. All these observations highlight the potential prematurity of Katz and Mair’s (2002) vision of the emergence of one-dimensional intra-party power structures.

Firstly, several recent studies have found continuing differences in parties’ intra-organizational power distributions. Gibson and Harmel’s (1998, 649) study on IPD in 19 parties in four countries (Denmark, UK, US and Germany) found that the leftist parties still tend to appoint more power to their extra-parliamentary organizations than the rightist parties. In a similar vein, Detterbeck’s (2005, 179–182; 2008, 31–33) two studies on cartel party tendencies in Germany, UK, Switzerland and Denmark (2005) and Germany (2008) found that the proportion of national public office holders in parties’ leading organs has actually decreased and the significant party-type specific variation that relates to parties’ historical roots continues to exist in parties’ internal decision-making procedures. Bratberg (2010) observed in relation to British parties that while the ‘critical junctures’ can produce changes that differ from parties’ historical legacies, those legacies still
Similar conclusion emerged also from Passarelli’s (2015, 236) recent effort to study party presidentialization across party families: parties ‘genetic’ characteristics matter. In short, even when parties operate under similar contexts, they might still harbour very different views on IPD – contrary to the generalizing ethos of the cartel model.

Secondly, a few recent studies have revealed change dynamics that differ from Katz and Mair’s model. In her study on the development of intra-party power in emerging Southern and Eastern European parties, Van Biezen (2000, 396–397, 409–410) found that while the surroundings should have been especially favourable for the emergence of strong public party ‘faces’, the parties instead built strong extra-parliamentary organizations. Although this might be explained by differing contexts (original model refers to Western European states, as Katz and Mair (2009) note), it nonetheless places some doubts on the generality of the model. Another interesting deviation from the idea that external ‘push’ forces parties to re-organize emerges from Heidar and Saglie’s (2003, 235–236) study on Norwegian party organizations: while all main parties planned organizational ‘revamping’, the ideals mostly stayed at the level of rhetoric and the parties continued in their old mass party form. Later, Allern and Saglie (2012, 967–968) showed that the Norwegian parties had in the 2010’s continued to uphold strong vertical linkages between the regional organizations and national parties – unlike Katz and Mair’s (1995, 21) idea of vertical stratarchy expected. These observations suggest that the party-systems might encase forces that resist changes towards some specific party model. In his study on the relationships between the party organizations and parliamentary groups, Helms (2000, 108–109) classified five different party-system specific interaction models (UK, France, Germany, Japan and US).

Thirdly, while the most recent studies on intra-party power tend to treat power distribution as an explanatory factor – in government formation (Bäck 2008, Pedersen 2010), PPG unity and committee nominations (Tavits 2011) and policy choices (Schumacher 2012) – all of them report inter-organizational variation and highlight that when party power is dispersed to lower organizational levels, it is harder for the party leaders to have their way. One recent study has even taken a

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19 In somewhat more perplexing, but interesting way, Kavanagh’s (1998, 29–30) study showed that in the end of the 20th century internal power distributions in two British parties moved to opposing directions – against their historical trajectories. While the historically membership-dominated Labour became more leader-centric during party’s time in opposition, Conservative leaders (in this historically leader-dominated party) became increasingly challenged by their rank and file during party’s long reign. Bolleyer (2009) has also detected a connection between leader-centric tendencies and party’s governmental position – in opposite terms (see below).
completely opposite stance to Katz and Mair and Poguntke and Webb. After comparing major internal decision-making processes in the Swedish social democratic party in the 1950’s and 1990’s, Loxbo (2013, 539) concluded that the 'SAP party leaders in the 1990’s exercised considerably less control over internal policy-making and propaganda than their predecessors did in the 1950s, in the glory days of the mass party'. It has also been noted that the internal party dynamics can change according to the party’s governing status. When in government, the party leadership can act as the cartel theory expects, because it can satisfy party actors’ needs with state’s patronage possibilities. However, when the party ends up in opposition, the leadership has to lean back against the party organization (Bolleyer 2009, 574–576).

All in all, in a way or another all these studies challenge the idea of ‘uncontested’ ascendency of parties’ public ‘face’ and suggest that more complex dynamics exist within the Western parties. To be sure, some of these puzzling differences can be explained by varying methodological choices and contextual factors that diverge from the original model. Yet it seems that the cloud, which is produced by the lack of reliable over time data and the contradictory results of in-depth analyses, is heavy enough to warrant a healthy doubt on Katz and Mair’s story.

Most Finnish studies that have dealt with intra-party changes after 1980 have also suggested a development toward more leader-centric and ‘parliamentarized’ party practices. However, due to incoherent methodological choices, the lack of genuine over time data and the anecdotal nature of the observations, the evidence is far from conclusive. Contradicting results exists too. To be sure, all Finnish parties have also experienced the basic characteristics of party ‘decline’, from weakening party identification and attachment to the membership decline and significant decreases in organizational strength and activity (for an overview see Paloheimo & Raunio 2008, 210–212). This alone, however, does not automatically prove anything else than that the auspicious conditions for the public ‘faces’ ascendency exist in Finnish parties, too.

Already in the turn of the 1980’s when party memberships begun to decrease it was suggested that during the 1970’s, due to increasing political complexity and the emergence of party subsidies that allowed hiring professional workforce to party offices, the party leaderships had begun to establish themselves as distinct organizational power centres (Rantala 1982, 103–111; also in Nousiainen 1998, 68). In a similar vein, Borg (1982) noted in his seminal study on the relationships between parties and parliamentary groups between early 1900’s and late 1970’s that a tendency of ‘merging’ of party and parliamentary group leaderships might be
emerging. Although some later studies tangent the question of increasing leadercentrism, the hypothesis has never been submitted to rigorous empirical testing.

The most important (and the only) over time study that also tapped Finnish parties’ internal power relations in the post-1980 era appeared in Katz and Mair’s (1994) edited volume. Interestingly, the hard data in this study countered the idea of the increasing public ‘face’ dominance. According to Sundberg (1994, 172–174, original figures appeared in Sundberg & Gylling 1992), the introduction of public subsidies in late 1960’s led to increases in party and parliamentary office staffs. However, also in Finland the central office continued to grow too, and it remained significantly larger than the parliamentary offices (as the specific numbers in Sundberg & Gylling 1992 show). More importantly, Sundberg showed that the parties’ institutionalization that solidified with the enactment of general party law in 1969 lead to a widespread decrease in parliamentary groups’ formal autonomy (see also Wiberg 2000, 167-168). Therefore, the parties’ central offices were still clearly financially and formally stronger in early 1990’s.

Few scattered observations have suggested that in the 1990’s party offices begun to decrease while parliamentary offices started to grow faster (Ruostetsaari 1998, 48; Mickelsson 2007, 267). Few party elite interviews too suggested a turn towards a more parliamentary-oriented organizing (Nousiainen 2006, 318). However, after Sundberg and Gylling’s (1992) effort genuine over time measures have not been taken and therefore the scope of the trend and the current status of the party ‘faces’ relative powers remains uncertain.

On a more anecdotal note, Sundberg (1994, 177–182) reiterated the idea of professionalizing leaderships by pointing out the central offices’ increased resources and increasing tendency to employ modern campaign techniques. Similar suggestions have been made also elsewhere (Ruostetsaari 1998). However, Sundberg (1994, 164–165, 170, 182) also pointed out that while professionalization strengthens the party leaders, the members’ rights to select candidates and party leaders (to all national party organs) is firmly codified in the law and therefore the leaders remain to be bound from below.

Later, Sundberg (2002, 209–210; 2003, 148–163) named this party type as ‘democratic-professional’: while ‘professional assets have replaced voluntary assets, and public assets replace private assets’, the members are still ‘the ultimate rulers in a democratic organization’ and it is in their hands to ‘hire and fire party bureaucrats and to decide whether to buy or not to buy professional aid from external sources’. In spite of the ground level decline, which in Finnish parties largely corresponds to
what has been detected elsewhere, Sundberg’s interpretation designates significant powers to parties’ activist strata and therefore stands against Katz and Mair’s theory of one-dimensional ‘power elite’. Later Sundberg (2008, 82) claimed that while the formal decision-making procedures have remained intact (see below), parties’ actual power structures have changed. This objection seems to be based on anecdotal evidence.

Heikki Paloheimo’s account in Poguntke and Webb’s (2005) presidentialization study corresponds to this view. According to Paloheimo (2005, 257–265), the Finnish party leaders have become more autonomous because 1) the old linkages to party members have dissolved, 2) the leaders now more frequently operate in arenas where party monitoring does not extend to and 3) due to Finland’s constitutional reform that has put the party leaders into the fore, they now enjoy a larger presence and prestige. In terms of the new arenas Paloheimo mentioned international cooperation that takes the decisions far away from the domestic party circles and mass media that tends to demand fast answers that do not lend easily to intra-party deliberation. Similarly, maintaining the stability of large coalition governments, which have become the norm since the 1980’s, requires significant autonomy as pressing situations need to be solved quickly. Perhaps most importantly, however, the Finnish party leaders have become stronger because the position of the government and the ministers has strengthened. While under the semi-presidential constitution it was not unusual that party leaders were left out of the government, since the 1980’s their ministerial status has become a rule. Also, their ability to nominate ministers has increased and party meetings have largely developed into the chairman’s speech forums – although the party leaders still need to be sensitive towards them. The leader’s seat has also become more turbulent and reflective towards electoral losses.

20 Except in terms of ‘democratization’ in which Scandinavian countries have always been relatively open (Krouwel 2012) ground organization’s ‘strength’ has severely declined. Sub-national offices stagnated already in the 1980’s and they became strongly dependent on central organizations assistance (Sundberg 1994, 173–176). Even the campaign work eventually centred on candidates independent support groups (Sundberg 1995, 53–59). Since early 1980’s the importance of memberships, local branches and members to party finance have decreased significantly while the importance of public subsidies has become absolutely essential (Karvonen 2014, 52–57). Finnish parties have become – by their own will – exceptionally embedded into the state from where they manage their own finances (Sundberg 2012, 133).

21 Raunio (2002, 2008) has argued convincingly that deeper involvement with the EU tends to increase leaderships and parliamentary groups power as most EU matters circulate through Eduskunta but not through party organizations.

22 Wiberg (2008, 180) too has suggested that most of the ‘steering work’ is done in the governmental inner circle that comprises of coalescing parties leader’s.
In purely empirical terms Paloheimo’s argument, which has also been repeated elsewhere (Paloheimo & Raunio 2008, 211–212; Sundberg 2008, 74, 81–82), seems to draw from his earlier work (Paloheimo 2003), which in terms of intra-party dynamics builds on 8 elite interviews. The information on leaders’ increased capability to nominate ministers and control the meetings of parties’ national executive committees stems from these interviews and therefore provides a solid indication of changed procedures (Paloheimo 2003, 229, 237). Besides this, however, the argument also seems to make use of something that could be called ‘circumstantial evidence’; a strategy to deduce outcomes of a dependent variable (in this case the distribution of intra-party power) from the expected effects of contextual changes. Position-induced prestige and arena-dependent autonomy seems to mainly assume that a changed situation automatically leads to changes in intra-party power. This is not necessarily the case as Finnish parties continue to inhibit internal control mechanisms that can be used to prevent such behaviour (see chapters 4, 5 and 6). Overall, however, Paloheimo’s sharp observations – combined with the often-repeated views on cartelizing tendencies (Wiberg 2008; Sundberg 2008; Paloheimo & Raunio 2008; Sundberg 2012) – suggest a change towards increasing dominance of the public party ‘face’. As in the case of international studies, however, the quality and the amount of evidence is not enough to warrant conclusions about ‘uncontested’ power transmissions.

Finally, some studies have suggested that notable inter-party differences have prevailed in Finland, too. In his study on parties’ formal decision-making power, Sundberg (1997, 109–114) found that in spite of decades of heavy state regulation, the parties continued to vary from ‘extremely egalitarian to the extremely hierarchical’. In a similar vein, Mickelsson’s in-depth analysis of Finnish Social Democrats’ and Conservatives’ ‘self-conceptions’ showed that differences in the parties’ core values that connect to their conceptions on leadership were still clearly visible in the 1990’s. Conservatives continued to highlight individualism, statesmanship and personal skills while Social Democrats continued to champion communality and equality, also the corner values of their intra-party procedures. (Mickelsson 1999, 286–287, Mickelsson 2007, 267–268).

While there are reasons to expect a tendency towards growing leader-centrism and ‘parliamentarization’ in Finnish party politics, parties’ differing ideals on legitimate leadership might produce varying responses and contradict uniform

23 Nousiainen’s (2006, 318) interview data also suggested that party power shifted from extraparliamentary parties to parliamentary arena in the 1990’s.

24 According to Bolleyer (2009, 560) this is the general logic of the cartel party theory.
development. In other words: the tendency to the public ‘face’ dominance might be more pertinent in some parties than others. All these observations beg for a more definitive empirical test – and this is what this study hopes to deliver.

1.3 What? Research questions and preliminary definitions

The cartel party thesis (as a whole) has been tried in many individual countries (for example in Canada by MacIvor 1996 and Young 1998, in Israel by Yishai 2001, in Germany by Detterbeck 2008, Italy by Pelizzo 2008, in Belgium and Italy by Sandri & Pauwells 2010). Few times it has also been submitted under multi-country comparison (in Southern Europe by Hopkin 2003 and in Western Europe by Detterbeck 2005), and a few studies have scrutinized in a more focused manner its founding themes (for example how state subsidies affect party competition (Scarrow 2006) or how cartelization affects the rise of new extreme right parties (Pelizzo 2007)). Surprisingly little attention, however, has been given to one of its central claims, that of the intra-party power change (Bolleyer 2009, 559–560). Some comprehensive studies touch the issue (Detterbeck 2005; Krouwel 2012), but detailed studies that focus on the over time power change have not yet seemed to emerge. Yet the idea of power change seems to be widely supported. For example, Gauja (2013, 19) has recently stated that ‘there is a general consensus in the contemporary party literature that political parties with parliamentary representation are now effectively led by the latter group’. This is not a unique situation in party studies. Sigmund Neumann (1956, 405–406) noted that Robert Michels’ (1968[1911]) famous ‘iron law of oligarchy’ that has provided the theoretical foundation for nearly all 20th century studies on intra-party democracy, had by 1950’s become an ‘undisputed axiom’ although it was seldomly rigorously empirically tested (Neumann 1956, 405–406).

At least two factors might explain why a persuasive theory of intra-party power can sustain itself without rigorous testing. Firstly, as it was already noted, in-depth analysis of intra-party power – especially in a cross-temporal framework – is a laborious exercise (Heidar 1984). In contemporary academic culture that rewards fast production of short journal articles, such undertaking might not seem

25 Bolleyer’s (2009) study comes closest to this definition. However, instead of being a comprehensive account it analyses the impact that party’s governmental position has on the power distribution. Also, the study focuses empirically only one party, the Irish Fianna Fáil. As Bolleyer (2009, 576) herself notes, to gain a more robust view power dynamics should be ‘compared across different party models embedded in similar contexts’ (emphasis is original).
appealing. The second possible reason stems from disciplinary traditions, more specifically, from the general lack of dialogue between theoretical and empirical party studies. The post-1945 history of party studies shows that there has not been a shortage of party theories: a total of 34.5% of all published work on political parties has been of a theoretical and analytic nature (Caramani & Hug 1998, 507). However, despite recurrent attempts, scholars have not been able to generate widely advocated theories and theoretical and empirical works have often lived in their own worlds. Moreover, even empirical studies have more often sought to produce new theoretical concepts rather than test existing ones. (Montero & Gunther 2002, 8–18.) The plethora of analytic party types and typologies is a well-known result of this phenomenon (for comprehensive overviews see Gunther & Diamond 2003 and Krouwel 2006). In order to raise the quality of the party theories, it is necessary to explicitly test existing and justified hypotheses in a genuinely comparative manner (Harmel 2002, 135). This is exactly what this study is aiming for: to be a theoretically driven, empirically thorough and focused test of a prominent theory that has been widely lauded but not thoroughly tested.

1.3.1 The research questions

Drawing from the previous discussion, this study addresses four large questions, two of which are empirical (and can be divided into primary (A) and secondary (B) parts), one that concerns methodological issues and one that addresses normative grievances. Empirical questions will be accompanied with more specific theoretically motivated hypotheses after relevant arguments have been developed. The study seeks answers to the following questions:

1A: Has the balance of intra-party power shifted from parties’ membership organizations to the parties’ public ‘faces’ in Finnish parties between early 1980’s and early 2010’s? A comprehensive theoretical explication of what such power change means will be provided in the following chapter and the question is answered with widest existing set of empirical indicators (see question 3).

1B: If a power change has taken place, to what extent can it be attributed to the hypothesized explanatory factors? The theoretical explication continues in the next chapter with a review of the factors and mechanisms that have been connected to the alleged party change (social change, mediatization, ‘governmentalization’, regime change, internationalization, etc.). Later, it will be shown that these factors have indeed been very prominent in the recent history of
Finland and thus we should expect change. Aside from the mere coincidence of independent and dependent variables, the causal analysis is strengthened by the various secondary and primary sources that are used to build connections between the variables.

2A. Has the development, if it exists, been similar in all parties and has it led to convergence or do significant inter-party differences exist in intra-party power balances? Koole 1996, (520–521) has argued for detecting few simple basic party types and comparing their experiences rather than building dominant types and forcing all parties under them. As the literature review already showed, party-type specific differences might exist. Recognizing this possibility is a central feature of this study’s main argument.

2B. If party-wise differences exist, to what extent can they be attributed to the hypothesized explanatory factor? This study gives special attention to the nature of party change, which has in recent decades become a major independent topic of research (Harmel & Janda 1994, Harmel & Svåsand 1997, Appleton & Ward 1997; Harmel 2002, Van Biezen 2005). The argument that is developed in the next chapter juxtaposes the externally induced pressures against the existing intra-party power structures – the main independent variable explaining party stability. By building this deliberate tension between the conflicting forces (external pressures, internal conditions), this study is able to contrast several theories of party change – and elaborate Katz and Mair’s theory.

3. What kinds of methods and data are needed to make valid and reliable claims about power changes within political parties? Aside from the empirical and theoretical concerns (which are no doubt the primary ones), the study aims for a methodological contribution. The third chapter produces a comprehensive review of indicators that have been used in existing studies and contrasts them against theoretical notions of intra-party power. After revealing a major deficiency in the existing ‘toolbox’ it proposes a novel solution, which will be employed in the analysis.

4. Finally, what are the normative implications of observed developments? Reflecting back on the discussion that started this thesis, at the very end the main observations are contrasted against the two normative models of representative democracy, the competitive and the participatory ones. After showing how the contemporary party practices are rather problematic in the light of each ideal, the section proposes a practical solution that might help to overcome some of these problems.
1.3.2 Some preliminary confinements and definitions

Although all the central concepts and logics will be examined thoroughly in the forthcoming chapters, two preliminary definitions are in order to give a more concrete meaning to the research questions. First of all: what is the party that this study is looking at? The answer must start by considering what constitutes as a party. While some have even considered a party’s voters as parts of a party (Duverger 1967[1951], 90–92), others have been adamant that the voters only choose between parties (Schlesinger 1984, 377). This study follows the latter conception which corresponds well with the Michelsian tradition that understands a party as a community of members (see Harmel & Gibson 1998). However, more is needed as even in the most un-institutionalized cases a party is not an anarchistic flock of individuals but an organization that encases at least some separable subunits. The most restricted view emerges from American, rational choice inspired literature, where parties are seen as mere ‘teams of candidates’ and a party is mainly understood via its parliamentary party group (PPG). European scholars also recognize extra-parliamentary party organizations (EPO); the party outside of the legislature that campaigns and takes part in the party decisions. In the European parties these two ‘tracks’ co-exist and condition each other’s functioning. (Montero & Gunther 2002, 10–15; Müller 2000.) The linkage between the PPG and the EPO builds the main tension in intra-party power studies (see next chapter).  

Although the Finnish PPGs are legally separated from the EPOs (Wiberg 2000, 167-168), ever since the very beginning of Finnish parliamentary politics the organized PPGs that connect to the EPOs have been responsible for the functioning of Eduskunta (Borg 1982). Thus, they are essential ‘pieces’ of Finnish parties in the national level and, as Wiberg notes (2000, 167), in fact the only party organs that convene continuously. While the definition of the parliamentary ‘track’ is fairly self-evident, the EPO normally encases multiple operative levels. The widest would be, of course, the whole totality of individual members – the object

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26 One might object that there is also a significant relationship between parties and their affiliate organizations, especially strong interest organizations that have been relatively tightly connected to parties in Scandinavia, although to a decreasing extent (Sundberg 2003, 87–89, 121–123). Should we consider them as parts of parties’ power structure? While it is undeniable that interest organizations have had a strong impact on Finnish party politics (and politics more generally) as Sundberg’s various studies show, this study considers them as independent actors that seek influence via party ‘tracks’ – without constituting a separate one. They are not considered as constitutive units of a party and therefore their relative weight in the overall scheme is not feasible to assess in a study that focuses on intra-party power distribution. To be sure, interest organizations may of course employ all of these ‘tracks’ and ‘faces’ to exert influence within a party – as they have frequently done.
of the studies that focus on direct intra-party democracy. Here, however, the focus is on IPD understood as representation in intra-party organs. The Finnish parties have since the early 20th century organized in three layers, in bottom up order: in local, regional and national contexts, all including their own distinct channels of internal representation. The ground level includes the local (and by extension municipal) party branches while the regional level organizes in the level of electoral constituencies and draws delegates from the local branches. The national party comprises of three party organs that can also be understood in a bottom up order, from the widest and rarely convening to the smallest and most active one. They are the party congress, the party council and the party’s operative ‘government’, the national executive committee (NEC). (Sundberg 2008, 64–74.)

Instead of examining the interconnections between national and subnational levels like students of stratarchic (Eldersveld 1964, Carty 2004), federal (Bolleyer 2012a) and multi-level (Allern & Saglie 2012) parties do, this study focuses almost exclusively on the national parties that are responsible for state-level decision-making in Finland. In this scenario, the power of the membership organization is understood through sub-national delegates’ presence in the national party organs. However, as this study’s ultimate interest lies in parties’ everyday functioning, it excludes the national organs that convene too infrequently. First and foremost, this applies to the party congress whose operative capabilities are questionable. Sundberg (1994, 169–170) has noted how their ‘pre-preparation’ has gotten easier over time. It has been suggested that since the 1960’s they have merely showed off party strength and produced publicity for the party agenda (Nousiainen 1998, 65), which is then ‘applauded’ and ‘baptized’ by the congress (Rantala 1982, 111–113). Of course, all party leaders and members of the leading party organs are selected in the party congresses and therefore the effect of the congress ‘sieves through’ into the study.

In general, the party councils do not play a very visible role in everyday party politics either, as they convene only few times a year. However, as they are generally conceived as the ‘party congress between party congresses’, they sometimes take part in the major intra-party decisions and therefore their role will be assessed when it is relevant. Mostly, however, the study focuses on the power balance between the leading EPO organ (the NEC, which also includes the leadership) and the PPG (and by extension the ministerial group when relevant).

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27 The only aberration from this scheme takes place in chapter 5, where the overall development of subnational party organizations is presented alongside with the development of central and parliamentary party organizations. The reason for presenting it is to deepen the picture of the general decay of membership activity.
According to Sundberg (2003, 27), the ‘party executive supported by party congress, and the parliamentary party [...] are the units who manage and control the human and material resources at the top of the party hierarchy. Moreover, it is in these units that the party policy is formed and executed in the name of the party for its members and voters. As will be shown shortly, this definition/confine ment corresponds well with Katz and Mair’s theory too.

Due to its overlapping role in the crossroads of several party organs, the party leadership’s position is inherently ambiguous (see Heidar & Koole 2000a, 14). In Finland the party leader is – formally and practically – the chairman of the NEC (vice chairs operate as deputies), but he/she almost always also acts as an MP and when the party is in government, usually as a minister too. In other words, he/she represents the party and the public ‘faces’ simultaneously. The literature provides two ways to conceptualize the party leadership’s role in relation to the rising public ‘face’ ascendancy. In Katz and Mair’s (2002) theory, the EPO leadership is a pivotal power centre, which due to parties’ ‘governmentalization’ may begin to lean over to the parliamentary/governmental sphere. In Poguntke and Webb’s (2005) model, the leadership detaches itself from the EPO and the PPG and, thus, in a way forms an individual party ‘face’ whose operations are nonetheless heavily directed towards the public domain. While most forthcoming analyses focus on the relationship between the central EPO organs (mainly the NEC) and the PPG, the party leadership’s individual position will be assessed too, when possible.

The second concept that demands a preliminary definition is power change. The latter part is rather self-explanatory: ‘organizational change is the difference found between two points in time in the way a party operates’ (Heidar & Saglie 2003, 223). Here, operation of course refers to the distribution of power, but what does that mean? What is political power?

The focused discussion on the nature and the meaning of political power flared in the turn of the 1960’s, as a corollary of a few studies that sought to describe the distribution of power within a few selected American cities. Two influential sociological studies claimed that the power had concentrated in the hands of small ‘power elites’ (Hunter 1953; Mills 1956). Provoked by the thin evidence provided by the studies, Robert Dahl (1957; 1958; 1961) demanded a proper definition and rigorous measures for political power. According to Dahl, the location of power can be revealed only if the ‘ruling elite’ is clearly defined and its preferences prevail in a real conflict. Thus, in Dahl’s understanding, power meant decision-making capacity in situations where someone opposes. Not long after, Peter Bachrach and Morton Baratz (1962) pointed out to Dahl that not all (if any) important decisions
are necessarily submitted under the public decision-making procedures. Instead, Bachrach and Baratz argued that it is highly possible that powerful actors are able to manipulate the agenda and procedures in a way that some options will never see daylight. Nonetheless, also Bachrach and Baratz underlined the importance of conflict because otherwise there is no way to know whether the observed consent is ‘genuine’. Conflict, or perhaps more accurately the lack of it, was Steven Lukes’ starting point. Lukes observed that major political issues only rarely escalated into open conflicts. Western capitalism, for example, seemed to exist in rather harmonious terms although the system was characterized by obvious injustices. To explain the paradox, Lukes developed his ‘radical’ conception of political power, which claimed that through systematic manipulation of preferences that takes place in numerous social institutions, the masses internalize ‘the elite’s’ preferences and under this ‘false consciousness’ keep reproducing them. Although a conflict of interest remains, it exists only on a theoretical level. Despite their differences in how power is exercised, Lukes claimed that all the ‘three faces’ of power are based on a similar underlying concept of power: A’s capacity to exert significant influence over B contrary to B’s interests. (Lukes 1974/2005, 1–37).

This is arguably the classic conception of political power, familiar from many studies. However, Barry Hindess (1996, 1–13) has pointed out that the concept of ‘power as simple capacity’ was in fact drawn from fairly specific political experiences and is not very representative. Hindess has argued that beside it, another less confrontational concept of power has been prominent in Western political thought: ‘power as legitimate capacity’, a right-based operational autonomy that stems from the consent of the governed. Here too A exerts influence over B, but not against B’s will or interests. Hindess argues that this conception is frequently cited in relation to sovereign governments and that ‘it can also be used in other contexts where agreement between the parties concerned is thought to establish a pattern of rights and obligations’.

Now, notwithstanding the possibility that a ‘party is itself a political system’ where ‘politics is endlessly played out, with different coalitions of forces and actors striving for dominance’ (Katz & Mair 1992, 6), it should be possible that legitimacy-based dynamics might also exist and that for methodological and theoretical purposes it is useful to acknowledge them. These ‘four faces’ of power do not contradict each other if they are viewed in a framework that acknowledges the temporal and arena-specific dimensions of party politics. The logics of crude

28 In contemporary scholarship the fourth face of power is most often associated with Michel Foucault’s writings (see Digeser 1992).
majority power can co-exist in a party along with subtler forms of interference like agenda manipulation and indoctrination. In some cases – consider a well-liked party leader – omnipotence might be highly consensual. For example, in the influential delegation model of parliamentary democracy, the party leaders gain their strength from the members whose agents they are (see Müller 2000; Strom 2000; Strom et al. 2003). Thus, a preliminary definition of intra-party power can be stated as follows: it is a party actor’s right- and/or resource-based capacity to make a difference in important party decisions.

One last definitional consideration is what constitutes as an important party decision. In other words: what is the object of intra-party power? According to Heidar (1984, 13), to possess intra-party power is to be ‘able to influence the organizational workout of official party policy platforms’. For Heidar, IPD is strictly an intra-EPO matter and does not connect to the actions of a parliamentary or ministerial group. This study finds Heidar’s conception to be too limited as it neglects the fundamental objectives of intra-party activism. Why should party activists write programs if they do not care what happens to them in actual decision-making? Or, why should party activists take part in the candidate selection if they do not care who ends up in the PPG? Or, why should intra-party organs take part in the government formation if they do not wish to voice out their opinions? This study argues that at least in the level of intention the party decisions and procedures aim at channeling the members’ views to the upper party echelons that operate in the extra-party arenas like the parliaments and governments. This is also the view that stems from the classic party studies (Ostrogorski 1902; Michels 1968[1911]; Duverger 1967[1951]) to the contemporary ones (Katz & Mair 1995, 2002). The final object of intra-party power is not intra-party decision per se (although power ‘traverses’ through them), it is the extent to which the EPO’s doings, be they selections, preparations or direct decisions, affect (enable, disable) the autonomy of the PPG.

1.4 How? The research design and the organization of the thesis

Finally, a few words on how these questions will be answered. As the thesis appoints a whole chapter to the measurement of intra-party power and another one to the studied cases, this overview simply 1) explains the general rationale of the research design and 2) lays out the organization of the thesis.
1.4.1 In search of the ‘golden ratio’: combining analytic depth with generalizability

The objective of party research is to improve theories about political parties. In relation to this aspiration one problem stands out from the literature: a coexistence of 1) the large theoretically ambitious studies that due to their scope remain fairly shallow in empirical terms and 2) the small concentrated studies that provide great empirical depth without necessarily even trying to contribute to the more general theoretical questions. In part, this mismatch illustrates why the grand theories can survive without rigorous testing. Analytically, the main challenge is how to maximise theoretical leverage (generalizability) without sacrificing analytical depth? This is an age-old problem: these virtues are at the opposite ends of the continuum and there is an inherent trade-off between them. The more depth one wants, the less generalizable the results will be and vice versa. (Peters 1998, 5.) Thus, an empirically based and theoretically relevant contribution to the intra-party power literature requires acknowledging both of these factors and situating the study somewhere in between.

To begin with analytic depth it seems almost self-evident that the most thorough picture emerges when one studies a single specimen intensively, i.e. commits to a case study. Historically, it has been the most popular approach in comparative politics (Peters 1998, 137) and still in recent times also in party change studies (Harmel 2002, 135). That being said, there has been a general tendency to perform case studies too loosely – without giving sufficient attention to theory and method (Peters 1998, 137). As Harmel (2002, 135) notes, in relation to the party change studies, ‘though generally informed by extant theory, brimming with rich detail, and offering new theoretical insights, such studies have normally fallen short in satisfying the demands of rigorous theory-testing’. However, instead of turning to large n cross-country comparisons as Harmel suggests as a cure, this study has given serious consideration to the several improvements that have been suggested recently for strengthening the inferential value of case studies.

First of all, it has been argued that in order to produce theoretically meaningful results, case studies need to be more strongly anchored in theory. George and Bennett (2005, 5, 17-18) define a case study as a ‘detailed examination of an aspect of an historical episode’ but hasten to add – to differentiate them from mere

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29 Harmel is especially referring to Katz and Mair’s (1994) edited volume, which includes Sundberg’s (1994) effort.

30 In the context of party organizational studies this approach which is often proposed as a savior to all problems suffers from severe data-related defects that will be discussed in detail in chapter 3.
descriptions of random historical events – that case studies should be conducted in a ‘theoretically conscious’ manner; instead of drawing freely on whatever feels interesting, they should focus on well-defined aspects of a case – case being an ‘instance of a class of events’ and class being a ‘phenomenon of scientific interest’ like a revolution, constitutional arrangement or any other social scientific category that bears general theoretical relevance. Peters (1998, 151-152) makes an important addition by pointing out that instead of understanding cases only as abrupt events, they can also refer to processes that unfold over significant periods of time. Therefore, externally induced, gradual intra-party power shifts that form the ‘class of events’ that this study is interested in can be conceptualized and studied as a case. Strictly depth-wise, a ‘theoretically conscious’ case study has many strengths over large n comparative studies. Proximity allows crisper concept validity and sensitivity towards the context, which helps to clarify interconnections between the studied variables and also pay attention to the un-theorized intervening factors. Overall, it can produce stronger causal arguments. (George & Bennett 2005, 17–22, 30–32.)

Purely in terms of depth and rigour, then, the most thorough handling of party power change would involve a sharp explication of important theoretical mechanisms and submitting them under in-depth examination within a single party – pretty much like Bolleyer (2009) did. The obvious problem – which Bolleyer (2009, 576) duly noted – is that a single party study is hardly generalizable. It has been objected that ‘because science is a generalizing activity … scientific status of the case study method is somewhat ambiguous’ (Lijphart (1971, 691). However, while the case researchers are not even trying to meet the statistical standards of representativeness as generalizability to diverse populations (George & Bennett 2005, 30–32) case studies can, if planned well, strive further than their immediate observations allow.

Even single-country studies can have a wide comparative value if they are guided by a strong connection to comparative theories (Verba 1967, 111–115) and ‘written in self-consciously theoretical manner’ (Peters 1998, 12). More importantly, if a certain case can be shown to encase a strong resemblance to the theory, its leverage will increase significantly. Unlike in statistical analysis where each observation carries a similar weight in relation to the end result (statistical inference) in case studies and comparative politics more generally some cases carry a more inferential value – although only in relation to specific theories, of course. This relates to the idea of most likely and least likely case designs, which assume that there exists a case that so closely (most likely) or so remotely (least likely)
resembles the expectations of the theory that it can either weaken it significantly by revealing deviations (in the most likely setting) or strengthen it significantly by showing its workability (in the least likely surroundings) (Eckstein 2000[1975], 149). In general Popperian scheme weakening theories is easier than confirming them (Gerring 2007, 237). As this study’s intention is to push Katz’s and Mair’s reasoning, it proceeds with the most likely case scenario, which Finland happens to fulfill nicely.

Besides being one of Katz and Mair’s (1995, 17) original most likely picks due to the vastness of state subsidies and patronage opportunities and a well-established tradition of inter-party accommodation, Finland has been considered as an extreme case in Western Europe in terms of strength and rapidness of societal change (Karvonen 2014). Moreover, the Finnish case involves a major constitutional reform from the semi-presidential to the parliamentarian government that has greatly enhanced the power of parties and party leaders (Nousiainen 2001; Paloheimo 2003). Against the general European trend of ‘de-parliamentarization’, the Finnish parliament (Eduskunta) has actually strengthened (Raunio & Wiberg 2014, 7–14). As will be shown in detail in chapter 4, all the factors that Katz and Mair (2002) connected to the ‘ascendancy of party in public office’ have been present in Finnish recent history – often in an especially pronounced manner. Thus, Finland provides a suitable ‘most likely’ case for testing the theory more thoroughly than has been done previously.

What makes single-country studies sometimes even better for theory testing (than cross-country comparisons) is that they can be divided into theoretically meaningful subunits, which can then be compared in a relatively homogenous ‘environment’, which ‘controls’ for many factors (Peters 1998, 22). According to George & Bennett (2005, 18), ‘there is a growing consensus that the strongest means of drawing inferences from case studies is the use of a combination of within-case analysis [causally oriented over time depiction of a single case] and cross-case comparisons within a single study’. In a cross-temporal analysis the

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31 Michels’ iron law of oligarchy is based on the least likely strategy. By being able to show that even the explicitly most democratic institutions turned into strong oligarchies Michels claimed that it is likely that no other (explicitly less democratic parties) would be able to resist the tendency either. (Eckstein 2000, 149.)

32 This is not the first time, however, when Katz and Mair’s theories have been tried with most likely cases. Detterbeck’s (2008) study on cartel parties in Germany relied on similar logic; Katz and Mair (1995, 17) considered Germany as a likely case too. However, Detterbeck’s (2008) focus on the whole thesis left individual aspects such as the power change to a rather superficial level. Interestingly, however, Detterbeck found that while cartelizing logics were detectable in the party system level, intra-party level contained more differences than convergence.
‘environment’ can be incorporated to the model as an independent variable(s) (Peters 1998, 23-24). Thus, comparison takes place on three levels: across time, between cases and against the theory. To make the test harder, this study compares the over time development of the three theoretical party types that have matured under similar external pressures. Rather than trying to disconfirm Katz and Mair’s theory altogether, it tries to elaborate it by incorporating a theoretically relevant intervening variable to the model: the party organization itself. As will be explained in detail in the next chapter, there exists at least equally convincing reasons to believe that parties may react differently to similar external pressures – depending on their existing internal power structures.

The logic of the test follows John Stuart Mills’ method of difference (also known as the most similar systems design), which aims to reduce the number of potentially significant explanatory factors by comparing units that are similar in most possible ways and differ only in terms of the dependent variable. When most of the explanatory variables are controlled for through the similarity of the cases, the cause for variance is easier to unearth. (Przeworski & Teune 1970, 34; Lijphart 1971, 687–690). In this study the similarity stems from the parties operating in a similar context. As all of them have been subjected to the same ‘treatment’, the remaining differences have to be explained by intra-party factors. The next chapter develops an elaborated theory of intra-party power change that explains why different party types should react differently to same external pressures. If the differences in intra-party power continue to exist and they align with the party-type specific expectations, it can be argued that power change is not a general phenomenon, but conditioned by differences, which are specific to certain party types.

A reliable assessment of such differences can only be established if the analysis is sufficiently well defined. For example Katz and Mair’s (1994, vi–vii) decision to appoint ‘free hands’ to the country experts pretty much excluded the possibility for genuine comparisons between the countries and the party types. A central way to strengthen comparative analysis is to focus on the ‘key’ variables (Lijphart 1971, 690). George and Bennett (2005, 67–72) maintain that in order to make the comparison theoretically meaningful, it needs to be focused and structured. Focus refers to the aspect that was already touched upon: the analysis should be confined to certain well-defined aspects of the phenomenon. The idea of a structured comparison is borrowed from survey research; it refers to the practice of asking same questions from each comparable unit. Successful execution of these tasks requires 1) a clear identification of the (one) ‘class of events’ to which the study is
focused as well as a theoretically motivated 2) case selection and 3) selection of explanatory variables. By committing to the rigorous, ‘theoretically conscious’ framing of the research that takes previous concepts and analyses seriously, the analyst does not only make the analysis more transparent and theory-relevant, but also builds comparability to other analyses.

Even with these specifications, however, the disconfirmation of a theory (Katz and Mair’s) and the confirmation of another (my elaboration) in a one single-country study seems a bit far-fetched. Thus, instead of understanding this as an invalidating or confirmatory effort, it is viewed as a plausibility probe; a preliminary test for a ‘proto theory’, which is executed in order to determine whether there are reasons to dig deeper. Of course, when executed in an environment where it is unlikely to succeed, such as this one, the hypothesis receives stronger corroboration. Also, while plausibility probes are considered as ‘weaker’ than confirmatory tests, the same requirements of theoretical clarity and analytic rigour apply to them too. (Eckstein 2000, 140–143; George & Bennett 2005, 70-73). Still, as the forthcoming analysis mainly rests on the coincidence of ‘environmental’ pressures that should produce change and changes in intra-party power (or lack thereof), the causal power of specific intra-party factors (i.e. existing power distributions) is mostly insinuated by theory – not observed directly. A truly confirmatory analysis that is able to reveal real causal mechanisms requires ‘moving in’ to the parties’ internal over time processes, as for example Müller (1997) and Bille (1997) have done fairly recently. To close the circle, however, what these studies lack is the comparative element that makes generalizations possible. By focusing on three parties that represent the opposite corners of the field (in relation to the main independent variable, existing power distribution) and therefore provide some potential for generalization within this ‘most likely’ context, this study tries to combine the virtues of generalization and analytic depth as well as it can be done in one book length study.

1.4.2 The organisation of the book

What is left of this thesis is divided into six long chapters. The next two focus on the theory and the three following chapters focus more on the empirical issues. The last chapter is reserved for concluding remarks and discussion. The next chapter develops the theoretical argument that is tested in the empirical chapters. It is divided into three large sections, each dealing with one of the argument’s central components: power, change and resistance. The first section focuses on intra-party
power. Via a short historical depiction of the emergence of intra-party power networks in Western European parties, the section moves to a theoretical level, probing the essence of the concept: What is the general nature of intra-party power balance? What are the main players that are involved in intra-party power games? And what are its general components (i.e. sources of power)? This examination aims at clarifying the ‘dependent’ side of power change. The second section focuses on ‘independent’ factors. It first reviews the general theories of party change followed by an explication of the ‘push factors’ that have been associated to the hypothesised power change within Western parties. After depicting the main components of Katz and Mair’s argument, the chapter turns to the factors that might work against the change. The third section detects the main source of intra-party resistance, explains its origins and the reasons for its persistence and finally defines the three ideal party types, whose responses to presented pressures should differ. The types provide the basis for case selection.

The third chapter focuses on methodological issues. It provides an in-depth evaluation of the measures that have been most commonly used to tap intra-party power distribution. Instead of just reviewing the measures, they are contrasted against the theoretically explicated sources of intra-party power in order to determine which theoretically relevant aspects existing methods cover and what is left on the blind side. The analysis reveals that while most aspects have been covered relatively well, existing methodology (and empirical studies for that matter) have avoided the study of the actual intra-party decision-making power, which according to many scholars might differ drastically from what the formal statutes state. The chapter concludes by proposing a novel approach that is based on a historical reconstruction of important intra-party decision-making processes and comparing them over time in order to determine if significant power changes have taken place.

The fourth chapter lays a foundation for empirical analyses. It first defends the case selection by sketching out the studied party cases’ developmental trajectories and showing their differences in the beginning of the research period. Secondly, the chapter presents the main developments in Finnish ‘party environment’ during the research period. The presentation, which thematically follows Katz and Mair’s framework, shows that all theorized factors have been strongly present. The idea is to show that 1) the studied parties have emerged and developed in markedly different ways and 2) although they have faced serious (and of course similar) ‘environmental’ pressures during the past 35 years 3) the different ‘growth stories’
give a reason to expect that they might respond differently. The logics of this thinking is explained thoroughly in chapter 2.

Chapter 5 presents the results of the empirical analysis that leans onto the ‘traditional’ measures of intra-party power such as asset distribution, formal decision-making procedures, etc. To provide a wider grasp of the long term trends, the analysis of the primary data is complemented with a thorough review of previous findings. While the empirical analyses of intra-party power are rare in the post-1980’s era, important studies that have covered the developments before this period do exist and they help to extend the analysis way back into the past, in some cases all the way to the birth of the Finnish party system. Despite some variance that is discussed in the concluding chapter, the findings give a pretty clear picture of the long-term trends.

The sixth and final analytic chapter tackles the developments in the actual intra-party decision-making power by presenting in-depth reconstructions of a total of 13 government formation processes that were taken between 1983 and 2011. The purpose of these descriptions is to 1) reveal the main site of intra-organizational power within the respective parties in various time points and 2) allow over time comparison to determine whether there have been major over time shifts in actual decision-making power. Again, with some (expected) variation the analysis finds a fairly unequivocal development over the party spectrum. All the research questions are answered in the concluding chapter and complemented with relevant theoretical reflections. The thesis ends by considering whether the observed developments have increased or decreased the quality of the Finnish democracy. A short note on the potential future research avenues is also provided.
THE PROBLEM OF INTRA-PARTY POWER CHANGE: ‘ENVIRONMENTAL’ PRESSURES VS. INSTITUTIONALIZED PARTY STRUCTURES

‘...party [...] is a structure in motion which evolves over time, reacting to external changes and to the changing “environments” in which it functions.’

‘...organizational change [...] always has the effect of altering distribution of resources among different internal groups. Resistance to change is also the main reason why, once institutionalized, an organization tends to perpetuate itself.’

– Angelo Panebianco (1988, 49, 241)

If we conceive parties similar to business firms (Downs 1957), forecasting their reactions to the pressures that they face in the ‘electoral marketplace’ should be a no brainer: in order to maximise profits (votes and political leverage) party leaders should make all necessary organizational changes that the new situation demands – whether they concern chains of command, office resources, communication networks, etc. The problem is that parties (at least in Western Europe) are not entirely like business organizations. Their political and voluntary nature has produced several organizational ‘faces’ whose interests’ organizational changes might contradict. All organizational reforms have a bearing on existing power distribution and, as it is generally thought in political science, actors like to hold on to their power (Panebianco 1988).

This chapter develops a theory of party power change that accounts for this complexity. It proceeds in three steps. The first section focuses on the dependent variable, intra-party balance of power. Through a historically informed review of influential party power studies the first subsection portrays the birth and consolidation of Western parties’ intra-party power networks. The second subsection deduces a general analytic framework that defines relevant actors, the theoretical scope of interactions between them and the elementary sources of intra-party power. Combined: the thing we expect to change.

The second section focuses on independent variables; forces that can induce change into parties’ power distributions. After examining the logics of party change the first subsection incorporates a general model of change into the analytic
framework. The second subsection then provides a summary of those ‘environmental’ pressures that are believed to encourage change in Western party organizations and explain how exactly they are expected to do this. The end product is the functional adaptation model, well known from most post-1950’s developmental party theories, which constitutes one of this study’s two primary hypotheses: parties adapt to their ‘environments’ and therefore their internal power distributions look more or less similar all the time.

The third section introduces an intervening variable, intra-organizational resistance potential. This attribute is widely recognized in organizational literature but seldom addressed by developmental theories. When it is recognized that parties are historically constructed, rigid institutions that bear strong path dependent traits to their past organizational choices, the simple functional, ‘environmentally’ induced adaptation begins to look less convincing. From this thinking emerges a competing, institutional hypothesis: parties’ existing internal power distributions are resilient and they do not change very much. Therefore, parties continue to differ from each other to a significant extent.

2.1 Power: the distribution of resources in a multilevel organization

This section elucidates the general concept of intra-party power. It begins with a brief historical overview of the emergence of extra-parliamentary party organizations (EPO) that eventually challenged parliamentary party groups (PPGs) autonomy. On this duality grew the concept of intra-party power that is still widely employed: extra-parliamentary organizations ability to exert influence to PPGs workings (for example Gibson & Harmel 1998). The other part of the section takes a more analytic approach and defines a general framework of intra-party power balance. It has three constituent parts, which are defined in ideal typical terms: actors that have relevance in intra-party power dynamic, the theoretical scope of their interactions and the elementary sources of intra-party power. Combined, these ‘ingredients’ produce a skeletal concept of intra-party power network that is later elaborated with change and resistance factors.
The birth of the modern party organization and the possibility for intra-organizational power relations

A necessary precondition for any kind of assessment of intra-party power dynamics is that parties indeed encase a multitude of actors that may compete for power. Historically, such dynamic is a fairly recent innovation. Representative government was born long time before modern organized parties existed (Manin 1997, 194). Although the term ‘party’ was used in England in late 17th century (Bryce 1902) it referred to loose associations of likeminded MPs (LaPalombara & Weiner 1966, 7–14). Sartori (1976, 18–24) has assessed the ‘partyness’ of these groups by distinguishing two representative systems: parties in government and party government. In the former case groups share vague physical resemblance with parties but their relation to governmental decision-making is unclear. In the latter system parliamentary output results directly from party groups coordinated efforts. According to Sartori pre-19th century governments were not party governments. Edmund Burke, who made his famous definition of parties in 1770 did not view them as vehicles of people’s opinions, but rather as general organs that manage communal problems. According to Sartori ‘Burke would have been horrified by party instructions and party discipline’ – common features of modern party government. Thus, even unified parliamentary groups were still on the making.

Even during the first half of the 19th century political governance rested firmly in the hands of fairly independent local notables (Weber 2009a, 101). ‘[O]n the eve of the first reform bill [1832, when the suffrage was extended for the first time in Britain] there was nothing that could be seriously called a party system either inside or outside parliament’ (McKenzie 1955, 3). Very limited suffrage and the local nature of political competition made sure that public office holders who had started to produce some unity were in firm hold of political power; competing

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33 Intra-organizational ‘competition’ can be understood in two different ways and it is very important to make a clear distinction between them. Horizontal division refers to different organizational units and levels (formal party organs in local, regional and national contexts) while vertical division refers to competing political factions that may penetrate through all levels – from like-minded MP’s to their supporters in local party units. Intra-party struggle can be approached via analyzing fractions’ abilities to form majorities against other fractions (see Sartori 1976, 72–75). This study however focuses exclusively on horizontal division. Put roughly, here the focus is on the ‘distribution of decision-making authority among units and across levels’ (Harmel 2002, 138), focusing especially on the question which level is the strongest.

34 ‘Party is a body of men united, for promoting by their joint endeavours the national interest, upon some particular principle in which they all agreed’ (Burke [1770]/1839, 425–426, quoted in Sartori 1976, 9).
units did simply not exist (Katz & Mair 2002, 114–115). According to Duverger (1967[1951], xxiii, xxix) several ‘trends of opinions, popular clubs, philosophical societies and parliamentary groups’ existed, but ‘in 1850 no country in the world… knew political parties in the modern sense’. Only the establishment of a permanent link between parliamentary groups and local electoral committees in the latter half of the 19th century marked the birth of a ‘true political party’. This development was highly motivated by suffrage extensions around Europe that increased the importance of electoral masses (Katz & Mair 2002, 116–117). During this developmental phase ‘organization outside the parliament became not only profitable but essential for political survival’ and because of this ‘second-rung leaders’ emerged into the extraparliamentary level (Daalder 1966, 51). This development marked the birth of that intra-party power network that studies of intra-party power have been traditionally interested in: the dynamic relationship between extraparliamentary and parliamentary leaders.

One classic study that is often considered as one of the founding texts of modern political science (for example by Von Beyme 1985, 1) presented an in-depth examination on the development extra-parliamentary organization and the first systematic characterization of the dynamic between it and parliamentary representatives. In his *Democracy and the Organization of Political Parties* (1902) Moisei Ostrogorski portrayed the birth of Birmingham Caucus, electoral committee that British Liberal party employed to secure several victories over Conservatives in late 1800’s, and its subsequent evolution into federal party organization. The caucus was formed after 1867 suffrage extension, where ‘urban masses obtained the largest share of political power; and England became a democracy’. Formally, its idea was to gather the interested to discuss about current matters and strengthen Liberal values, but in reality the caucus was a highly structured effort to coordinate liberal votes.35 Despite its noble democratic spirit, power centralized into the hands of small albeit new type of elite (urban bourgeoisie). Only a very small minority participated actively and the social composition of meetings followed strict hierarchy: the president was of highest social rank and lower middle classes mainly

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35 The conservative elite attempted to overturn the effect of the suffrage extension by introducing to the bill three-candidate districts where each voter had two votes. The idea was to destroy Liberal majority by splitting the vote. However, through effective ‘counselling’ of voters the caucus was able to distribute votes between Liberal candidates and secure multiple landslide victories for them (see also Tholfsen 1959, 161.)
kept things running. Local committee organization was strict, ‘naturally emergent’ hierarchy, which controlled everything, including candidate selection. Hierarchy was ‘repeated at every stage of Organization’. Local organizations sent delegates to federal meetings to approve party line that had been crafted beforehand by the federal executive. The participatory rush that came along with the suffrage set new requirements to the leadership that had to be well aware of masses’ sentiments, but it could always avoid real challenges: by challenging the old Conservative establishment with the demagogue of democracy, it ‘shared’ power with lower strata while party bureaucracy smothered all real opportunities. (Ostrogorski 1902, 95–114, 132–135, 161–162, 300–303, 329–371, 448–449, 509–519, 588–591.) These observations anticipated the central thrust of many later studies: party organizations tend to be run by a very small group of people. Who these people are is another, much more important question.

Although the birth of extra-parliamentary organization did not bring democracy – at least in the direct sense of the word – it altered the ‘idyllic state in which circles of notables and, above all, members of parliament’ ruled (Weber 2009a, 102–103). Indeed, after the caucus had established its relevance, its relationship with parliamentary group tensed. The question was to whom does the MP pay his condolences when he is making decisions in the parliament? To his own deliberations or to the caucus that claimed to represent movement’s democratic weight? When Liberals’ electoral dominance was generalized, some MPs wanted to dismantle the caucus. But instead of complying, ‘caucus men’ began to send direct orders to MPs to submit under party line or to lose seat in next election after caucus withdraws its support. From the contemporary ‘democracy-heavy’ viewpoint it is interesting that Ostrogorski was devastated about the EPOs control. He saw a coming of new relationship between voters and representatives that degrades ‘representative of the people in parliament to the status of a clerk at the mercy of a committee taking the place of the whole body of electors and usurping its rights and its powers’. (Ostrogorski 1902, 194–199, 207–216, 300–303, 580–

36 ‘Organization combines (…) all the essential conditions for success, by providing men accustomed to obey orders, well disciplined, and following freely acknowledged leaders, who in their turn possess in a high degree such qualities as energy, skill, and strategical and tactical ability’.

37 Manin (1997, 194–196) has argued that the birth of political mass organizations did eventually alter the concept of representation: the representatives’ freedom to act according to his own deliberations was replaced by stricter correlation between party’s platform (to where, in ideal situation, party members could contribute to) and representatives’ actions. This problem re-emerges in the concluding chapter where current developments are contrasted against democratic ideals.
Similar worries were presented in many early studies of party organizations (for example Bryce 1933b[1921]).

However, Ostrogorski’s grim conclusions were repudiated in many studies. In perhaps the most famous of them, R.T. McKenzie (1955, 9–10, 585) argued that extra-parliamentary organizations did not take over British parliamentary system, but instead parliamentary leaders anticipated the threat, ‘shackled the monster’ and regained the control of their parties. According to McKenzie no major British parliamentary group in the modern era has reduced itself into a delegate of the extra-parliamentary organization and ‘the institution of Parliament has survived almost unimpaired into the age of mass electorates and of mass parties’. In similar vein, Von Beyme (1985, 161–162) argued that Ostrogorski grossly exaggerated the powers of the caucus: in reality their control in candidate selection was not as tight as he believed and the parliamentary whip retained its central role in organizing party’s legislative behaviour. Also, the fusing of PPG and EPO offices in 1886, which Ostrogorski interpreted as EPO’s final invasion in fact ‘brought the party back under stronger parliamentary organization’.

Empirical problems aside, the importance of Ostrogorski’s study – in relation to intra-party power studies – is that that it explicitly presented a possibility for alternative intra-party power balance: EPOs potential to influence the PPGs that until late 19th century had been considered as autonomous units. For Sartori (1967/2005b, 10–11) the creation of the EPO was one of the founding features of modern ‘party system’, a demarcation from the ‘stone age of parties’ dominated by ‘factions, secret societies, sects, aristocratic cliques, political clubs, coalitions of notables’. However, as Duverger (1967[1951], 65–67) has noted ‘first parties’ merely tried to reap benefits from the enfranchisement and real EPO potential build later when working classes organized around Marxist conception of class party.

The next wave of classic party studies focused on this distinction. In his Political Parties: A Sociological Study of the Oligarchical Tendencies of Modern Democracy Robert Michels created a highly influential theory of intra-party power by analysing socialist parties, especially German Social Democrats (SPD), early developments. Michels’ case selection was smart: while old parties despised the idea of intra-party democracy and thus finding oligarchic tendencies from them (as Ostrogorski did) did not constitute a very good measure for the general idea, socialists eagerly highlighted their democratic nature. By showing that oligarchy existed in most
democratic institutions too Michels was able to cast a heavy cloud over all hopes
for democratic organizing.\(^{38}\) (Lipset 1968, 15–16.)

Michels’ (1968[1911], 61–73, 81–84, 120–122, 205–216) began his analysis from
newly enfranchised working class’ need for efficient interest representation. By
pointing out to the impossibility of direct democracy in large mass organizations,
Michels concluded that a system of representation was necessary – and the first
step towards rule of the few. At first, elected delegates did not differ from other
activists; they were mere ‘servant[s] of the mass’, who were rigorously monitored
and rotated frequently. In time however delegates’ acquired special skills that
increased probability of their re-election. Although democratic practices that
should have given tools against accumulation of leadership positions existed
(parties held frequent elections), technical expertise and psychological sentiments
old towards leaders strengthened the status of the incumbents. Michels argued that
formal ratification in fact made leadership more rigid (compared to aristocracy)
because the ‘blessing’ of the people gave the masses ‘the illusion of being masters
of their masters’. In reality it effectively killed all opposition because to disobey the
elected oligarch was same as to disobey the democratic mass. Michels’ famous ‘iron
law of oligarchy’ stated that in large organizations power inevitably concentrates
in the hands of a very small elite. The party ‘becomes divided into a minority of
directors and a majority of directed’ and masses possibilities to interfere reduce to
‘infinitesimal minimum’; ‘half-dozen or so’ strong executive committee runs the
show. (Michels 1968[1911], 66–88.) In terms of oligarchy all classic party authors
reached very similar conclusions.\(^{39}\)

The important question is: which elite controlled the leadership? According to
Michels in socialist parties too ‘highest order of leaders’ (party chairs) consisted
mostly of MPs and thus they too had ‘essentially parliamentary character’. However,
Michels also noted that if MPs’ representation in party executive is
limited somehow, ‘much friction is apt to rise between the two groups of leaders’

\(^{38}\) As will be shown later, Michels' thesis – which was translated to Finnish too in the mid-1980’s –
was highly motivating factor for Green parties to seek alternative ways to structure their political
efforts.

\(^{39}\) Ostrogorski’s and Michels’ contemporary Max Weber also concluded that specialized and
disciplined bureaucratic ‘core’ runs all party organization: it crafted programmes and strategies and
decided on candidates, which the mass may formally approve – at best. Unlike other classic students
of party organization Weber considered ‘caesaristic mass democracy’ as a good thing as it helped to
train leaders and sieve dictators who’d lost support – without compromising leadership. (Weber
influence of Weber, Joseph Schumpeter (1942) presented his ‘elitist’ theory of democracy where
parties’ role was merely to act as a venue for leadership selection.
(i.e. party’s internal leaders and MP-based). Nonetheless, Michels argued that through their competence and prestige MPs enjoyed distinguished position within the party. Also, he noted that MPs’ dependence on the party is only indirect: as their power stems fundamentally from voters, for the term MP is untouchable. Usually MPs also enjoyed vast rights to participate in the EPO while their own activities took place behind closed doors. (Michels 1968[1911], 153–158.) While EPO’s had consolidated and at least on paper provided resistance potential, in early parties an oligarchy composed of MPs continued to dominate.

As was already pointed out in the introduction, at first Michels convincing theory received almost axiomatic status even though its claims were seldom tested empirically (Neumann 1956, 405–406). Later, however, his thesis was strongly questioned. First, it was pointed out that Michels’ thesis was based on experiences in very particular circumstances (Neumann 1956). As Von Beyme (1985, 232–233) has later formulated referring to the ongoing democratization in most Western European publics: ‘could the parties [in early 1900’s] be more democratic than the systems in which they were fighting for power?’ Secondly, Michels’ ‘intense single-mindness’ (Neumann 1956, 405) and drive for general theory motivated criticism that built on newly detected heterogeneity in party politics that had been growing throughout the West since the beginning of the century (Bryce 1933, 211). By the 1950s many of the ‘biggest names’ had contended that Michels’ predictions were over-deterministic and that different party organizations may develop differently (Lipset 1968, 27–28).

When Maurice Duverger (1967[1951], 1–5) was finishing his classic thesis the heterogeneity in the party realm had become obvious. However, Duverger (1967[1951], 133–142, 150–160) too believed that all parties are controlled from a small core, the ‘inner circle’. He pointed out that while the ‘dominant philosophy’ requires that legitimate political leadership rests on democracy, ‘practical efficiency’ pushes parties to oligarchy and many methods exist (co-optation, appointment, nomination and layered representation) to ‘disguise’ autocracy. However, Duverger (1967[1951], xxxv, 4–5, 133–135, 182–183) also emphasised that the form of oligarchy can vary according to party’s social composition and the democratic sentiment within. He emphasised that parties are complex collections of ‘small basic communities’, whose internal structure and mutual interactions determine the nature of their practice. Duverger noticed that during the 1900’s it had become more typical to form parties ‘outside’ of parliaments and that generally these parties tended to give more weight to extra-parliamentary forces. Duverger noted that while MPs should weight more in intra-party activities as they represent voters who
in numbers always exceed the membership, often EPO leaders who act in the name of party activists interfere and gave orders to MPs. He called this the ‘external oligarchy’.

2.1.2 The intra-party power network: main actors, the scope of their interactions and the sources of their power

Up to this point the discussion has circled on a fairly general level, mainly characterizing abstract tension between parties’ different operative dimensions. In order to analyze power change more rigorously, more concrete definitions of how these party ‘faces’ are composed, what are their primary incentives, restrictions and resources need to be established. We also need a ‘yardstick’ for the theoretical scope of ‘inter-face’ interactions and a deeper understanding of the sources of organizational power. Only after these specifications the interaction between intra-party power distribution and parties’ ‘environment’ can be understood.

First, we need to define who the main players in intra-party power games are. As the discussion above suggests, the basis lays in the distinction between leaders of party organization (i.e. the extra-parliamentary party apparatus) and leaders of/in parliamentary party group (Michels 1968[1911], 114–115). According to Duverger (1967[1951], 133–142, 182–183) the latter group (‘elected representatives’) represents party’s voters while the former group represents party members and because electorates and party community’s ideas of desirable futures may differ, ‘problem of their reciprocal relations is of great importance’. This duality produces the main tension into the general model.

But parties are more than their leaders. Duverger (1967[1951], 90–91, 101, 109–114, 138–142) who produced the first systematic examination of party membership classified members according to intensity of their involvement. In relation to intra-party power, two outer circles – mere voters and supporters who may also give financial support and partake in ancillary activities – are fairly insignificant as they do not seek active role within the organization. The innermost circle, activists, is more relevant as it oversees and directs organizations everyday operations and participates in leadership elections. It is still however important to notice that only local leaders are directly selected; all other leader strata – including the national leadership – is chosen by delegates. Although activists choose delegates too, delegation increases the gap between activists and the ‘apex’. Therefore, intra-party conflicts never take place directly between activists and leaders, they happen between different leader groups. Nevertheless, as Angelo Panebianco (1988, 25–
26) has stressed, leadership can never dismiss the needs of the most active ‘nucleus’ of party activists.

Building on this foundation, Katz and Mair (1993) developed an ideal typical three-tier frame of those organizational levels that are important in horizontal intra-party power dynamics. By complementing the basic division (parliamentarians and EPO leaders) with activist core nucleus they introduced three ‘faces’ of party organization: the party in public office (PPO, also known as the party as governing organization), the party in central office (PCO, also known as the party as bureaucratic organization) and the party on the ground (POG, also known as the party as voluntary membership organization). While only the two first ‘faces’ connect to the main competing ‘oligarchies’, ground organizations too have their own leaders who operate mainly in local and regional branches. Because this is a study of national parties, local leaders are considered only insofar as their activity relates to its functioning. This happens when a local leader becomes a member of some national representative party organ.

The main characteristic of an individual who represents the party’s public ‘face’ is that his/her position is dependent on party’s electoral success. Its main organizational reflection is the parliamentary party group and with some reservations party’s ministerial group. By extension, the public ‘face’s’ professional workforce can also be considered. Members of the public ‘face’ are motivated by factors that stem directly from their status as elected representatives: material benefits, ‘psychic rewards of power and status’ and fulfilment that grows out from success in directing policies. They are also constrained by many things. The dual position between party organization (that campaigns) and electorate (that votes) makes them dependent on both and their role as ‘official governors’ is likely to ‘foster a sense of general responsibility’ and dependence towards other members of ‘the establishment’. But public office also provides resources that are

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40 Katz and Mair’s (1993a) depiction reminds a lot of V.O. Key’s (1942) classic ‘dissection’ of American party organizations, which distinguished 1) party-in-the electorate (voters), 2) parties-in-government (party leaders in national and state legislatures) and 3) parties-in-organizations (parties formal institutional structures such as national committees). Only difference seems to be that instead of members, Key focused on voters, which is understandable considering the differences between decentralized and vote-seeking American parties and European membership parties.

41 As Katz (2002, 93) points out, depending on their mutual relations the ministerial group may produce a competing power unit for the PPG. While this is certainly possible, I see no reason to expect that these organs would actively work against each other as it would effectively jeopardize one of the main motivations to belong into the public face, possibility to affect national politics (according to Katz 2002). Secondly, ‘faces’ can be internally incohesive, although it decreases their power relative to other faces.
inaccessible to other party actor’s. Besides owing the exclusive right to direct state-level decision-making, public office holders control state bureaucracy too, which provides them significant opportunities for patronage and inside information, which builds expert status that can be used against other party leaders. (Katz & Mair 1993/1998, 596–597; Katz 2002, 93–95.) In short: public officials are always in a politically advantaged position, but in order to enjoy it they need electoral victories, which binds them tightly to other actors. Also, at least in modern parties EPO organs often control candidate nominations and other selections that directly affect PPO’s autonomy.

Party in central office (PCO) refers to party’s national headquarters. It mainly consists of party’s national executive committee (NEC) and the central party office. NEC is the formally recognized central leadership unit of the EPO, which comprises of party leadership (chair and deputy chairs) and additional members who represent subnational parties. These NEC members are normally elected in party congresses, but a NEC may also include ex officio representation from the parliamentary party and ancillary organizations (trade unions, etc.). The central office hosts paid party officials.42 PCO’s main resources are its central location in the middle of the party apparatus (especially in relation to communications), expertise (especially in relation to policies and fundraising) and formal legitimacy ‘in the apex of the party organization’. When it is unified it can be very powerful as it controls most party resources and formal right to rule. However, two major constraints limits it. Firstly, because it’s a collection of leaders from different party ‘faces’ (national and subnational leaders, PPG representatives, etc.) that might weigh objectives differently (MPs value electoral success, local leaders value ideological goals and bureaucrats value organizational stability) it is inherently prone to disunity. Secondly, as the NEC’s legitimacy stems ‘only’ from the party community, it has no formal standing in national matters; legally they belong only to parliamentarians. As Katz states: ‘central offices can lead only so far as the volunteers and public officials who comprise the two other faces are ready to follow’. (Katz & Mair 1993/1998, 599–600; Katz 2002, 98–100.) As was stated earlier, the party in central office, especially the party leadership, is a pivotal party ‘face’ whose leaning (towards ground or public ‘faces’) determines the overall balance of power within the party. (Katz & Mair 2002, 122.) According to Poguntke and Webb’s (2005,

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42 Theoretically, it is the NEC’s servant, but because it controls crucial resources and bureaucracies tend to produce autonomous powers, it might develop independent power too. Thus, like in the public ‘face’ here too cohesion is not an automatic condition.
also Webb et al. 2011) model the leadership may also develop into an independent power ‘face’.

Finally, there’s party in the ground. In the widest sense it refers to all members but as they are diffused around the country and on average the intensity of participation is low, more concrete manifestation of POG lies in various organized party bodies. National party congresses and more permanent assemblies as well as various sub-national bodies (regional and local branches) give active members’ possibilities to take part in party’s work. However, as members’ main occupation lies somewhere else, POG’s key characteristic is its voluntary and amateur nature. Although some activists may reap individual benefits (social status, patronage) they are mostly motivated by collective incentives: policy, symbols and solidarity. Their resources connect to electoral work (campaign labour, money, safe votes, local knowledge) but they also build leadership’s ‘legitimacy reservoir’. The combination of policy-driven incentives and electorally important resources sets POG ‘naturally’ against public ‘face’ that is dependent on their effort and generally more vote-seeking. However, their strength should not be exaggerated; ground leaders face severe constraints in their action. First, they too lack formal standing in national politics – even more severely that NEC members, as they often take part from dispersed regional viewpoints. Secondly, and perhaps more importantly, the intermittent nature of participation prevents activists from gaining real expertise and, thirdly, because of its regional character POG lacks cohesion that is necessary for challenging upper party echelons. (Katz & Mair 1993/1998, 597–598; Katz 2002, 95–98.)

These rather static characterizations provide a general understanding of which kinds of actors participate in intra-party power games and with what kinds of measures and motivations. They do not provide much depth for understanding the logics that can make some ‘faces’ strong and others weak. Duverger’s tripartite classification of EPO/PPG-relations provides a coarse overall view how different ‘faces’ might interact and gain dominance. Although he portrayed them as historical developmental phases43, they can also be read in more general terms, as conditions for 1) PPG domination, 2) EPO’s strengthening and 3) EPO dominance.

43 The first characterizes parties that were formed in 19th century, prior to universal suffrage. In general parlance this party model is known as the cadre (or elite) party. The second phase describes development that has become to be known as the mass party: previously excluded masses’ (workers, farmers, etc.) organization that was created outside of the parliament to ‘take over’ national power democratically. The final phase corresponds to militant parties that communists and fascists developed in the interwar era. (Duverger 1967[1951].)
Parliamentary representatives dominated parties when party organizations were weak and decentralized, and therefore unable to provide counter-power. When elections and parliamentary representation was the sole purpose for the party’s existence, its leadership positions too end up in the hands of parliamentarians and there was no possibility for the emergence of ‘external oligarchy’ (that is, EPO leadership that actually differs from the PPG). The central party remained weak also because militant membership was small and mostly interested in spoils that successful candidates could offer to them. (Duverger 1967[1951], 182–185.) Katz and Mair (2002, 114–116) have summarized this scenario with three factors: 1) exceptionally ‘high’ quality of public officials and a small number of activists, 2) their ‘amalgamation’ via shared incentives and 3) the impotence of the central office, which results from strongly personalized character of resources. In general: public officials dominate parties when no conditions exist for the need of another power unit.

In the second scenario ‘external oligarchy’ became a relevant player and the power balance between it and the PPG evened out. The main causes for its strengthening were the influx of activists (who EPO leaders now claimed to represent), enlargement of party bureaucracy and the formal consolidation of internal decision-making procedures. This also created tension between public and central party ‘faces’. As participation in state matters ‘elevated’ MPs to political elite, activists became suspicious and created ways to monitor their conduct in the parliament and to reduce their influence in party leadership. EPO tried to enforce their claims via financial and campaign-related leverage. However, MPs retained their old powers too. Especially the prestige and intellectual authority that was built in state affairs increased their indispensability. While lower levels of party leadership were always easy to fill, upper echelons required more and this ‘natural discrepancy’ gave MPs potential to absorb themselves into party leadership. (Duverger 1967[1951], 190–197.) Katz and Mair (2002, 116–119) have summarized the main factors of this phase as follows: 1) universal suffrage increased the relevance of coherent governing and campaigns and 2) this lead to the enlargement of the organization and a need to coordinate resources, which then strengthened the PCO. 3) Instead of creating a party that supports the PPG, it became PPGs task to support activists’ interests, which were supervised by the PCO. In general: EPO can bend PPG when it ‘brings something to the table’; i.e. possess resources that PPGs need, but to become really effective, however, these dynamics need to be formalized too.
In the third scenario, EPO takes total control over parliamentary representatives. MPs are reduced to salaried ‘employees’ and defenders of premade proposals, which are now completely prepared in party offices. To ensure PPG’s total compliance the EPO leadership takes over the PPG leadership too and crude monitoring mechanisms and sanctions are laid upon MPs. Leadership legitimacy leans now completely towards EPO. While EPO’s dominance leans to a total possession of resources (the party even confiscates MPs’ personal salaries), this dynamic too rests on a certain ‘philosophical’ foundation, which differs from previous models. (Duverger 1967[1951], 197–202.) This scenario stemmed more from Duverger’s future visions than actual developments. The idea of total EPO control was based on real parties – extremely hierarchical ‘mini armies’ that communists and fascists developed in the interwar era – and Duverger seemed to honestly believe that the ‘devotee’ parties spirit echoed well with more general societal developments and the model encased wider potential (Duverger 1967[1951], 1–5, 44–46, 122–124). While he clearly overexaggerated their influence (see below), this scenario provides a necessary ‘border’ to the other end of the continuum as it points out that total EPO domination could be possible if the EPO managed to gain control of all party resources.

Sources of organizational power will be dealt thoroughly in the next chapter, which focuses on methodological questions. However, before examining the logics and factors of party change an elementary idea of what constitutes intra-party power (i.e. the party actor’s capacity to make a difference in party affairs) is needed because without it, it would be impossible to determine how ‘environmental’ pressures should affect dynamics between party ‘faces’. As it has been already hinted, in most general terms intra-party power builds on organizationally important resources. The variety of resources that have relevance for the functioning of the organization is wide. In general, however, they refer to structural regulations (internal decision-making capacities and procedures), material means (money, manpower, technologies, etc.) and more personal attributes (positions, competency, contacts to relevant extra-party players, etc.). (Panebianco 1988, 33–36.)

Combining these sources of power to party ‘faces’ (to which they are perfectly compatible with although Katz and Mair do not list them explicitly) provides us a rudimentary idea of what intra-party power balance means. First, it needs to be acknowledged that all parties need a certain combination of resources to be able to affect national legislation. **Intra-party power balance means how these aggregate resources are distributed between party ‘faces’**. If for example members of parliamentary party are the
only legitimate decision-makers – de jure and de facto –, control all necessary material means (finances, communications, preparatory offices, campaign workforce, propaganda, etc.) and organizational competences and linkages too the situation reminds of Duverger’s first scenario, total PPG dominance. If, on the contrary, central party office controls all material resources and decision-making channels the balance of power leans over to the EPO, and so on. Usually the reality sits somewhere in between, where all party ‘faces’ control some resources. Whatever the case might be, this is the power network whose changes we are interested in.

2.2 Change: the interplay between ‘environmental’ pressures and party agency

Now that it is reasonably clear what is expected to change it is time to examine the other constituent part of the theory: sources of change. During past decades when Western parties’ have faced major challenges and many have worried about their ability to adapt party change has emerged as a vital field of inquiry (Appleton & Ward 1997, 341–342; Harmel & Svåsand 1997, 291; Harmel 2002, 119.) The first subsection examines the concept itself: what does party change mean, why and how does it happen, and who or what causes it? The focus is naturally on organizational change, not on policy positions, ideologies, et cetera. In the end the above-crafted general framework is supplemented with general logics of change. The second subsection presents – through a review of influential post-1950’s developmental theories – overview of those ‘environmental’ pressures that should have induced change in Western parties’ internal power balances. The section concludes by gathering most important ‘push factors’ together and connecting them to expected power changes.

2.2.1 The general logics of party change

As it has been already established, parties operate in societal ‘environments’ that condition their conduct. Here, a fundamental question is ‘how much structure actually matters and how much room it leaves for parties as active agents?’ (Van Biezen 2003, 179). Or in other words: 1) is party change caused by exogenous and endogenous forces and 2) is change intentional or non-intentional (on behalf of the party agents) (Panebianco 1988, 237–243). Three bodies of literature give distinct
answers to these questions. They are the life-cycle approach that focuses on parties’ long-term internal maturation processes, the system-level trends approach that focuses on parties gradual ‘environmental’ adaptation, and the discrete change model that emphasises party agents reaction potential and smaller, abrupt changes. (Harmel 2002, 119–128.) In short, the life-cycle model emphasises endogenous sources of change, the system-level trends model highlights exogenous factors. However, both of them give primacy to structural variables and treat party agents as reactionaries. Instead, discrete change model tries to accommodate both endogenous and exogenous sources of change but emphasise agency.

The life-cycle theory dates far back in time. According to Mintzberg (1984, 207) highlighting ‘stages of organizational development’ has been a central theme in organizational studies since Max Weber. In these theories ‘organizations pass [...] through definable development phases similar to those of biological organisms (birth, growth, decay, etc.)’ (Panebianco 1988, 239). The quintessential life-cycle theory of party organization is of course Michels’ ‘iron law of oligarchy’ – a work hugely influenced by Michels’ mentor Max Weber (Scaff 1981). For Michels’ (1968[1911], 61–77, 85–97, 353, 364-367) the most important driving force of party’s organizational change is the organization itself. In the first stage the impossibility of mass governance leads into representation by few and in the second stage the oligarchy consolidates through specialization that is another mandatory feature of efficient organizing. In the third stage ‘psychology of organization’ (i.e. masses need for leadership and their gratitude towards the leader who is treated like a cult hero) takes root and eventually it creates reinforcing psychological reactions in leaders (‘Le parti c’est moi, I am the party’). In short, changes emanate from organizational imperatives.

In general terms the life-cycle model makes sense. It is perfectly reasonable to assume that organizations experience change, ‘as the party passes from infancy to later stages of development’ (Harmel 2002, 128–130). However, to view party change only as a correlate of internal maturation is unrealistic. According to Van Biezen (2005, 149–153) the life-cycle model’s primary problem is that it neglects party’s operating ‘environment’. It expects that each party follows a similar developmental pattern in all times and places. Van Biezen argues that neither empirics nor theory supports this conclusion; parties always born and operate in some specific societal ‘situation’ that provides them certain preconditions. Panebianco (1988, 239–240) concurs with this criticism by noting that the environment in which parties born and develop may throw them on various
developmental paths. Thus, the life-cycle model alone is clearly insufficient to explain party change – especially the type this study focuses on.

The system-level trends theory (or environmental adaptation model), which most clearly reflects the logic that has been used in previous characterizations, has the opposite emphasis. There, the main cause of change is the ‘environment’, which sets the conditions for party competition: when it changes parties are expected to change too. Here, ‘environment’ refers to social, political and technological macro conditions and organizational change is conceived to be gradual and incremental process. Also, as all parties that operate within the same technological, political and social context face similar pressures the model suggests that parties converge towards some general model. (Harmel 2002, 122–125.) That’s why Van Biezen (2005, 152–153) has named this model periodic: in all times parties look more or less similar and they also continue to evolve into same direction while trying to remain competitive. Indeed, the model has a strong bearing on ‘ecological’ reasoning as inability to adapt leads to ‘extinction’ (Appleton & Ward 1997, 341). As established parties rarely die, convergence is deeply rooted in the model.

The idea that parties adapt to ‘environmental’ changes is not new either albeit it has been employed less explicitly than the life-cycle model. Most well-known party organization studies make use of the idea of environmental adaptation. For example Ostrogorski (1902, 42–56) described carefully the philosophical and economic foundations (the emergence of liberalism and industrial revolution that led to enfranchisement and wealth accumulation) that empowered and encouraged middle classes to create party organizations. Similarly, the emergence of universal suffrage created the initial motivation to seek organizational efficiency in Michels’ theory (Harmel 2002, 132) and Duverger (1967[1951], xxiii–xxxviii, 183, 424–427) defined very explicitly the emergence of conditions that were favourable for mass parties. Although similar hypotheses on ‘environments’ and party organizations interaction continued to be developed throughout the latter half of the 20th century (see below), explicit statements on how exactly the environment affects parties seem to have emerged only recently.

The clearest theoretical explication on how environmentally induced change works emerge from Richard Katz and Peter Mair’s oeuvre that makes great use of it.

44 More than anything the ‘environment’ refers to ‘electoral environment’. Ware (1987a, 2) has summarized its basic logic well: ‘...elections do constrain parties in several important ways. The need for a party to respond to mass electorate has a great impact on how that party is organized, how its internal affairs are conducted, how it manages relations with its supporters and voters, and how it finances its activities’. 
The central thrust of their argument is that parties have changed because changes in their operating environment have forced them to. Katz and Mair conceptualize change in dialectic terms: it is a cyclical process between environmental stimuli and party responses. However, the environment is clearly the primary force while party actors mainly react: ‘while reasons for this change are myriad, with the immediate source usually being found in the internal politics of the party, the ultimate source can often be traced back to the environment’. But how exactly does the environment change parties? In another passage Katz and Mair clarify that ‘changes in the political environment ... alter the structure of incentives and balance of resources among the leaders of the various faces of party organization’. They continue that ‘[S]ometimes these environmental changes bring new pressures and challenges; other times they represent new opportunities. In each case, however, they alter the distribution of resources or incentives within the party and therefore the patterns within it’. (Katz & Mair 1992, 9; 1995, 6, 15–17; 2002, 129–130; 2014, 356.) For example when suffrage was universalized and the number of eligible voters increased to hundreds of thousands, central office’s coordinating powers became much more valuable for party work than they were under limited suffrage and power balance shifted towards it (Katz & Mair 2002, 117). In other words: changes in competitive ‘environment’s’ demands can increase some party ‘faces’ relevance relative to others and strengthen their power leverage accordingly.

The newest theory of party change, discrete change approach (or purposive action model, as Müller (1997) has named it) can be regarded as a more advanced version of a simple environmental adaptation model as it problematizes the interface of external pressures and parties’ reactions. As one prominent duo succinctly argued – summarizing its founding spirit neatly – ‘party change does not ‘just happen” (Harmel & Janda 1994, 261). Main difference to system-level trend models is emphasis on agency and intra-party factors more generally, and also the notion that change might also take place abruptly (Harmel 2002, 125.). As this study focuses on long-term trends abrupt changes receive little attention. Party agency, however, will play a crucial role in this chapter’s overall argument.

In a text that is often considered as one of the founding pieces of this school of thought Frank Wilson (1980, 526–528, 542–544) argued that socioeconomic, cultural and institutional changes are unlikely to produce direct changes in parties. Wilson underlined that only when they affect competitive situation within the party

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45 While system-level trend model does inhibit a sense of purposeful agency (see Harmel 2002, 129) – mere reaction to external stimuli presupposes existence of rational (albeit perhaps involuntary) agent – party change is clearly structurally induced and agents are more reactionary than proactive.
system (via emergence of new competitors, tactics, rules and ‘prizes’) they might reflect in intra-party arenas too. More importantly, Wilson acknowledged that neither these more concrete pressures would change parties directly. Party leadership is the ‘key intervening variable’ whose actions ‘determines whether or not parties will in fact respond to any of these factors’. According to Wilson ‘[T]he notion that parties are transformed by unseen socioeconomic, cultural and political forces while their members and leaders remain unaware is misleading. Parties change primarily because their leaders and members see the need to change and make efforts to change them’.

A few years later Angelo Panebianco (1988, 240–244) developed these ideas further by examining the process of change. He distinguished 1) purposeful agents who try to react to 2) external pressures, but face 3) intra-party conditions and 4) cognitive limitations. According to Panebianco innovative feelings emerge often in changing contexts but they may not find ground because organizational stability weighs a lot and agents are hindered by ‘bounded rationality’ that prevents them from ‘foreseeing everything’. Most importantly, Panebianco pointed out that neither exogenous pressure alone nor endogenous factors (like changes in party leadership) can induce change individually; external pressures need to coincide with favorable intra-party ‘situation’ (brittle, incohesive structures) to produce meaningful changes. Acknowledging these factors complicated the idea of party change even further.

As this study focuses on effects that major long-term ‘environmental’ change can cause, the life-cycle model that confines change inside parties and the discrete change models view on abrupt shocks are not relevant here although both kinds of changes arguably happen all the time. The point is not, as Harmel (2002, 128–134) has wished, to understand ‘the totality of party change’ but instead to examine a rather specific change under rather specific context. Stemming all the way from the research questions, what is important here is the interplay between severe ‘environmental’ pressures and intra-party agency. Thus, this study combines elements from system-level trends thinking and purposive action model, which, as Müller (1997, 293, 308) has noted, do not contradict each other as environmental pressures tend to coexist with intra-party forces. Moreover, this study posits these contradicting forces deliberately

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46 Panebianco’s influential volume ‘Political Parties: Organization & Power’ was originally published in his native language Italian in 1982.

47 A decade later Harmel and Janda (1994, 261–268) argued that while abrupt external shocks that touch on parties’ primary goals tend to ignite most severe changes, it is possible that intra-party factors like leadership change can induce change independently.
against each other. Before doing so, however, it is necessary to lay down the general logic of intra-party power change as the ‘environmental’ model suggests and sieve out the most important change factors.

If intra-party power balance refers into how organizationally important aggregate resources are distributed between party ‘faces’, power change then simply means re-adjustments in this distribution, which alter party ‘faces’ relative strengths.\textsuperscript{48} For example, when suffrage extension strengthened campaign coordination’s value, central office’s resources grew while public ‘face’ weakened as its autonomy in electioneering decreased (deduced from Katz & Mair 2002, 117). If this was followed, for example, by a formalization of a decision-making procedure that favoured the EPO (like shifting the selection of PPG leadership from the PPG to the party council) its power would have continued to increase and PPG’s decrease, and so on. The point is that every change in organizationally important resources reflects in the power balance (Panebianco 1988, 241). Two caveats must be noted, however. First, all changes are not significant enough to cross the ‘operative threshold’, i.e. to change the party’s functional logics fundamentally. Like Duverger’s second scenario showed, EPOs strengthening did not completely diminish MPs’ leverage as they continued to possess important resources. The EPO strengthened but it did not make the PPG completely powerless. While sudden institutional breakdowns are possible, it is far more likely that fundamental changes result from small gradual alterations (Mahoney & Thelen 2010, see below). The second important caveat relates to resources. While some of them are clearly important over time (for example money, decision-making capacity, etc.) it is also possible that a resource can lose its relevance and therefore a) the overall pool of resources is not fixed and b) some alterations might not affect the power balance at all.

\subsection{2.2.2 ‘Environmental’ pressures and party adaptation in the late 20th century}

Keeping these conceptualizations in mind, the factors that according to Katz and Mair (2002; 2009) caused intra-party power changes in Western European parties in the late 20th century can now be examined. Most of them originated in influential post-1950’s studies that detect general trends in party environments and tried to deduce them into ideal-typical organizational models. These models, like

Katz and Mair’s synthesis, can be conceived through Robert Merton’s (1968, 39–41) idea of middle range theory, a proposition that is more than a working hypothesis, but less than logical derivative of comprehensive general theory. It is a theoretical generalization of empirical phenomenon, which is then contrasted against new empirical data to corroborate or disconfirm it. Now, while Katz and Mair (1995, 19; 2002, 114, 129–130) have sometimes disclaimed that their models only represents the ‘menu’ of organizational solutions that are most effective in specific conditions Lucardie and Rihoux (2008, 5) argue that their assessment – as well as ‘most authors from Duverger’ – propose at least implicitly that ‘each period can be characterized by the predominance of this or that type’. Without this postulate, these models will lose their theoretical value, as they cannot be disconfirmed. Therefore, while acknowledging their disclaimers, these characterizations are treated as general propositions.

Interestingly, the roots of ‘dominant model’ thinking can be traced back to Maurice Duverger. To support his idea of growing EPO-dominance Duverger (1967[1951], xxvii–xxxvii, 23–26, 427) pointed out that external creation had become the norm in the 20th century (i.e. parties were predominantly created outside of parliaments) and even old parliamentary-born parties had begun to build large party structures. Duverger believed that a ‘contagion from the left’ was taking place because mass membership organization seemed mandatory for producing competitive edge in electoral arena. Duverger solemnly declared that ‘we live in an age of mass production’ and therefore only ‘disciplined parties of today’ ‘alone suit the structure of contemporary parties’. Existence of loosely organized cadre parties in North America did not fit Duverger’s scheme and he wondered how ‘the most modern material techniques coexist there alongside an out-of-date political technique’. Duverger expected them to follow the mass party format soon as it had proved to be the most effective electoral machine.

15 years later Leon Epstein (1967, 127–129, 257–260) showed that ‘contagion from the left’ did not happen. Mass party model had not spread to countries where it did not already exist and where they existed rightist parties had not adapted to this organizational format. What is more, it begun to look like that mass parties

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49 For example Duverger (1967[1951], xiv) wanted to develop ‘working models’ to which empirical reality could be contrasted with the intention of ‘verifying them or, more probably, at destroying them’.

50 The most likely case design also expects that theorized connections are unconditional (Gerring 2007, 237)

51 Panebianco (1988, 262) has called Duverger’s work ‘as a “hymn” to mass party’s political virtues’.
were on decline, both in size and ‘their working-class socialist character’ and instead, as Epstein noted, ‘middle class style’ was becoming more popular. Thus, Epstein argued for ‘contagion from the right’: an organizational restructuring where ‘business oriented middle class parties’ emerge as ‘pioneers of the new style of campaigning via the mass media’. While ‘American parties were front-runners in this development the mass media oriented style was being quickly emulated in large European countries – to the extent observers were talking about the ‘Americanization’ of European party politics. According to Epstein mass parties’ dominance was confined to a very specific social structure (i.e. to the emergence of class conscious mass of workers) and when it ceased to exist (due to gentrification and individualization) other techniques of gathering the mass vote (mass media) became dominant.

Epstein’s theory of technologically and socially induced party organizational change is strongly echoed in all newer developmental theories. Its logic leaned heavily on ‘environmental’ factors: to remain competitive in media-heavy middle class conditions parties needed to start investing on mass media tools. This meant that traditional communicative linkages (party newspapers and gatherings) and even the linkage itself begun to lose significance, downplaying mass membership’s that had created conditions for ‘external oligarchy’ and legitimized it.

Another influential theory from this era broadened this perspective by highlighting its political side. Already in mid-1950’s Otto Kirchheimer (1954, 313) had noticed that strong dividing lines were losing importance in post-war German politics: mainstream parties were converging, public activism was moving towards more personal concerns and extreme parties were on the decline. On this foundation emerged Kirchheimer’s (1966, 184–192) more general catch-all party theory, which claimed that in advanced Western democracies ‘all-embracing concerns’ (deep ideologies) that could deter ‘nationwide clientele’ (the electorate at large) were slowly substituted to less dramatic political goals, which were offered to both white- and blue-collar electorates with ‘heavy concentration on issues which are scarcely liable to meet resistance in the community’. An important part of the theory was also the idea that as workers became richer (due post-war industrialization) their difference to the middle class waned and removed a significant motivation for political class struggle that had informed class-mass politics.

Perhaps even more important for intra-party power changes were changes that took place in upper political echelons. According to Safran (2009, 545) catch-all theory was heavily linked to Kirchheimer’s second major theme, ‘waning of
opposition’, the emergence of ‘large coalitions’ and ‘power-sharing schemes or rotations – arrangements that are marked by a decline of effective opposition’. Kirchheimer (1966, 189–192, 197) suggested that governmental ‘push’ lead parties to adopt more cautious lines as harsh criticism might jeopardize future participation in coalition governments. In other words: instead of cherishing traditional differences between opposition and government most parties too now sought after governing position by deliberately reducing the distance to other parties. ‘Governmentalization’ of politics (term coined by Müller 1994) is a major theme in Katz and Mair’s (2002, 124) scheme. When most parties can be considered as governing parties and governmental position becomes their raison d’être parties at large orient themselves towards this objective.

Kirchheimer (1966, 190–191) distinguished five general aspects in the ‘catch-all’ tendency: 1) increasing the strength of party leaderships whose actions were now being judged by the whole electorate instead of just party activists while 2) downgrading the importance of activists who might become a liability to party’s imago-building. Parties also 3) reached towards several interest groups to maximise their financial resources and politically they aimed for 4) diminution of ‘ideological baggage’ and 5) a shift away from their traditional classe gardée. Although catch-all theory is not a party organization theory per se, it encases an idea of ‘organizational style that is elite driven’ (Williams 2009, 539). Kirchheimer understood leadership change through professionalization; in a catch-all party leaders are co-opted on the basis of their technical and managerial skills, not ideological or class-based reasons (Krouwel 2003, 28). As the reality of politics begun to lean towards reaction rather that proactive ‘programming’, a leader’s capacity to mobilize voters behind any conceivable issue became crucial. Their personal capabilities were now raised to the front and leader selection became parties’ most important function. (Kirchheimer 1966, 198–199.) However, as Bardi et al. (2014a, 152) have pointed out, as parties typically maintained their large memberships, this change was more about the quality of organizing than actual size of the organization.

Nonetheless, the catch-all theory presumed significant power transmission from ‘party men’ to the public ‘face’. Especially in socialist mass parties such a transition would have been substantial. Katz and Mair (2002, 119–122) also highlight that change became possible due to gradual erosion of their ‘excluded’ subculture’. As

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52 According to Krouwel (2003, 24) catch-all thesis was only a summary of larger and more comprehensive theory of party system transformation. Kirchheimer’s ‘grand vision’ also included ‘state-party cartel’, professionalization of party politics and personalisation of party/voter-link – all well-known themes in contemporary party theories (see below).
socialist MPs gained governing experience, it empowered them against ‘external oligarchy’ and quite often EPO leaders too were affected by ‘realities of governing’. But as public office holders continued to depend on the central office for its resources, its role became pivotal: if it continued to act as ground organizations delegate the EPO maintained its strength. If central office leaders ‘governmentalized’ too public ‘face’ strengthened. Although Kirchheimer was cautious against total convergence, he (1966, 184–191) argued that pressures towards ‘catch-allism’ were strongly conditioned by ‘spreading secular and mass consumer-goods orientation’ that enhanced competitive behaviour between parties and emulative behaviour in organizational domain. One distinguishing feature of this era’s theories was a heavy reliance on market rhetoric that had become popular along with economic theories of democracy (Downs 1957).

The next major theory focused on professionalization. In heart of Angelo Panebianco’s electoral-professional party, his ideal model that gathered ‘some general trends’ of the time (early 1980’s) was the ascendancy of technical professionals who surpassed traditional party bureaucrats in central party offices. It is important to note that Panebianco was not just talking about replacement of office clerks but also about ‘representative bureaucrats’, elected party officials who during the mass party era provided crucial communication links between leadership and activists by operating as ‘middlemen’ in intra-party bodies. As the ‘gravitational center’ of politics shifted from class memberships to electorate at large professionals’ services – which they executed with weaker ideological attachment, ‘depolicizing’ the organization – became more important than ‘party men’s’ links to activists. (Panebianco 1988, 224–226, 231–232, 264–265.) Thus, Panebianco provided more explicit explanation of why and how activists were being pushed aside from central party work.

Panebianco presented the main characteristics of his model by contrasting it against the ‘mass bureaucratic party’ that 1) emphasised bureaucracy (including representative bureaucrats) and 2) membership (‘electorate of belonging’) from where it also 3) predominantly gathered its financial means. It also 4) gave pre-eminence to EPO leaders and 5) stressed ideology and ‘believers’. Contrarily, electoral-professional party 1) emphasised professionals, 2) voters and elections (‘opinion electorate’) and 3) gave pre-eminence to public, personalized leadership. Electoral-professional party was 4) financed by interest groups and public subsidies and 5) stressed issues and leadership. Panebianco explained the emergence of electoral professional party with familiar environmental factors. Firstly, he highlighted too that erosion of social stratification systems diluted ‘the peculiarities
and cultural attitudes of each group’ and as electorates became ‘socially and culturally heterogeneous’ parties needed to seek new clientele from open waters. Secondly, Panebianco also highlighted the rise of mass communication complex that brought personalized, candidate-centred and issue-oriented politics. Overall, he concluded, ‘public representatives appointed through election are correspondingly gaining in importance’. (Panebianco 1988, 264–267.) Panebianco’s theory has a clear functionalist undertone: technical experts who provide more autonomy for national leadership are stronger because their input is ‘needed’ to win elections. ‘Representative bureaucrats’ are no longer ‘needed’ because their link to activists is not as valuable anymore.

Finally, Katz and Mair’s cartel party theory that emerged in the mid-1990’s suggested that the gradual weakening of central organizations set parties back into 19th century conditions when only one operationally relevant intra-party power centre existed. Due to the decreasing of member/voter-ratio the EPO leaders lost their legitimacy in national questions and they now represent only a small ‘encapsulated political community’. Central offices traditional source of power, its location at the centre of the organization lost most of its importance as media revolution enabled that public officials can communicate directly with voters and party members. Moreover, as central offices too begun to direct their efforts to the ‘mobilization of support in the electorate at large’ they begun to lean more towards the leaderships that the ground organization (POG). At the same time MPs manned parties’ central governing organs. (Katz & Mair 1993/1998, 615–616; Katz & Mair 1995; Mair 1994, 12–13.)

Thus, intra-party ‘conflicts seem to have been settled’ and we witness ‘the ascendency of the party in public office, which assumes a more or less undisputed position of privilege within the party organization’. As the public ‘face’ controls the most important resources it can focus on governing – most parties are now ‘governing parties’. Meanwhile, the party apparatus has lost its independent political status and as ‘externally oriented’ professionals operate party offices now the probability for intra-party conflict has diminished. Central office works now as

53 Wolinetz (2002, 147) has remarked that it is interesting how Panebianco seems to simultaneously emphasise the toughness of change that results from institutionalized practices and easy change. Panebianco (1988, 265) did, however, note that the level of adaptation depends on how institutionalized the party is when pressures hit it. This point will be dealt thoroughly below.  

54 To be a ‘governing party’ does not mean that a party is in government. It refers to parties that have ‘a reasonable expectation that they might be included in a national governing coalition or in a significant share… of subnational governments within the reasonable foreseeable future’. (Katz & Mair 2009, 757.)
public ‘face’s’ electoral agency in campaigns that are almost exclusively capital intensive, which also means that party in the ground has become more or less obsolete and it is maintained mainly for historical reasons. (Katz & Mair 1995, 19–20; 2002, 122–126; 2009, 755–756.) However, as politics has professionalized, the risk of losing elections has increased and therefore politicians have become more dependent on voters (Katz & Mair 1995, 16; 2009, 757–758; also Panebianco 1988, 267).

Aside from reiterating traditional ‘environmental’ push factors – social change, ‘governmentalization’ and mediatisation of politics – Katz and Mair lifted up in their work two more novel changes that affected intra-party dynamics.55 Firstly, they (1995, 15–21) pointed out that as gentrifying of Western societies decreased parties’ membership activity and decreased their incomes, parties saved themselves by erecting state subsidy systems which by mid-1990’s had become the most important sources of party revenue. The importance of this change was paramount as it ended party leaders’ dependence from party members. Because subventions were usually made dependent on electoral performance, established parties sheltered themselves from new competitors (thus the term cartel). Transformation to vote-dependent income model also of course strengthened the general electoralist dynamic within party organizations.

The second factor that put pressures on intra-party dynamics in the end of the millennium was the internationalization of politics and the economy, which accelerated in the 1990’s after the cold war ended and significant international organizations such as the European Union and World Trade Organization were created (Katz & Mair 2009, 754). The main result of this change was, as Mair (2009, 14) argued, that ‘the range of principals which oblige governments to behave in particular way and who define the terms of reference of responsibility has expanded enormously’. In other words, in a policy interdependent world the possibility of responsible party government is undermined as national political leaders become bound by external constraints (Rose 2014). For parties internal dynamics this means that 1) because political input stems from many sources their abilities to control political agenda becomes limited and 2) the distance and complexity of decision-making makes monitoring hard (Mair 1997, 131–132; see also Raunio 2002; Poguntke et al 2007; Mair 2009; Bardi et al. 2014b).

55 While it is true that Kirchheimer (1957) and Lijphart (1968) wrote about states’ and parties’ cartels decades ago (Krouwel 2006; Katz & Mair 2009, 755), neither of them highlighted the emergence of state subsidies, which can easily be considered as one of the most fundamental changes in party ‘environments’.
Drawing from these insights, these main developments can be now compressed down to a five major forces that have supposedly affected intra-party power balances. Combining them to the analytical framework that has been developed throughout this chapter produces the functional adaptation model that summarizes most important expected resource shifts that have been connected to Western parties’ internal power changes in the turn of the millennium.

First, as the Western lifestyle individualized due to modernization (i.e. workers and middle classes became wealthier and more educated) and social classes eroded, political mass participation gradually lost its flavour. The development that was first conceived as a decline of parties was especially problematic for the party ‘faces’ whose power initially grew out from parties’ mass character, the POG and the central party bureaucracy. The main thing that they lost in this transition was legitimacy: as the portion of the electorate that party organizations could claim to represent got smaller and smaller, so did party activists and especially their delegates (the PCO) claim to intra-party power, which in national decision-making rests on informal acceptance. PPO’s, the only lawfully legitimate party ‘face’s’ autonomy increased in relative terms as it could now more easily lean on the whole electorate – to which the linkage is, by definition, hazier. Party leadership’s orientation, too, started to turn towards this direction.

A second and more concrete tendency that also stemmed from party members detachment was the gradual replacement of voluntary party incomes with state subsidies. Its most obvious consequence, which again hit both extraparlamentary ‘faces’ was the leaders’ and MPs’ reduced dependence on the party members. Transition to state-based funding made ordinary members (in the POG) financially irrelevant and keeping in mind that asset coordination was central party’s (PCO) original source of power, it reduced its leverage too. While the PCO might still allocate funds, it cannot take credit for amassing them. The other, less obvious but equally important result of the generalization of public subsidies was the emergence of vote-seeking organizational logic, which stems from subsidies’ electorally based nature. As all operational ‘faces’ are now more or less dependent on subsidies, parties modus operandi should change: they turn from political organizations into electoral agencies.

Thirdly, the waning of class society also facilitated more ‘governmentalized’ working procedures in the upper rungs of national politics. Transformation from deeply contentious logics to widely accommodating practices produced several consequences that should weaken activist bodies. First, and still relating to party office resources, strong orientation towards governing gives PPO’s objectives
‘natural galore’, which easily leads to the relegation of the EPO organs (local and national) to mere supporters because ability to govern requires strongly vote-seeking electoral strategies. Second, the evolution of national ‘high politics’ from contentious and divided practices to a game of solving national problems among party elites shuts out sectional politics, which activists could try to play. When relevant decision-making moves up to the cabinets, possibilities for intra-party interference decrease. The PCO’s expert position, one of its most crucial sources of power in the mass party era, becomes less important.

Fourthly, the mediatization and personalization of politics too increased PPO’s leverage in many ways. First, it eroded the traditional communicative ‘corridor’ between party leaders and members that made mid-elites important in mass bureaucratic parties. When party leaders could start communicating with members and voters directly, ‘party men’s’ organizational indispensability waned and again the central party lost a precious power resource, communications. Second, as mediatization made campaigning more capital intensive POG’s other material asset, manpower, lost much of its old importance. Now, not only are the party members relatively insignificant in financial terms, even their labour has become less important. A third and final effect that strengthens public officials through mediatization is that like ‘governmentalization’ it tends to grow the gap between party apex and activists. Personalization increases party leaders and public office holders’ prestige; they are now expected to deliver the party’s ‘message’. Because party leaders and other public officials operate under constant media ‘surveillance’, they need to respond lot faster than the traditional delegate-based ‘conclave’ IPD allowed, and the monitoring of their conduct becomes lot harder than it used to be in more closed party circles.

The fifth and final ‘environmental’ tendency that has allegedly strengthened party leaders and parties publicly elected officials against ordinary ‘party men’ is internationalization of politics and economy that has increased politics’ scope and complexity, and transformed its general operational logics. At least three developments are important. First, a political agenda can no longer emerge exclusively from intra-party deliberations. More probably it stems from sources that reside far outside of parties, and even national boundaries. Thus, party activists’ possibilities to set goals have decreased and the traditional ideal of NEC-directed intra-party politics become outdated. Secondly, when parties face external challenges, amateur activists’ skill set is simply not specialized enough to provide him/her neither effective nor legitimate grounds for responding to them. Now, expert conviction is more often required and that too is also more likely to emerge
from outside of parties (bureaucracies and other expert institutions). And thirdly, as political negotiations now take place far away from party offices, it is harder for party activists to monitor leaders’ doings. *In general: party activists involvement has gotten lot harder as nationalized political steering has given way to complex and fast political processes whose ramifications tend to extend well beyond national boundaries.*

If the environmental adaptations model is taken into its logical conclusion, the combined force of these pressures should have swung the power pendulum from the EPOs to the public ‘faces’ (and party leaders) so clearly in all Western parties that significant differences between them (in this respect) cannot exist anymore.

### 2.3 Resistance: why and how parties resist changes?

This hypothesis sounds familiar, intuitive and convincing. It has been repeated so many times during the past two decades (most notably in Mair 1994; Katz & Mair 1995; 2002; Scarrow et al. 2000; Blyth & Katz 2005 and Poguntke & Webb 2005) that it has often come to be accepted as a given state of things (for example Allern & Pedersen 2007; Gauja 2013 and Pilet & Cross 2015). Yet, *aside from the empirical deficiencies dealt with in chapter one, only a few general theoretical remarks are enough to raise some doubts against it.* First, one of the most widely shared ‘common views’ in party organization literature is that ‘[L]ike all human groups parties are conservative: they do not easily change their structure, even if the general trend urges change upon them’ (Duverger 1967[1951], 135, also in Panebianco 1988; Harmel & Janda 1994; Müller 1997; Hopkin & Paolucci 1999 and Gunther & Diamond 2003). As Appleton and Ward (1997, 341) put it, it’s almost ‘axiomatic’ that party ‘organizations have an inbuilt resistance to change’. Given that organizational changes will alter internal resource distribution (i.e. existing power balance) this makes sense (Panebianco 1988, 241).

This problem is widely acknowledged in purposive action models of party change. While Wilson (1980, 542–545) highlighted the significance of reformers deliberative choices in organizational change, he also maintained that their will alone is never enough: in order to succeed leaders need to ‘overcome the internal resistance’, which is ‘often high’. The reformers task is to ‘recognize the advantage of changing’ and force it through ‘organizational inertia and the often determined resistance’.[56] In a similar vein Harmel and Janda (1994, 261–262) pointed out that

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56 More recent literature (Panebianco 1988, Harmel & Janda 1994, Kitschelt 1994) recognizes that initiative to change organization might also emerge ‘from below’ (new members, contending factions
‘decisions to change a party’s organization [...] face a wall of resistance common to large organizations. A successful effort to change a party usually involves both a good reason [...] and the building up a coalition of support’. Because of this inherent resistance potential parties’ responses to external pressures can be lot less ‘rational’ than the functional model expects. ‘Environmental’ model seems too deterministic (Deschouwer 1992, cited in Harmel & Janda 1994, 263).

Party scholars ‘obsession’ with general change has tended to exaggerate similarities and belittle differences (Wolinetz 2002, 138–139). Heidar and Saglie (2003, 219) summarize the problem perfectly: ‘[I]n the literature on political parties, organizational changes are often discussed in terms of predestined developments towards a particular party type – analytically presented as a ‘model’ – around which existing parties will eventually converge. The argument is that democratic polities offer a standardized setting, a common arena in which all parties compete for votes and power. [...] However, even though party convergence recurs in the literature, party heterogeneity prevails in the actual party world’. Aside from mere ‘organizational conservatism’ this results from the simple fact that ‘[P]olitical parties have not emerged or evolved in a continuous, unilinear manner...’, they have been erected and developed in under many different circumstances, for many different purposes (Gunther and Diamond 2003, 193). Parties can adopt dissimilar organizational frameworks and continue to develop differently.

This third and final section develops these ideas further in order to provide an alternative, institutionally motivated hypothesis. The argument is grounded in a generational development thesis, which stipulates that instead of making comprehensive adaptations to periodical trends, parties’ choices in their formative period sets them on a specific organizational trajectory, which tends to persist over time (Van Biezen 2005, 151–152). This dynamic and its consequences are explained in two phases. The first subsection charts the general dynamics of party formation and explains how initial organizational choices can bear strong ramifications for future developments. In short, the explanation highlights formative coalitions’ potential to a) set a resource allocation that suits its interests and to b) use this unequal power distribution to consolidate its power over other party ‘faces’. When a certain power distribution has been institutionalized it becomes hard to change. The second subsection embeds inter-party differences into this framework. It argues that because parties’ birth conditions differ, it is likely that fundamentally different intra-party power balances exist too.
Furthermore, section acknowledges that these differences can severely affect parties adaptation potential as dissimilar established power structures favour different party ‘faces’. In parties where power distribution has traditionally leaned over public ‘face’ adaptation to current pressures that favour it should be easier than in parties where power has been distributed more evenly. Three ideal typical party models that should differ in these terms are described. The chapter concludes by drawing related hypotheses.

2.3.1 The formation and persistence of the initial organizational choices

The idea that parties’ initial organizational choices bear fundamental consequences for later organizational developments is strongly supported in classic party organizational literature. Already in the first pages of his seminal volume Duverger (1967[1951], xxiii) proclaimed that ‘[J]ust as men bear all their lives the mark of their childhood, so parties are profoundly influenced by their origins’. Three decades later Duverger’s clearest ‘spiritual’ disciple Panebianco (1988, 50) gave more explicit characterization: a ‘party’s organizational characteristics depend more upon its history, i.e. how the organization originated and how it consolidated, than upon any other factor. The characteristics of a party’s origin are in fact capable of exerting a weight on its organizational structure even decades later. Every organization bears the mark of its formation, of the crucial political-administrative decisions made by its founders, the decisions which ‘molded’ the organization’. In order to defend the institutional hypothesis two components need to be addressed: 1) the initial choice and especially 2) the mechanism that keeps ‘reproducing’ it.57

What sets parties into a specific organizational trajectory? Two fairly similar views exist in the literature. According to Herbert Kitschelt (1989, 68–73; 1994, 209–212) initial choices are made in party’s activist community and they reflect preferences of the activist group that has the majority. Typically this is the ‘ideologue’ group that take party’s idea of the future world in most literal terms and find some satisfaction from the organization itself (other main activist groups are ‘pragmatists’ and ‘lobbyists’ who take more instrumental leaning over party affairs) because they tend to be overrepresented during ‘high cleavage mobilization’, which is a typical ‘environmental’ condition during a formation of a new party. Kitschelt

57 Organizational reproduction can be understood through Arthur Stinchcombe’s (1968) idea of historical causation, which refers to the re-emergence of effect (certain organizational/institutional outcome) even when its cause (formation of that institution) took place long time ago.
maintains too that after a party’s basic organizational format has been chosen it
tends to consolidate into ‘independent variable’, i.e. something that is rather
constant and that can affect the party’s strategic flexibility. Kitschelt underlines that
initial choices can evolve into ‘organizational pathologies’: structures that do not
suit well future ‘environments’ but are hard to correct afterwards.

Panebianco (1988, 6–9, 16–20, 53–54) too highlights the primacy of ideology
during a party’s founding moments. As bases for selective incentives (i.e. the
organization itself and its auxiliary networks) do not yet exist and activist
participation leans on ‘social movement’ type of motivation, ideology that forms
the basis for collective incentives acts as the main source of motivation for
majority of activists (‘believers’). However, instead of appointing initial choices to
activists (like in a democratic process) Panebianco emphasises leader’s broad
autonomy to set the ideological line, party’s ‘hunting ground’ and, most
importantly, initial organizational choices. While here ideology is more like a
product that is ‘sold’ to the masses, the organization still needs to be ‘in line’ with
it.58 To sum it up: core activists’ and leaders’ ideologically bound ideals determine initial
organizational choices.

While it sounds fairly intuitive that organization takes the form that the
powerful favours, it can seem less certain why this arrangement should persist over
time. In order to make the institutional hypothesis plausible good reasons need to
be given. Even though the moment of birth’s crucial importance and
‘organizational conservatism’ seem to be widely supported, the exact mechanism
that ‘reproduces’ original choices has not been often addressed, it seems. Two
explanations can be deduced from party literature. As they have been developed
somewhat unintentionally (i.e. the author was not probably considering this exact
question) and they relate to fairly different problems, they are assessed from
external viewpoint, through theories of new institutionalism, which have sought to
understand and explain the emergence, persistence and change of rather persistent
‘rules of the game’.59 Conceiving parties as institutional arrangements that encase

58 This is Panebianco’s general idea of party formation. Further in his analysis Panebianco (1988, 50–
53) elaborates factors that affect the form of genetic model. These include a) whether party forms by
penetrating from the center or towards it, b) whether major external donor exist or not and c)
whether exceptional charisma plays a role or not.

59 What exactly ‘rules of the game’ refers varies according to various schools of new institutionalism.
Rational choice institutionalism (RCI) tends to focus solely on formal arrangements (constitutions,
laws, etc.) while sociological school (SI) extends to shared beliefs and norm systems (organizational
cultures). Historical institutionalism (HI) situates itself in between, incorporating viewpoints from
both. (Hall & Taylor 1996.) Descriptions below are deliberately crude. They merely aim to
certain resource allocations and guidelines for human conduct provides a useful way to view organizational stability and change.

The first explanation for party organizations persistence stems from Panebianco (1988, 21–45, 53–54, 245–246). After the organization is formed it begins to institutionalize; its ‘tool’ character erodes and it becomes an end in itself, and its preservation becomes leadership’s number one priority. Integral to this qualitative development is the consolidation of incentive structures that reach beyond ideology – to more selective motifs. Inspired by the problems of unidirectional power theories Panebianco advanced a more nuanced theory of organizational order, which build on Peter Blau’s (1964) exchange theory of power. Panebianco conceptualized organizational order (i.e. power structures) as a contract within party leadership (horizontally) and between the leadership and activists (vertically). Here, the existing power balance should persist as long as leadership (i.e. the ‘dominant coalition’) is able to satisfy the ‘bargain’ (i.e. consolidated incentive systems) with other participants. Organizational stability, which is under constant internal (intra-leadership) and external (environmental) pressure, is leaderships’ main objective. As it controls most organizationally fundamental resources, it has good chances to survive. Only coexistence of a major external shock and internal turmoil is able to shake organizational order.

Panebianco’s theory can be evaluated through a lens of rational choice institutionalism (RCI), which shares a similar, calculus-based logic. In general, RCI has conceived institutions as functional, mutually beneficial contracts that are negotiated between utility-maximising free agents in order to solve collective action problems (Hall & Taylor 1996, 942–946). Put crudely, this equilibrium oriented variant of the theory views institutions as ‘simply the ways in which the players differentiate between different schools of thought in order to determine the most suitable framework for party analysis.

60 In classic party theories party leadership’s domination was conceived unconditional. Panebianco considered this highly problematic and unrealistic.

61 This is a deliberately crude reading of Panebianco, only intended for sketching out his basic understanding of the mechanism that can stabilize party organizations. Panebianco (1988, 60–63, 243–245) did not argue that change never happens or that organizational life is static. He clearly acknowledged that minuscule changes (that do not alter the power structure) happen all the time and that ‘dominant coalition’ faces continuing pressures that it need to accommodate. He also acknowledged that the level of institutionalization (and, thus, potential for stability) differs between party types. Nonetheless, the logic of stability (and, thus, persistence) lays on the contract between various party ‘faces’, which need to be ‘satisfied’ to sustain the organizational order.

62 This logic has been prominent especially in American party theories (see Schlesinger 1984, Strom 1990 and Koelble 1996.)
want to play’ (Shepsle 2006, 2). Here, the chosen institutional arrangements persist because the contract that solves the collective action problem continues to please the players. If the situation changes, the ‘bargain’ needs to be re-negotiated. If someone is ultimately displeased, the ‘contract’ expires. Pure RCI is based on voluntarism: institutions exist because all participants benefit from them. The problem is that this is not the case: most political institutions are plagued by power asymmetries. (Bates 1988, Hall & Taylor 1996, 952–953.) As Moe (2005, 218) has reminded, even the most justified decision-making institution (i.e. majority democracy) leaves behind ‘losers’ who have to submit under majority’s wishes without really agreeing to any ‘bargains’.

Panebianco’s contract-based formulation can be criticized from the same angle. Although leaders are always constrained to some extent by an ideological ‘big line’ that lays the foundation for majority’s (‘believers’) incentives and leadership’s legitimacy, and they have to balance intra-leadership demands too, these ‘bargains’ are certainly not equal. Panebianco himself stated that although power is reciprocal in the sense that leadership’s power can never be absolute, it is based on ‘unbalanced negotiation’ that results in clear asymmetry. As leaders control most ‘zones of uncertainty’ (i.e. organizationally crucial resources), they have always upper hand in power games (Panebianco 1988, 22–25.) Therefore, the persistence of initial intra-party power distribution is essentially based on something else than a voluntary ‘inter-face’ bargain.

The second possible explanation for organizational persistence stems from Kitschelt’s work. Kitschelt (1994, 212) argues that after the initial format has been set, its stability is maintained through homogenizing forces that result from selective recruiting and ‘socialization of activists under the auspices of existing organizational rules’, which then limits the search for alternative organizational frames.65

63 According to Shepsle (2006, 1–3) there are two variants of RCI, the equilibrium-based and an earlier variant that considered institutions as exogenous constructs that merely provide the game form for the players.

64 Interestingly enough, Panebianco (1988, 54) too wrote about leaderships need to ‘raise’ or socialize future elites.

65 Again, this reading focused only on those factors that according to Kitschelt can produce continuity. Kitschelt (1994, 216–217) was not arguing that organizational frameworks never change. In parties that have lower barriers to new entrants and looser bureaucratic structures change ‘from below’ (i.e. through a development of alternative ‘dominant coalition’) or via major electoral defeat is more probable.
This explanation contours views that have been presented under the rubric of sociological institutionalism (SI). Major difference to RCI is that here participants do not ‘play freely’ with prefixed preferences; their preferences are in part produced within the organization. SI builds on organizational learning processes that ‘bound’ actor’s rationality and create boundaries for organizational ‘imagination’. While taking part in organizational activities participants internalize certain perceptions, routines and procedures that are supported within the organization. Eventually these conceptions can become so internalized that they are ‘taken for granted’ and the reproduction can work without much formal reinforcement as procedures are conceived legitimate. (DiMaggio & Powell 1991, 8–15, Zucker 1991, 83–86, Jepperson 1991, 145–146, 158, Simon 1991, 125.)

Now, while it seems perfectly reasonable to expect that individuals learn ‘the customs of the house’ when they enter a new organization and the actual level of human rationality does tend to lean towards the ‘bounded’ version (Jones 1999), it is a long shot to view party actors as complete ‘cultural dopes’ ready to follow almost any given framework (see Garfinkel 1984). Such view is very far from traditional conceptions that view parties as ‘miniature political systems’ (originally Eldersveld 1964) where ‘politics is endlessly played out, with different coalitions of forces and actors striving for dominance’ (Katz & Mair 1992, 6). Indeed, from the viewpoint of political science (SI has been primarily developed in organizational studies that focus on business organizations) that highlights notions like disagreement, contention and struggle SI’s view of organizational life is too ‘bloodless’; it easily reduces into ‘action without agents’ (Hall & Taylor 1996, 954). Although social learning processes are undoubtedly a part of party organizations reality too, it seems unrealistic that existing distribution of power – which is likely to be very unequal – is sustained only through them.

Although both RCI and SI can reflect some features of organizational life, neither of them provides convincing explanation why existing organizational choices tend to resist changes and persist over time. Paradoxically, their main limitation is the diminution of the role of power. In pure RCI power plays no part at all as free-willed individuals only bind mutually beneficial contracts. As Thelen (2004, 25) has pointed out, this is an unrealistically ‘malevolent’ picture of political institutions, which often emerges through bitter rivalry. Indeed, what RCI fails to note is that ‘much of politics is based on authority rather than exchange’; it is almost by definition a game of contending groups that aim to lay all-encompassing authority structures over others (Pierson 2004, 34). Contrarily, by emphasising deeply internalized beliefs SI promotes blind submission. While the former
conception is too ‘thin’ as it appoints all outcomes to individual’s preferences, the latter is too ‘thick’ as it leaves no room for agency (Ikenberry 1994, 6). Interestingly, however, the end result is more or less the same: organizational life that repeats itself in static and voluntary manner. Both views can explain persistence within confines of their internal logics but neither is able to account for power and conflict (Thelen 1999, 387) – the lifeblood of politics, which plausible theory of organizational persistence should be able to account.

Power asymmetries’ connection to political institutions is one of the defining features of the third school of institutional theory, historical institutionalism (HI) (Hall & Taylor 1996, 940–941, Mahoney 2000, 521–522). Instead of ‘contracts’ or ‘cultures’ HI views institutions as results of ‘concrete historical processes’ and struggles, which produce asymmetric power relations that begin to reinforce themselves after the initial arrangement has been set (Thelen 1999, 382, 394; Pierson & Skocpol 2002, 700). However, although the asymmetry may be very powerful and actors can reinforce it actively, in order to avoid the perpetual ‘lock in’ that results from RCI and SI’s logics HI theorists have also argued that the inherent unevenness plants seeds for disagreement and makes institutional structures always subject to contestation (Mahoney & Thelen 2010, 8). By accommodating active agency, institutional limitations and power historical institutionalism provides a better framework for analyzing party change and stability than actor- or structure-centered approaches.

HI’s two central concepts are critical juncture and path dependency. Critical juncture is the defining moment when ‘basic organizational logic’ ‘gets decided’ (Ikenberry 1994, 16–20). In critical juncture one institutional choice is selected over other options. While the selection might take place under high uncertainty – i.e. alternative’s pre-decision probabilities might not differ very much (consider a tight vote) (Mahoney 2000, 513) – after the choice is done path dependent dynamics begin to reinforce it. In path dependent processes past actions affect future choices by gradually increasing the probability of repeating previous choices. Every subsequent step into same direction increases the attractiveness of chosen path (and decreases alternatives vogue), cumulatively, and makes turning back harder or changing track (Pierson 2000; 252; Pierson & Skocpol 2002 699-700.)

This basic idea of path dependency relates to relatively automatic processes where past choices are repeated because a lot of resources have been put on to them (i.e. their sunk costs are high). These processes were first detected in the relatively free, voluntary and unambiguous world of business. What makes them even stronger in politics is the widespread exercise of authoritative power that lays
binding solutions over all actors. (Pierson 2000, 252–261.) Moreover, political institutions are ‘distributional instruments’ that empower some actors over others. Instead of relying on ‘automatic’ reinforcement, actors can take active role in strengthening their position. (Mahoney & Thelen 2010, 7–9.) Political institutions tend to persist far longer than their initial ‘cause’ (i.e. the originating purpose) exactly because privileged actors’ do not only live by their powers, they actively seek to reinforce them. In the first place informal organizational practices can be formally codified. (Ikenberry 1994, 8–9, 20.) Later, ‘winner’s’ can use this privileged position to increase their powers by structuring other resources and by setting barriers against external threats (Mahoney 2000, 521, Pierson 2004, 36). Panebianco (1988, 36) whose account can also be read through this perspective (without emphasising ‘contracts’) noted that in time intra-party power resources tend to accumulate. If we consider intra-party life as endless struggle between party ‘faces’ (Katz & Mair 1992) it is quite easy to picture a situation where party ‘face’ that sets the original decision-making system tries to increase its operational capacity by using this same system to fix other important party resources too.

Pierson (2000, 259) has noted that asymmetry can ‘hide’ itself over time, evolving from ‘relatively balanced conflict, in which one set of actors must openly impose its preferences on another set ("the first face of power"), into one in which power relations become so uneven that anticipated reactions ("the second face of power") and ideological manipulation ("the third face") make open political conflict unnecessary’. This reminds of Duverger’s 1st and 3rd phases where one party ‘face’ conquers all operationally relevant resources. In such situation contestation does not become highly unlikely only because the costs of opposition are so high (Hall 2010, 208–209), it becomes unthinkable because the asymmetry is considered legitimate. This situation reminds of SI’s vision of institutions where actor’s from all levels of a party take the current organizational reality ‘for granted’, making it a deeply cultural phenomenon.

However, it is highly unlikely that total domination could occur in open systems. As was already pointed out, every institutional choice leaves behind ‘losers’ who have motivation to pursue change. While ‘winners’ can build strong bulwarks, no institution is pristine – and certainly not self-standing; active reinforcement keeps institutional solidification ‘on the agenda’. Also, in order to be effective institutional rules need to be enforced. As all man-made rules are ambiguous to some extent, there’s always room for interpretation, which opens the door for non-conformity and contestation. Such ‘opening’ can happen when an institution’s ‘environmental’ context changes. Here, it becomes possible to
conceive institutional rules in ‘new light’ and offer new interpretations for them. (Mahoney 2000, 523; Thelen 2004, 31; Mahoney & Thelen 2010, 7–14).

Translated to the terminology of the hypothesis that has been developed in this section, this argument can be summarized as follows. 1) Party’s founding activists/leaders set the initial organizational framework (i.e. intra-party power distribution between party ‘faces’) according to their ideologically bound preferences. 2) Then, following the path dependent logic, the initial condition begins to strengthen because power holders want to consolidate their power positions. They are empowered to do so by the initial unevenness in resource distribution. If for example the central EPO office emerged as strongest in initial struggle because it controlled the ‘means of production’ (financial and labour resources and communications), it could use these resources as a leverage to formally codify its position in intra-party decision-making procedures too, and so on. 3) Because of perpetual strengthening the distribution becomes clearer over time, and more resistant. It might become so strongly consolidated that it begins to look impenetrable. To borrow again from Panebianco (1988, 55–63), strongly institutionalized party organizations can secure themselves from a) internal challenges by erecting rigidly centralized channels of influence and b) from external pressures by developing self-reliant resource pools. However, as Panebianco also notes, in reality no party can completely isolate itself, internally nor externally. 4) Thus, as the party continues to compete in ‘environment’ that is characterized by interdependence of layered and potentially changing forces and tendencies, the feasibility of certain organizational choices might become questionable and contested. 5) However, unlike the ‘environmental’-functional model that assumes that all organizational changes just ‘go through because they have to’ institutional model acknowledges that existing organizational arrangements (that pertain to specific power distributions) might differ from what is conceived ‘electorally rational’ and therefore instead of witnessing fluid transformation we might witness strong resistance and inability to adapt.

2.3.2 Inter-party differences and their consequences

Thus far, this section has progressed in fairly general terms, characterizing common factors and mechanics that can explain why party organizations might not adapt to whatever pressures their ‘environment’ lays upon them. This final subsection makes the model testable by specifying those intra-party conditions that affect parties’ probability to resist current ‘environmental’ pressures. After it is
shown how party’s existing internal balance of power may either resist or contour external pressures, three ideal typical party models that differ in terms of resistance potential are described.

Kitschelt (1994, 207–208, 213) has argued convincingly that parties’ existing decision-making structures may enhance or hinder parties’ strategic flexibility as they affect leadership autonomy. According to Kitschelt ‘... highly cumbersome patterns of decision making’ can ‘impede the choice of new and electorally beneficial strategic chances’. The factors that limit autonomy include potentially competing offices and units in intra-party arena and ‘rules requiring leaders to submit their political pronouncements to internal scrutiny and formal votes by representatives of the rank and file’. In this study’s framework this means that parties where power is diffused to many ‘faces’ are more likely to resist changes than parties where power is concentrated into a single ‘face’. However, if the nature of external pressure is taken into consideration, the situation becomes more complex. While diffusion always leads to friction as the number of ‘empowered interests’ is higher, one dimensionality does not automatically lead to adaptation. Because the current ‘environmental’ pressure favours the public ‘face’, a party where central party is dominant should resist it, as it would weaken its own position. Conversely, if the existing balance of power favours public ‘face’ adaptation to current pressures should of course be easy.

The next step is to determine theoretically relevant baselines for expected inter-party differences. While it is clear that every party’s internal power structure is unique to some extent as the conditions of their formation and development differ, grounds for more systematic expectations exist too. At least since Duverger’s (1967[1951]) and Neumann’s (1956) seminal contributions Western parties have been classified and typified according to various criteria (ideology, origin, organization, etc.). Although these classes are not universally agreed on, enough similarities exist in main ideas and terminology that they can be used to structure analyses (Krouwel 2006; Lucardie & Rihoux 2008). The challenge is, then, to find classification criteria that reflect relevant party dimensions and ideal party types that differ according to these criteria.

The first relevant criterion that is considered below is party’s origin, which is thought to encase something fundamental, something that extends beyond parties’

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66 A rather similar idea lays in Panebianco’s (1988, 56–59) concept of ‘systemness’, which refers to the rigidness, clarity and interdependence of the network of intra-party units. According to Panebianco ‘a highly institutionalized [i.e. systemized] party drastically limits its internal actors’ margins of manoeuvrability’ and therefore their reaction potential is generally lower.
everyday practices. ‘Core identity’ is especially suitable in diachronic studies that track party ‘genus’s’ developments in changing environments. (Mair & Mudde 1998, 223–224.) The second important criterion is of course organization, which can be approached from many angles. One recent historical classification scheme based on organizational criteria differentiates parties between the ‘extent of organization’, distinguishing narrowly structured parties from large, complex and comprehensive bureaucracies (Gunther & Diamond 2003, 169). While this criterion is important as it clears out the amount of potentially competing organizational levels, it alone is an insufficient basis for comparable types because it says nothing about how organizational levels interact. As Ware (1987a, 9) has pointed out, history knows several large parties where intra-organizational interactions have been almost non-existent. Another organizationally based recent classification makes an important addition by highlighting ‘centralization of decision-making, whereby in some parties the leadership hierarchically controls and coordinates all activities while in other parties more horizontal, open and democratic structures dominate’ (Krouwel 2006, 266). A combination of these criteria (i.e. the extent of organizational layers that share intra-party power) is sufficiently close to the idea of intra-party power distribution.

In terms of party types these recent classificatory schemes have one thing in common. While they expose a great variety of party types that differ in terms of temporal occurrences, strategic styles, ideological leanings and functions, they suggest that only one historical party type has combined wide organization and dispersed decision-making style. In Gunther and Diamond’s (2003, 172–173) scheme (‘extent of the organization’) four out of five party ‘genus’ (elite, ethnically based, electoralist and movement parties) locate on the ‘thin’ side and only mass-based parties sit in the ‘thick’ end. Only mass-based party frameworks have been wide enough to provide theoretical possibilities for power dispersion. In similar vein in Krouwel’s (2006, 263) scheme (centralization of power) only in mass parties (others are elite/cadre, catch-all, cartel and business firm) 1) membership has had relevance (they are the ‘core’ of the party) and more importantly 2) party in public office has been subject to extra-parliamentary control. All other party types seem to have shared the idea of narrow organization, public ‘face’ domination and low or non-existent potential for EPO resistance. Thus, expected inter-party variation in probability for intra-party resistance against current pressures should be based on this fundamental distinction. It can be extended with a recently emerged party type that endorses a rather unique ideal power distribution; one that clearly extends
beyond this traditional distinction. In political process parties\(^67\) (or amateur-activist parties (Lucardie & Rihoux 2008) or ‘new politics parties (Poguntke 1987a; 1987b)) activists’ power is based on direct participation rather than delegation and representation (Scarrow 2015, 24). In these parties power should be even more diffused than in mass parties where intra-party delegates exercise EPO power.

The end result is a three-fold typology that differentiates party types according to their characteristic power distribution, which organizational reformers are likely to encounter. In a pyramid-like structure where the horizontal axis represents the wideness of power dispersion \textbf{elite-centred electoral party} situates to the tip for obvious reasons.\(^68\) **Representative membership party** is vertically located in the middle of the pyramid because it incorporates two potentially competing leadership groups: public officials (the only power-relevant group in elite-centred electoral party) and EPO leaders that ideally represent ordinary members against public officials. The \textbf{democratic process party} situates itself to the ground level, denoting activists direct possibilities to interfere with party affairs. Before explaining how these ideal party types’ reactions to current pressures are likely to differ their main characteristics need to be sketched out.

Beginning from the top of the pyramid, the quintessential model of elite-centred, thinly organized, electorally motivated and parliamentary leaning party type that this study focuses too is Maurice Duverger’s caucus/cadre party.\(^69\) Cadre parties were born in the wake of universal suffrage, between 1860 and 1920

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\(^{67}\) Although this type is defined below by using Poguntke’s (1987a, 1987b) and Kitschelt’s (1989) seminal contributions and Lucadie & Rihoux’s (2008) more recent efforts, Scarrow’s (2015) term is preferred because organizationally it strikes to the heart of the matter: that these parties are characterized especially by their emphasis on the intra-party process itself. Instead of limiting democracy to policies (as political process can denote) term democratic process party is used instead as it widens democratic processes to all intra-party decisions.

\(^{68}\) Here, leader-centric electoral parties refer to parties from cadre party tradition. Few newer party types exist that could be posited even above them because cadre parties still have to manage things within the public ‘face’. Following old fascist parties idea of ‘führer principle’ new extreme right parties have tended to favour very autocratic leadership style where power is concentrated in the hands of individual ‘founding entrepreneur’ who is virtually untouchable (Ignazi 1992; 1996; Mudde 2007; Johansson 2014). Due to the unavailability of empirical counterpart (a party that reflects this ideal type was formed in Finland only in 1995) it has not been included into this analysis. Similarly, ultra-light ‘business firm parties’ (Hopkin & Paolucci 1999) whose leadership’s should also be very autonomous have been omitted from this study, for the same reasons.

\(^{69}\) Although Duverger often connected concepts of caucus, cadre and weak articulation to old rightist parties, he also showed examples of leftist parties that had employed caucus-like ‘basic elements’, like the British Labour Party. In general, however, cadre party type corresponds to usually rightist (conservative or liberal), internally formed and weakly articulated parties that formed before or right after universal suffrage. (Duverger 1967[1951], 20–21, 45–47, 65–67).
In relation to the argument that has been developed here its most important feature is that they were created inside parliaments, by MPs, who started to bind together existing party units (local electoral organizations) and/or extend outwards to create new ones. Parliamentarian’s role in party formation was ‘immense’: ‘preponderance of the elected representatives is easily explained by the mechanism of the party’s development in which the greatest part was played by the members of parliament’, as Duverger wrote. Distinct style of formation lead to distinct organizational features. For Duverger parties were essentially a ‘community of communities’ and their differences stemmed from the form and nature of their ‘basic elements’ (party’s constituent unit) and the level of ‘structuredness’ and intensity of their interaction (general articulation). Cadre party’s ‘basic element’ was the caucus, a ‘limited’ and ‘semi-permanent’ club run by few notables. Their activities centred to election times after which they reverted back to ‘hibernation’. In terms of articulation cadre parties were weakly connected ‘incoherent agglomeration[s] of associations linked by vague and variable bonds’ that allowed large regional autonomy (decentralization) and left dominance in national matters into the hands of small, parliamentary-based elite that weak central organization could not counterbalance. Indeed, as MPs dominance cut through the whole organization (as they set up the EPOs too), they often dominated relevant party offices simultaneously. (Duverger 1967[1951], xxix—xxxv, 17–23, 40–47, 63–67, 182–185; rather similar characterizations appeared in two other classic studies, Neumann 1956, 404–405 and Sartori 1967/2005b, 16–21.)

Translated to this study’s terminology: the POG was composed of local elites and therefore hard to distinguish from the party in public office. Their connection was very tight and situated in the constituency level. The result was that party in central office was, if it existed, very weak. It was, at best, a ‘service organization’. (Katz & Mair 2002, 115.)

Duverger’s cadre party (and by extension Neumann’s (1956) party of individual representation) is not of course the only definition of elite-centred electoral party. As previous discussion showed, parties whose main characteristics include wide leadership autonomy and electoral focus have been defined throughout the latter part of 20th century. However, it is important to differentiate ideal types that characterized novel developments (like cadre party) from types that have tried to capture tendencies that faced them afterwards. For example Kirchheimer’s catch-all theory did not describe emergence of new parties, it described the transformation of existing parties (of mass integration) (Wolinetz 2002, 145) – like Panebianco’s (1988), Koole’s (1994), Katz and Mair’s (1995, 2002) and Carty’s (2004) efforts. These models build on general organizational evolution, which as such defies the whole idea of essential features that are set in party genesis (this constitutes a clear paradox in Panebianco’s effort, as Wolinetz (2002) has noted). While it can be argued – in spirit of extreme system-level adaptation – that fundamental adaptation can lead into a completely new party type, this study does not take this claim as given, but instead sets it as an testable hypothesis. Therefore, this review focuses only on models that describe novel types, which may build distinct features that can explain differences in resistance potential. However, as was already noted, even this limited view

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The activist majority that put up these organizations was *markedly vote-seeking and dominated by the public ‘face’*. It is therefore likely that they favoured organizational structures and practices that avoided empowering extra-parliamentary forces that could limit their operational autonomy. Originally, the role of the EPO in these parties was that of a service center: it provided technical means for electoral rallying but it did not partake in political decision-making and other important party affairs. Now, as Katz and Mair (2002, 120–121) have noted old elite/cadre parties too had to strengthen their membership organizations after suffrage extensions and while their leaders may have wanted to create merely a pool of opinionless ‘cheerleaders’ it was possible that EPOs strengthened to the extent that they could challenge public officials. However, while some resources shifted to the EPOs (campaign matters, etc.) it should also be remembered that the mythical ‘golden age’ of membership parties only lasted for two decades (roughly after WWII until mid-1960’s) after which mass party techniques were quickly deemed as relics. Also, while all parties publicly adhered to the mass ideal during ‘golden age’, member’s actual roles (whether they were conceived as stakeholders or just ‘fans’) differed clearly between party types. (Scarrow 2015, 36–37, 67.) Thus, despite of some material re-distribution it seems rather unlikely that ‘golden age’ could have completely altered cadre parties PPO-leaning ‘organizational heritage’ and therefore it is likely that they arrived to the cartel party era in a form that contoured its demands.

The original model for representative membership party also stems from Duverger’s work. It is the mass party whose historical occurrence situates between 1880 and 1950 (Krouwel 2006, 262). A mass party’s most important difference to a cadre party was the ‘location’ of its genesis: they were brought up by activists who largely operated outside of parliaments and the parliamentary group was created only afterwards when the party gained support in elections. Again, the distinct formation brought distinct organizational features. Mass party’s ‘basic element’, the branch, was a strict opposite of cadre party’s caucus. Branches were inclusive as their main function was to gather new members. Branches worked in permanent, frequent and intense fashion (i.e. not just during elections): organized meetings, discussions and speech events were held to increase cohesion. In order to work efficiently branches required strict internal coordination and they were also tightly distributed.

does not account for all novel party types because such parties have not existed in Finnish context, where the actual test ‘takes place’.

72 As Michels (1968[1911], 61–62) noted, a well-organized numerically superior mass is working classes only weapon against established elites.
tied together: they existed to integrate ‘with wider community’ where all units had ‘a definite place which determines their respective importance’. All organizational units and their interactions were formally codified. Most importantly, this strict articulation included a ‘state-like’ idea of separation of powers in the national party level: party congress and national council played the role of ‘the legislative’ while national executive committee acted as ‘an executive’. Parliamentary group was not considered as an independent intra-party decision-making unit and as activists were often sceptical towards MPs, they imposed monitoring mechanisms to keep them intact. (Duverger 1967[1951], xxxv, 17–23, 40–47, 63–67, 182–185, again, very similar characterizations appeared also in Neumann 1956, 404–405 and Sartori 1967/2005b, 16–21.)

Clearly, a very different kind of majority brought up these parties. Considering that it was largely composed of extra-parliamentary activists who were motivated to ‘take over’ the elite-led parliamentary sphere that had previously excluded their interests, it seems likely that they took all possible measures to reinforce the EPO as much as possible, in material and non-material terms. In these parties the ‘golden age’ probably strengthened the initial setting too. However, as it is probably obvious by now the mass party was also the main victim in the story that was just told. Most ‘environmental’ pressures – from erosion of mass participation to mediatisation and internationalization, etc. – have been a challenge especially for parties whose internal power systems have leaned on delegate-based formal representation. The question is, then, is there any reason to believe that mass party’s ‘organizational heritage’ could still have relevance – in terms of resistance, that is? If we approach party organization from a strictly material viewpoint, it seems that the EPOs have arguably lost much of their leverage as parties now gain their funds from the state, incorporate far fewer members (whose relevance as a workforce has decreased due to increasing capital intensiveness of electoral competition) and political communication takes place through channels that are out of intra-party organs.

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73 It is very important to distinguish representative and direct forms of intra-party democracy. Although mass party members held some participatory value as they participated in sharing the costs of party activity (i.e. ‘they are not merely a party workforce’), they did not control the party directly (Ware 1987a, 9). Instead, control was exercised via internal decision-making procedures that imitated the working of representative democracy. As Gunther and Diamond (2003, 179) note, ‘the centre of power and authority in the party is located in the executive committee of its secretariat’, which is appointed by the party congress that is the ‘ultimate source of legitimate authority’. Via this link party representatives were entitled to supervise and control party in public office (Katz 1996, 118). This model differs clearly from the next, more direct model.
control. In contemporary political reality the material power of EPOs should be clearly smaller.\textsuperscript{74}

However, this is not the whole picture as intra-party power is about more than material resource distribution. In a critical commentary against cartel party thesis Koole (1996, 518–519) challenged Katz and Mair’s (1995) notion that national leaderships ‘insulate’ themselves from subnational activists by pointing out that a) subnational leaders still have locally-based incentives to affect national leaderships and b) if national executive committees are still largely composed of subnational leaders, ‘insulation’ is impossible. In similar vein Kitschelt (2000, 164–165) pointed out that parties are still dependent on activist participation (leaders are recruited internally, for example) and thus vulnerable to their exit. As at the same time the activist pool has decreased (due to general decline of mass membership politics) and become more sophisticated and ‘programmatically motivated’, leaders are not only incapable of avoiding their ‘internal principals’, they have become more dependent on them.

It seems that there has been a tendency to equate membership decline with decreasing activist power. While central EPO activists general legitimacy may have decreased because they now ‘represent’ a smaller portion of the electorate, it certainly does not follow automatically that their decision-making authority that can stem from decades of institutionalized practices that are likely codified in party rules – and perhaps even in national legislation too (see Van Biezen & Borz 2012) – has diminished simultaneously, especially in mass parties where EPOs have at some point of time held absolute power. If this balance has been codified, such diminution entails that EPO activists (who also craft the rules) would have dismantled their own powers. As this does not seem very likely there are good reasons to expect that parties that were formed and evolved in mass party format can still encase strong resistance potential if EPO activists decide to use their decision-making leverage. Because of the fairly limited nature of the group that has resistance potential, however, the central party is indeed the pivotal power centre in mass parties, as Katz and Mair (2002, 122) argued. If it decides to turn its support from members to public officials (which members of the NEC might hope to become, too), resistance potential becomes severely hindered.

\textsuperscript{74} It should be noted, however, that even the material decline of the EPO is not in fact this clear. As Bolleyer (2009) shows, leaderships possibilities to ‘buy off’ intra-party support can be strongly connected to governing position, which yields patronage opportunities and other means. When leadership loses this position (i.e. goes back to opposition) the leadership might have to lean back to traditional intra-party support.
The democratic process party is a much younger phenomenon. Environmentalist parties that first developed the idea of participatory membership democracy (Scarrow 2015, 24) and are therefore usually considered as main exemplars of this type emerged in 1980’s, as consequences ‘of new issues or values ignored by existing parties’ (Harmel & Robertson 1985, 502). One of these issues had a clear organizational underpinning. The objective to overcome ‘iron law of oligarchy’ (which, to be noted, plagued mass parties representative idea of democracy) created the ‘core of their identity and political project’, along with more general democratic ideals (Lucardie & Rihoux 2008, 3, 7). The movement whose activist core build on highly educated young urban professionals aimed to combine ‘hyperdemocratic’ ethos with anti-institutionalism; ideally, a participatory organization with low degree of formal bureaucracy. Thus, founding activists tended to endorse unconventional political participation (boycotting, demonstrations, etc.), individualism and self-realisation. Institutions, if they existed, should be based on participatory norms. (Poguntke 1987a, 77–82.)

Green organizational ‘philosophy’ built on ‘basisdemokratie’, direct grassroots democracy, and several concrete measures were introduced to make it reality. To avoid elite domination and maximise member’s potential to participate in national-level decision-making decisions were directed to lowest possible level. As even greens could not avoid the ‘technical imperatives’ (Michels 1968[1911]), lowest possible often meant some sort of an assembly. However, as Lucardie and Rihoux (2008, 6–7) note, usually this referred to regional and local rather than national assemblies. As direct participation was considered ideal, greens also employed referendums to make up the gap. To prevent the emergence of professionalized cadres individual power was limited with imperative mandates, collective leadership schemes and rotation methods and the party was expected to operate in complete transparency. Aside from these formal accountability measures greens endorsed low hierarchy and anti-authoritarian ethos, which could empower activists even more than formal democratic practices because even informal groups could legitimately challenge the leaders. (Poguntke 1987b, 610–612, 618–619, 625–627, 1993, 136–148.) As Kitschelt (1989, 62–66) has noted, the weakness of centralized leadership could lead to chaotic and unpragmatic behaviour where ‘constituency representation’ valued more than the logic of electoral competition.

It seems rather clear, then, that in terms of power distribution democratic process parties’ initial setup differed quite clearly from ‘old parties’ founding ideas. As Lucardie and Rihoux (2008, 6–7) point out, these parties were found by activists, not ‘party politicians’, who tried to ‘create party organization that allows
them maximum of power’ – over the PPG and the EPO (emphasis added). While this reminds of mass party ethos, greens ideas about ‘flattening’ their organizations in order to diminish leadership autonomy have been more extreme (Harmel 2002, 125). Also, as the genesis did not involve clear ‘dominant coalitions’ (like in ‘old parties’) because environmental parties were usually formed as amalgamations of various activist groupings (Poguntke 1987a, 1987b) initial organizational choices were also likely compromises. Even though some Michelsian dynamics have no doubt played a role as these parties too have matured in ‘environments’ that have been auspicious for the ascendency of the public ‘face’, it seems unlikely or at least worth of a doubt whether this extreme diffusion of power can concentrate so heavily on one party ‘face’ in 30 years that other ‘faces’ influence becomes meaningless for party’s functioning. As such, democratic process parties are ‘tough tests’ for Katz and Mair’s theory.

2.3.3 Ground hypotheses: adaptation or resistance – or both at the same time?

These insights and arguments can now be combined into hypotheses that are assessed in the forthcoming analyses. At this point, when exact measures of intra-party power are yet to be developed, they are still rather rudimentary. Nonetheless, the main competing logics should be clear enough.

The ‘mainstream’ hypothesis stems from Katz and Mair’s (2002) general theory of party adaptation. It asserts that due to certain changes in parties’ operating ‘environments’ (for details see subsection 2.2.2.) parties have been pressured to modify their power structures in ways that favour the party in public office that has emerged as the only power-relevant party ‘face’ while other ‘faces’ (that represent party activists in the extra-parliamentary party organization) have relegated into non-political service organizations. To provide clarity, this hypothesis is taken ‘literally’, that is, to suggest that all parties (regardless of their origin and developmental history) have transformed into the public ‘face’ dominated format and diluted significant EPO influence altogether. This strong adaptation thesis expects that parties’ organizational characteristics look more or less similar in each specific socio-technological context, which provides them equal opportunity structures and demands. In order to confirm it, studied party cases that represent the opposite corners of the organizational map (a conservative elite-centred electoral party, a social democratic representative membership party and environmentalist democratic process party) should not only have assumed similar intra-party power distributions, significant differences should not have existed in any point of the research period. Similarity
does not mean that parties are exact mirror images of each other, however, it means that differences in power distributions are so small that they cannot be expected to exert meaningful differences in party leaders’ operative capabilities.

The challenging view, the **strong resistance thesis**, asserts that parties do not respond at all to external pressures, which push against the interests of their historically dominant ‘faces’. This hypothesis emerges from a ‘literal’ interpretation of the institutional argument that was presented in subsection 2.3.2. In short, the idea is that a certain activist majority sets up a party organization that supports its power position and due to this leverage it strengthens itself to the extent that intra-party contestation (that is a prerequisite for power change that can alter the existing power balance) becomes highly unlikely. *The dominant party ‘face’ can make all changes that benefit it but it can also effectively resist changes that would weaken its power.* If the power system is highly diffused (i.e. clear hegemonic ‘face’ does not exist) significant changes will not take place in any circumstances because all initiatives can be effectively ‘vetoed’. In other words, if the strong resistance thesis holds, fundamental alterations (i.e. changes that upset the existing balance of power) cannot happen. For studied party cases this means that while 1) the conservative elite-centred electoral party will strengthen its public ‘face’ because the external pressure favours it 2) in social democratic representative membership party central party’s historically hegemonic status prevents public ‘faces’ from strengthening and 3) in environmentalist democratic process party public ‘face’ strengthening is prevented by the diffusion of power. This also means that public party leader’s operative capabilities differ too and therefore *some party types (namely, the leader-centric electoral parties) have ‘inherent’ advantage in the electoral market.*

Lastly, these extreme models are mediated with a **party type specific adaptation thesis**: a dynamic where parties start from different internal power distributions and progress towards the same direction, but still maintaining their initial differences (see Heidar & Saglie 2003). Compared to the strong adaptation thesis where parties are always located ‘on the same line’ (i.e. no significant differences exist between them) and strong resistance thesis where all parties always follow their own lines (i.e. parties are operationally unique) this thesis assumes a cross-temporally moving range of intra-party dynamics. Here, the main question is of course: is there an ‘operational threshold’ that parties cross at some point of time as they gradually evolve into the same direction? In other words: is it possible that internal power balances change so much (relative to initial conditions) that despite continuing differences to other parties their internal dynamics become operationally similar? In such case remaining differences are only about ‘aesthetics’ and parties’ leaderships become
functionally equal. This question is especially relevant for social democratic representative membership parties where the central representative body (i.e. the party in central office) is the pivotal power centre whose allegiance determines whether the party favours the public or ground ‘faces’. If a gradual strengthening of the public ‘face’ at some point of time crosses the ‘operational threshold’, party’s existing internal power balance changes.
3  ANALYSING INTRA-PARTY POWER BALANCE: A METHODOLOGICAL DISCUSSION

“Power is very difficult to measure. Measuring it over a long time span does not make it any easier.” – Helene Helboe Pedersen (2010, 743)

Now that the research problem is embedded into a proper theoretical framework the study is well equipped to proceed toward the analysis. Before delving into the empirics, however, it is necessary to clarify the methodological tools that enable detecting over time changes in parties’ internal power balances. It is not a secret that measuring intra-party power – let alone over time changes in it – is ‘notoriously difficult’ (Raunio 2002, 405–406; Heidar 1984; Pedersen 2010). But if the location of power is indeed ‘a key question’ (Lawson 1990, 112), the development of robust observational schemes should be a top priority.

Accurate, reliable and transparent assessment of intra-party power change requires a clear theoretical understanding of the concept and observational tools that reflect it adequately. Interestingly, such efforts are rare and therefore this whole chapter is devoted to the task. Here, the review of the concept and methods is accompanied with by critical scrutiny of their correspondence. The aim is to show that although most of the important aspects of intra-party power are covered by existing methods, one aspect that has been deemed very important in the literature has thus far avoided systematic assessment. To fill the gap and enhance studies on intra-party power this chapter formulates a systematic, transparent and transmissible approach for studying actual uses of intra-party power. The chapter concludes by elaborating a set of method specific hypotheses that bring concreteness to the general hypotheses.

75 As Panebianco (1988, 21–22) noted, still in the (early) 1980’s the field lacked a proper definition of intra-party power, leading students to contradictory conclusions. In his review article Heidar (1984) presented a whole array of methods and concepts. After Katz and Mair’s (1992, 1994) project the concept of power and the procedures for observing it seem to have stabilized to some extent.
3.1 The concept of intra-party power

Thus far this study has referred to intra-party power in fairly shallow terms, with just enough precision to enable broad theorizations. In the introduction intra-party power was defined as a party actor’s right- and/or capacity-based ability to make a difference in party environment – especially in questions that relate to the functioning of the parliamentary party. In the previous chapter this definition was extended with the concept of intra-party resource distribution, which designates the overall balance. Now it’s time to take a deeper look into this reasoning and define the exact content of these ‘resources’, as they deem what is meaningful to measure/observe.

The most elaborate and explicit assessment of the concept of intra-party power can be found from Angelo Panebianco’s work. Panebianco (1988, 21–23) was motivated by the fact that during his time (in the early 1980’s) a sufficiently elaborate conception was missing from the literature and this tended to cause confusion in debates on party development. Especially important was the dispute between those who believed like Michels that party leaders control their organizations in sovereign manner and those who argued that leaders were able to do so only because the ‘followers’ allowed them to. As both claims seemed empirically plausible Panebianco reasoned that opposite conclusions resulted from a conceptual difference: in the former case power was understood as a commodity that can be exerted over others unlimitedly while in the latter case power was corresponded to influence. According to Panebianco party leaderships often enjoy vast powers but their might never exists ‘autonomously’, without linkages to the party below and within the leadership. Therefore, Panebianco suggested, intra-party relations should be understood as exchange relationships between leaders and followers and, perhaps more importantly, within leadership groups.

According to Panebianco intra-party power builds on the possession of ‘zones of organizational uncertainty’, ‘factors that are integral for organization’s internal stability’ and survival. In layman’s terms: they are organizational resources that are mandatory for running the organization. Panebianco noted that while even the lowest activist controls some resources (he/she can leave the organization that is to

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76 Panebianco’s conceptual work on intra-party power is heavily affected by two classic works in organizational sociology, Peter Blau’s (1964) Exchange and power in social life and Michel Crozier and Erhard Friedberg’s (1980) Actors and systems: the politics of collective action.

77 Dominant coalition’s (i.e. ruling leadership’s) main objective is organizational stability, i.e. the continuance of their power status against external pressures and internal challengers (Panebianco 1988, 42).
some extent dependent on member’s input) and thus leader/follower ‘negotiations’ (exchange of resources) play a part in organizations survival, they are also very asymmetric because the ‘dominant coalition’ (the acting leadership) controls majority of the resources. Therefore, the most important question relating to the distribution of intra-party power concerns the intra-leadership distribution of resources: how widely are they dispersed and which organizational ‘faces’ are involved? Panebianco underlined that instead of considering power as mere commodity that some specific party ‘face’ (like parliamentary or extra-parliamentary parties) controls, the ‘dominant coalition’ can include participants from many ’faces’ like sub-national parties or even auxiliary organizations. Because of its potentially heterogeneous nature the ‘dominant coalition’ is a ‘precarious construct’: as resource distributions are always subject to change, so is the intra-party balance of power. (Panebianco 1988, 21–23, 37–40.).

In a leader-centric electoral party small and cohesive elite controls all relevant resources, in other party types control is more dispersed. In representative membership party congress-elected national executive committee and party’s central office have more independent roles and thus internal power distribution is more dispersed. In a democratic process party grassroots and other party ‘faces’ have even larger and more direct control of the party resources and therefore party leaderships autonomy is even more restricted.

Drawing inspiration from Crozier and Friedberg’s (1980) work, Panebianco elaborated six classes of resources that are especially important in political parties. As they correspond well with Katz and Mair’s characterizations, they provide a good baseline for a more general examination. Firstly, Panebianco highlighted competency, the ‘power of the expert’. Instead of mere technical skills expertise refers to demonstrated proficiency in handling of organizational matters and relations and the dependence that grows out from it. For Panebianco competence was a personal attribute; something that one possesses and others recognize. (Panebianco 1988, 33–34.) While it is certainly true that organizations are more dependent on some individuals than others, it must be recognized that at least in institutionalized parties only persons who enjoy formal position within the party penumbra may acquire such status. A formal position is a necessary (but not sufficient) condition for ‘expert power’ and therefore it should be acknowledged as an independent source of power.

The second important class of organizational resources, environmental relations, refers to powers of ‘stipulation, redefinition, or solidification of alliances’ and ‘choice of the issues to be disputed’ with external organizations and players.
Panebianco did not explicate what he meant by organizations and players but one can easily think of interest organizations like trade and labour unions and other significant party-related auxiliaries. As stated in the introduction, this study is exclusively concerned with intra-party dynamics and although a party’s environmental relations are naturally important (as for example Sundberg (1994, 2002, 2003) and Allern (2010) have showed) they will not be considered here in detail. As the review below shows, neither the methods of intra-party power studies have considered this ‘zone’ important/measurable.

However, the third and fourth classes of resources strike at the heart of this field. They relate to the distributions of two central non-human party resources, communications and money. Communications simply refers to someone’s capability to ‘distribute, manipulate, delay or suppress’ party communication (Panebianco 1988, 34). Although Panebianco seems to think communication mainly in intra-organizational terms, it’s easy to argue that communications – especially when they include external media relations – comprise one the most fundamental organizational resources in modern parties. As demonstrated above, the transition from mass bureaucratic to ‘electoral-professional’ party models builds heavily on the transformation of parties’ communicative preferences and techniques.

Another thing that modern parties cannot function without is of course money. Therefore, the one who is responsible for providing income and/or deciding how it is spent is naturally in one of the most important power positions. In the minimal case a party’s funding is dependent on a single external donor, who naturally wields a significant power over the organization. Another theoretical extreme is a situation when all party money emerges from individual members and donations, highlighting the importance of donators and the organizational actor who is responsible for gathering and coordinating it. (Panebianco 1988, 35.) Although Panebianco does not refer to other ‘means of production’ that are crucial for the working of modern political parties, this category can be extended with all similar resources – like party staff for example. Money, being the most substitutable, is of course the most important.

The fifth crucial class of resources is the ability to construct, interpret, manipulate and enforce organizations formal rules and decision-making procedures. In words that strongly echo the previous chapter’s discussion about institutions Panebianco wrote that ‘To establish formal rules is to mold the ‘playing field’, and to choose the terrain upon which confrontations, negotiations and power games with other organizational actors will take place’. Instead of
emphasizing mere formal arrangements Panebianco underlined that it’s equally important to notice that someone always interprets rules and has power to enforce them, or abstain from enforcement. This is to say that party actors may use formal rules strategically to create avenues for manoeuvring and usually someone occupies a location that is especially suited for doing so. However, Panebianco also reminded that most ‘internal formal relations are givens; i.e. they depend on the party’s organizational tradition and history’ and therefore the leadership may not of course do anything they please with them. (Panebianco 1988, 35–36.)

This understanding comes very close to Mahoney and Thelen’s (2010) views on institutional dynamics. In essence, their theory of gradual institutional change highlights the essentially contestable and contingent nature of formal rules and the minuscule alterations in interpretation and enforcement that can in long term lead into fundamental changes.

The sixth and final crucial class of resources that Panebianco highlighted was recruitment: the power to decide who will be able to enter the party and act on its behalf in internal and external representative roles. Controlling ‘organizational borders’ becomes especially important when we consider newcomers who might potentially challenge the ‘dominant coalition’ (the acting leadership). (Panebianco 1988, 36). Possibilities for organizational entry and other classes of resources are always theoretically subject to change. When the aggregate pool of resources alters, parties’ internal balance of power alters too.78

3.2 The methods of empirical intra-party power research

Potential reason for the disagreement over Michels’ predictions might have laid – in addition with differing conceptualizations (Panebianco 1988, 21–22) – in the lack of common methodology. Classic studies were not based on clearly defined concepts and explicit measures. They relied on in-depth observation executed deep within the party spheres and accompanied with anecdotal case information (Ostrogorski 1902, Michels 1968[1911]). Although McKenzie (1955, xii) laid out clearly his objective to compare power distribution in major British parties, his analysis followed traditional method, extrapolating inferences from recorded event

78 In most instances Panebianco (1988, 243) conceptualized party change in rather dramatic terms, as a relatively abrupt alterations in the ‘organizational order’. However, he too acknowledged that piecemeal changes happen all the time and therefore Panebianco’s theory fits rather well with Mahoney and Thelen’s (2010) ideas.
histories and interviews of ‘many hundreds of men and women in British political life’. Although Duverger (1967[1951]) devised some quantified measures along with his historical examples, he was more interested in creating concepts than testing them – just like theorists of the catch-all era that mostly deduced party effects from ‘environmental’ developments. After Duverger’s meticulous effort the field of intra-party studies took an organizationally oriented turn, shifting interest from power and domination to more functional accounts on how party organizations work (Heidar 1984, 4–5).

Some 15 years after the catch-all theories (Kirchheimer 1966; Epstein 1967) Kenneth Janda’s (1980) major comparative assessment ‘Political Parties: A Cross-National Survey’ was published. According to Janda who started the project in the mid-1960’s it was ‘the first systematic, comprehensive, empirically-based study of political parties around the world’. It focused on 158 parties from 53 states, encompassing ‘each of ten cultural geographical regions of the world’. Besides of its massive scope the thing that made the study revolutionary was its analytic rigour. Unlike his predecessors Janda build his framework consciously on existing party literature (one especially important influence was Duverger whose theories Janda was able to test directly in Janda and King (1985)). He deduced eleven basic concepts that aimed at subsuming all relevant party aspects. (Janda 1980, 3, 7–11.)

One of the concepts, centralization of power, connects directly to the question at hand. Janda defined it as the ‘location and distribution of effective decision-making authority within the party’ and clarified that a ‘centralized party is one which features the concentration of effective decision-making authority in the national party organs, with a premium placed on a smaller number of individuals participating in the decision’. Centralization of power was categorized into 8 subquestions that were answered by consulting various ‘library sources’. In Janda’s work too actual observations stemmed from secondary sources. (Janda 1980, 13–15, 108). The idea to ‘develop coding schemes [...] for applying numerical codes to textual information gleaned mostly from secondary literature on parties’ was at the very heart of Janda’s approach (Harmel & Tan 2015, 11). This key feature – ‘[S]tarting from theory-derived concepts and working down to the appropriate measurement’ (Harmel & Tan 2015, 12) – has been influential.79 In current studies

79 One fairly recent example that is worth mentioning is Gibson and Harmel’s (1998, 638–639, 650) study on the ‘extent to which the parliamentary group personnel and their actions may be controlled by the extraparliamentary party’. Drawing motivation from Harmel and Janda (1982) Gibson and Harmel produced seven indicators that considered EPO’s role in various PPG tasks like candidate selection, selection of the PPG leader, disciplinary measures, policy coordination and so on. Observations were deduced from ‘all available English-language literature [secondary and reference
it is often applied for quantifying intra-party relationships as they appear in parties’ formal rules (for example Pedersen 2010, vom de Berge 2013 et al., Scarrow & Webb 2013, see below for details).

Another, slightly different set of analytic tools was developed in early 1990’s in Katz and Mair’s international comparative project. Since then, most studies on intra-party power have applied some combination of their toolset. Unlike Janda and his successors who employed the method of ‘judgemental coding’ (Gibson & Harmel 1998; Harmel et al. 1995, Harmel & Tan 2003) Katz and Mair (1992, 6) confined their approach to parties ‘official story’, that is, party organization as it appears in their formal organizational structures, statutes and budgets.80

Thus, two basic choices emerge: should one include (potentially fraught) secondary observations on actual practices82 or stick with objectively measurable but perhaps ‘less real’ formalities? While Katz and Mair (1992, 2) criticized Janda’s analysis for low ‘level of detail’ ‘official stories’ have been criticized for providing only very superficial image of party life (see below). As this is a study of Katz and Mair’s theory and their framework (or some part of it) appears in most recent studies the subsequent review will confine to it. Janda’s coding scheme will make a comeback later when coding of formal rules is discussed.

Katz and Mair (2014[1993])83 set out their methodological outline in two steps. First they introduced the three ‘faces’ of party organization, as relevant observational units. Compared to Panebianco’s open idea of ‘dominant coalition’ they provided clear borders that could be used in more concrete analysis. Secondly, they posed a set of questions to direct the analysis towards relevant variables and relationships. First Katz and Mair encouraged to focus on each ‘faces’ resources and constraints and over time changes in their relative balances. Have, for example,

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80 This choice also informs the largest current international project on party organizations, the Political Party Database (PPDB) (Scarrow & Webb 2013, 6).

81 To be sure, this was not a very revolutionary idea; until early 1990’s the vast majority of party studies were based on official party documents (Appleton & Ward 1994, 117).

82 It should be noted that Janda (1980, 13–15) also devised elaborate measures to assess the validity of his findings. His ‘adequacy-confidence scale’ (AC-scale) examined 1) number of sources, 2) proportion of agreement/disagreement among coders, 3) level of discrepancy in case of disagreement and 4) the credibility of the source. However due to ambiguities in determining the criteria for the credibility of the sources, the AC-scale was mostly based on the first three components but the findings were also handed out to country specialists for evaluation.

83 Katz and Mair 2014 is essentially the same text as Katz and Mair 1993. Due to availability problems a newer edition had to be used here.
public ‘faces’ constraints diminished as a consequence of some ‘environmental’ changes (like mediatisation of politics) and how has this affected central offices resources (in relation to party communications)? Secondly, Katz and Mair advised to scrutinize the level of ‘faces’ independence and interdependence. Do they, for example, gather and control their own financial resources or do they work in congress, and in case they do is the relationship interactive or based on domination? Finally, building on this ground, Katz and Mair ushered to consider are ‘faces’ separate or do they overlap perhaps even to extent they are in fact one and the same thing? Katz and Mair also introduced concrete indicators to answer these questions. In order to make claims about party power and changes in it one needs to find out 1) who controls party’s leading internal unit, 2) how important intra-party resources are allocated and 3) how intra-party decision-making system works. (Katz & Mair 1993/2014, 356–360.) Similar ideas and indicators can be found from other analytic schemes (for example Heidar & Koole 2000a, 13–14) and recent empirical studies (for example Biezen 2000, Detterbeck 2005, 2008, Enyedi & Linek 2008, Pedersen 2010, Tavits 2011, Schumacher 2012). Thus, they provide a good yardstick for assessing the overall feasibility of existing methods.

The first dimension, control of the central party leadership unit, refers to the ‘pattern of representation’ – i.e. the distribution of representatives from different party ‘faces’ – in the party organ that is responsible for handling the majority of party matters. For Katz and Mair this unit is the national executive committee; the unit that is ‘crucial for decision-making procedures in a party’ and ‘typically responsible for the day-to-day functioning of the party between congresses or between elections’. Because of its centrality, the relative representation of ‘faces’ within it can be regarded as an indication of the value given to each ‘face’ within the party community. If for example EPO leaders form the majority, then it can be reasoned that party activists want and indeed can retain the power in their party. If

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84 The idea of independent organizational levels corresponds to Eldersveld’s (1964) idea of stratarchy, which Katz and Mair (1995) employed later to characterize the internal relationships in cartel parties. Stratarchy is also the main theoretical notion in Kenneth Carty’s (2004) franchise party model.

85 Compared to previous work Katz and Mair’s effort was markedly more interested in observing and explaining changes.

86 Somewhat surprisingly (considering the publication year) two out of three measures (decision-making system and overlapping positions) provided the basis for Olavi Borg’s (1980, 1982) analysis on Finnish parties internal power distributions. As neither Borg nor Katz and Mair cite any sources for their measures the author of this study was not able to find out the original source, if in fact one exist. Considering the fairly the limited array of easily accessible party data it would not be very surprising if many scholars had invented same approaches coincidentally.
a majority of NEC members are MPs, it may be deduced that the public ‘face’ plays a prominent role in party matters. (Katz & Mair 1993, 606–608; also Van Biezen 2000, 398–399 and Enyedi and Linek 2008, 461.) This dimension will be referred to as ‘presentational’ power as it denotes a power that stems from a presence in important location. Its extension that would take actual influence into account has been named as the reputational approach (Heidar 1984, 6–7).

The second empirical dimension concerns party’s internal allocation of human and material assets, the ‘number and distribution of the party staff and professional bureaucracy’ and money – especially the allocation of state subsidies (Katz & Mair 1993, 606–608). Asset allocation can be interpreted in two ways: as a direct indication of power, which directs focus on absolute differences and their effects to ‘faces’ general operating capacity (Van Biezen 2000, 408) or as a proxy for more general appreciation towards certain operational mode (Heidar & Koole 2000a, 13–15). Although it might seem self-evident that an increase in assets signifies an increased capacity to act, the relationship is more ambiguous (see below). This dimension will be later referred as asset-based power. Presentational and asset-based indicators are indirect measures of power: they do not refer to use of power; their relevance stems from the capacity/legitimacy that positions and assets are expected to produce.

The third method, analysis of decision-making systems, moves closer towards concrete uses of power. It refers to ‘the extent to which any of the three faces may enjoy an authoritative say in matters such as the formulation of party policy and strategy or the selection of candidates for public office’ (Katz & Mair 1993, 606–608). While such analysis may try to penetrate the actual decision-making processes (Heidar 1984, 7–8; Von Beyme 1985, 316, see below) within this methodological school it has referred to ‘how the parties themselves define the relationship’ between several party units and especially ‘whether the party in public office enjoys an independent position or is to some extent subordinate to the extra-parliamentary organs and depends on them for approval of its actions’ (Van Biezen 2000, 398–399). In other words, this method analyses the formal prerogatives of party actors’s in party statutes and therefore it too – while being ‘closer’ to using of power – has an indirect quality. Party rules too may be interpreted in two ways. Firstly, either as resources that empower actors or as reflections of actual power structures (or as Heidar (1984, 13) put it, ‘left-overs of yesterday’s power struggles’). After a reform formal rules may indeed reflect actual power relations but in more static situation (which is the norm) rules should be viewed as empowering resources. (Pedersen 2010, 744). Katz and Mair (1992, 6–8) concur with this line of interpretation: rules are not to be conceived as concrete
descriptions of decision-making system, but more like mirrors to party culture that reveal sources of continuity and show how conflicts may be limited by formally empowering several actors. Analysis that focuses on party actors’ formal prerogatives has been named the positional approach (Heidar 1984, 6). This name will be used here as well.

There are a few alternative ways to process and present party statutes information. Differences can be understood with reference to the levels of measurement. While Katz and Mair’s (1992) project focused on specific party aspects such as policy, leadership and candidate selection, the data handbook and analyses that followed it (Katz & Mair 1994) treated differences qualitatively, as nominal scale phenomena, which can be contrasted but not measured. This type of approach pushes for qualitative descriptions and prevents the use of elaborate statistical models. More recently it has become customary to treat observations that stem from party statutes as ordinal or even interval scale phenomenon to enable the use of sophisticated statistics. For example Gibson & Harmel (1998, 639) referred to their scale as ‘abstractly interval’. In a recent paper Pedersen (2010, 744–745) specified four formally regulated party operations that she considered to be especially important for PPG/EPO power balance. She scored them on a 1 to 5 scale, combined results to additive index and regressed it against parties’ coalitional behaviour. Currently, scholars are developing internationally applicable measurement schemes to enable cross-national comparisons on various intra-party relationships (see Scarrow & Webb 2013 for the project and Vom De Berge et al. 2013 for a detailed measurement scheme on intra-party democracy (IPD)). Besides that the field has during past 35 years produced a reasonably common understanding of intra-party power and main methods, the methods are clearly developing.

3.3 A critical evaluation: what aspects of intra-party power contemporary methods can illuminate and which ones they leave in the dark?

It seems obvious that quantitative indicators and regression analyses can yield more superior causal inferences than ad hoc observations and gut feelings. However, it is also important to notice that what is being observed is at least as equally important as how the observation was processed and analyzed. If observations concern features that are not relevant for the studied phenomenon it does not make much
difference how sophisticated are the tools used to analyze them. Kay Lawson (1990, 107) has criticized intra-party studies for relying too much on ‘tidy documents’, leaving the ‘hurly-burly of inner party life’ intact, producing insights that are ‘more quantifiable than credible’. For the quality of the research it is essential to consider how well the proposed measures correspond with the concept that they are trying to capture. How do existing methods relate to Panebianco’s resource classes and are there any serious deficiencies which might hinder current analyses’ persuasive force?

At first it should be noted that despite his penetrating theoretical rigour, or perhaps exactly because of it, Panebianco (1988) himself did not do a very good job in assessing his propositions. Upon the release of the English language version of his book it was generally considered that while the theoretical work was thorough, his empirical tests did not come close to the theoretical level (for example Shapiro 1989; LaPalombara 1990). Panebianco was acutely cognizant of the limitations of his analysis, which rested on secondary case histories of some dozen European parties (Panebianco 1988, xiv–xvii) – neither of which systematically assessed any resource possessions. Reasons that extend beyond laziness can explain his choices. Aside from the fact that his effort was deliberately theoretical, in spite of their intuitive appeal many of Panebianco’s concepts are hard to operationalize and therefore their correspondence to empirical indicators is often limited.

The first class of resources, competence as individual’s personal and recognized capacity to steer party work successfully (Panebianco’s 1988, 33–34) is a very good example. While it is obvious that great party leaders have had a major impact on the development of most Western parties and societies and their personal capacity has wielded great power on them, power that is based on individual competence is exceptionally hard to measure. In order to assess individual relevance in the overall network of power resources we would need exact information on the competences of relevant leaders (and others conceptions of their roles), how dependent party community is for their participation and what is the minimal level of involvement that the organization could stand. The time spent developing such measures would hardly overcome the problems that stem from the variable’s inherent ambiguity. Therefore, systematic indicators for power that are based on individual competence seem to be simply out of our reach and therefore studies of intra-party power change seem to suffer from at least one incurable defect. To make up for this, studies should at least acknowledge the existence of exceptional leaders (or lack thereof), which might distort the party’s ‘normal’ power balance. This requires
applying the ‘journalists’ tool’, the reputational method of asking from knowledgeable party participants (Heidar 1984, 6–7).

At the same time it seems obvious that a toolbox for intra-party power studies that does not consider ‘power of the expert’ in systematic fashion is insufficient. From the reviewed methods the notion of presentational power comes closest as it refers to positions that are somehow exceptionally important for the functioning of the party. Although the composition of main leadership units clearly differs from what Panebianco meant by competency it is evident that Panebianco (1988, 33–34) was indeed writing about party leaders, persons who ‘possesses a specialized knowledge as a result of the organizational division of labour’ and knowledge ‘which derives from experience managing the party’s internal […] political-organizational relations’. While all leaders might not be indispensable and some are extremely valuable, ‘expert power’ is preceded by a formal position within a party. Therefore, the study of the composition of the main leadership units could be the second best option, and the best available one.

Yet, even if we lower the bar from individual leaders to collective units two problems emerge. Firstly, as same people might simultaneously hold positions in several theoretically competing party ‘faces’ (for example a subnational leader might be an MP too) it is hard to determine which ‘face’ controls the executive.87 Secondly, and more importantly, it can be questioned whether the national executive is indeed the most relevant leadership unit. If it is not, then its composition does not matter much. (Katz & Mair 1993, 606–608.) Alternative ‘locations’ have been proposed. One might, for example, focus on the leader and consider who the real one is (EPO or PPG chair) (Gibson & Harmel 1998, 639) or for whom is he/she ‘working for’ (for the public ‘face’ or the EPO) (see Heidar & Koole 2000a, 13–14). One could also come up with a plethora of alternative power centres, like ministerial group or the PPG, let alone various informal party organs that might mix actors from all ‘faces’. Because of these problems Katz and Mair (2014, 361) argued that ‘any such assessment [on the control of the NEC] should properly be complemented by the analysis of the […] actual decision-making structure’. Despite these problems, both the ‘location’ and the composition of the central leadership unit are indispensable indicators of intra-party power and their measures should be developed further (see below).

87 Because of this problem Katz (2005, 92) warned not to take their schema too seriously. Also, as Mair (1994, 13, following Deschouwer 1994) noted, MP representation in the NEC does not automatically signal their ‘control’ over it, it might also signal that party wants to control the PPG.
As mentioned above, communications, financing and staff can be situated under the master category of ‘means of production’. All of these assets are mandatory for the functioning of the party organization and their control bears utmost importance for intra-party power distribution. While reviewed methods have recognized human resources and money, they have mostly neglected party communications. Although various studies characterize major transformations from party-dominated press to open and commercialized mass media and its effect to intra-party relations (Epstein 1967, Panebianco 1988, Manin 1997) systematic measures that connect the disposal of certain intra-party communication tools to intra-party power are lacking. This is not a surprise because due to their technical nature communication tools are hard to measure objectively over time. How to assess, for example, change from newspapers-based to Internet-based communication? As such, party communications might be another clearly important but empirically hard class of resources to study in cross-temporal framework. Like competency, it will be much easier to assess in cross-sectional setting, which allows detecting relevant technologies, measuring their extent and assessing their relevance in the overall scheme. However, even in an over time framework one should pay attention to major technological changes – no matter how ad hoc they might be.

Although money and human resources have been acknowledged in various methodological considerations, they are not unproblematic to measure. Firstly, true staff numbers might be simply hard to obtain, as parties do not usually have any legal reason to provide them. The second problem might be even more severe: we can never know exactly to whom the party bureaucrat is loyal. In many countries party subsidies are paid to parliamentary groups who then fund party offices. Who in this situation holds the power: the office that formally employs the bureaucrat or the PPG that pays his/hers dues? (Katz & Mair 1993, 606–608.) To determine who is empowered by the existing funding patterns is not unproblematic either. Theoretically party money may emerge 1) internally, from parties own members, 2) externally, from auxiliary organizations, or 3) from the state (Vom Beyme 1985,

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88 When doing cross-temporal comparisons with quantitative measures one should always pay attention to the potentially changing meaning of measured variables. The level of party membership, once the main indicator of party strength has now decreased into such low levels that its meaningfulness as a measure of party strength has been questioned (LaPalombara 2007; Biezen et al. 2012; Biezen & Poguntke 2014). Similarly, from the drastic decline of party-related newspapers (Mickelsson 2007) it can be deduced that they hardly carry a similar relevance than they used to in mass party democracy. Thus, not only our theories should be context-specific as the idea of middle range theory suggests (Merton 1968), our methods should consider context-specific issues too.
196–197, 202) but nowadays state subventions form the clear majority of party revenue in most European countries (Katz & Mair 1995). Katz and Mair’s (1993) method is to compare overall levels of PPG and EPO subsidies and simply assess which ‘face’ gains more. While differences in overall levels can be interpreted as indications of party ‘faces’ direct capacity (Van Biezen 2000) it must be remembered that the choice is actually made at the party system level and therefore the distribution of subsidies might not tell much about parties internal preferences. Again, we are confronted with the ‘problem of loyalty’: we do not know how money is used – and who controls its distribution. This problem has been recognized (Katz & Mair 2002, 123) but it’s hard to counter, as it would require intra-party data on finances, which is very hard to obtain (Krouwel 2012, 235; Bolleyer 2012b, 113). Although the study of asset-based power has been enhanced by the emergence of state subsidies that are relatively easy to attain, indicators require further ‘fine-grainment’ to allow more relevant insights.

Finally, there are parties internal decision-making systems – or as Panebianco (1988, 35) put it, the ‘control and manipulation’ of organizational rules. As statutes often include provisions on recruitment and it is more generally very much dependent on decision-making power, recruitment can be collapsed under the heading of decision-making power. As Panebianco’s definition of decision-making system already reveals, it can be viewed in formal and actual terms. That is, a written constitution exists alongside with actual practice and they might not always coincide. Although Katz and Mair’s (1993, 606–608) above-mentioned definition does not refer to formal prerogatives only, they are the ones that they (Katz & Mair 1993; 1994; 1995; 2002) and many others after them (for example Gibson & Harmel 1998; Biezen 2000; Detterbeck 2005; Enyedi & Linek 2008; Pedersen 2010) have actually studied – and this is somewhat problematic.

The inadequacy of positional analysis was noticed a long time ago and it has not disappeared from the literature even though it has become the main tool in party power studies. Duverger (1967[1951], xvi) already pointed out that ‘[C]onstitutions and rules never give more than a partial idea of what happens, if indeed they describe reality at all, for they are rarely strictly applied’. Duverger’s contemporary Sigmund Neumann (1956, 2) also strongly urged students of parties to reach over the ‘political morphology of legislative, executive, and judicial forms’. These critiques re-emerged in the 1980’s when organizational approach became popular again. Panebianco (1988, 35) was merciless, writing that ‘party’s statutes do not

89 Candidate and leadership selection are typical features in quantified analyses of party rules (see below).
describe its organization any more than a political system’s written constitution does. It is only a pallid trace, fleeting and imprecise, little more than a point of departure for the organizational analysis of a political party.\textsuperscript{90} While appointing some preliminary value to the study of formal organization Heidar (1984, 7–8) noted too that ‘[V]ery few, though, and certainly not the party activists themselves, believe that parties are like open books’. Thomas Poguntke (1987b, 612) concurred that while rules might display some ‘hard facts’ the “working mode” of a party can differ widely from what statutory provision were intended to guarantee – or camouflage.\textsuperscript{91} Even after Katz and Mair’s (1992) project the emphasis on formal intra-party relations has attracted suspicion. Heidar and Saglie (2003, 223) noted that ‘[P]arties may change their statutes to authorize the use of membership ballots – without actually holding any ballots. On the other hand, practices may change within a stable formal structure’.

Katz and Mair (1992, 6–8) were well aware of these limitations and also for the need to study ‘actual organizational practice’. However, they also strongly defended the need to take the ‘first step’ and track down formal prerogatives, which in their setting (international, comparative longitudinal study) provided the only source of comparable ‘hard data’.\textsuperscript{92} Katz and Mair turned Panebianco’s criticism around and pointed out that ‘party statutes also do not describe its organization any less than a political systems written constitution does’. That is, although formal rules might not reflect the actual workings of a political party, they can channel, constrain and preempt internal struggles because explicit display of prerogatives should deter openly rogue tactics. Others have also pointed out that formal rules set the boundaries for what is legitimate in intra-party arena and they may be used as a power source if intra-party battles flare up (Vom De Berge et al. 2013, 2–3; Pedersen 2010, 744). It could also be argued that party rules reflect party’s overall

\textsuperscript{90} It should be kept in mind that Panebianco’s own empirical effort did not travel much further. It is much easier to criticize a method than develop a better one.

\textsuperscript{91} This notion follows Duverger’s (1967[1951], 135–142) idea of ‘disguised autocracy’ where the purpose of democratic rules is to hide authoritarian rule.

\textsuperscript{92} It seems rather obvious that a major reason for still using formal rules as primary data relates to their easy accessibility, useability and comparability – and to the lack of compensating data sources. As Vom De Berge et al. (2013, 2) point out, it’s the only meaningful way to analyze intertemporal change as observing actual behaviour would be very time consuming. Leading figures of the largest operating cross-national project (Scarrow & Webb 2013, 6) lined that they will focus on ‘official stories’ too although ‘formal structures may be a poor guide to actual power relations’. Their reason is that the alternative way, expert survey, is even more problematic. This data problem is especially pertinent in cross-country frameworks.
idea of the power balance between the party ‘faces’ (Katz & Mair 1992, 6–8; Kittilson & Scarrow 2003, 65).

It appears that party rules encase insurance-like qualities. When everything works fine statutes’ potentially complex picture of intra-party life might not reflect the reality accurately, but when a conflict erupts the rules can become effective. They can also restrict the leaders in a pre-emptive sense, creating borders for acceptable behaviour, and costs for crossing them. However, while statutes do reveal which kind of powers are at party actors’ disposal, they do not of course tell anything about how the powers are actually applied. Because of this, analysis of formal decision-making system remains indirect and somewhat ‘theoretical’; like assets and positions, it only portrays the potential for capacity. Although formal rules can describe the party leader’s theoretical boundaries, alone they provide too limited a view of intra-party decision-making.

It’s not a surprise, then, that students of intra-party politics have sought to look behind formal arrangements, to actual practices. Duverger (1967[1951], xvi, 56–57) was adamant in that ‘the organization of parties depends essentially on unwritten practice and habit. It is almost entirely a matter of custom’; thus we must not ‘allow ourselves to be misled by the letter of the constitution, but must analyze its application in practice’. Likewise, Neumann (1956, 2) thought that only a leap over ‘morphology’ allows detecting the ‘nature, purpose and direction of the political power in being and in conflict’. Similarly, as was already pointed out, for Panebianco (1988, 35) the study of how the rules are interpreted was clearly more important than the rule itself. Again, his view fits into Mahoney and Thelen’s (2010, 10–11) ideas, for whom the rules’ inherent ambiguity and organizational contestation over their interpretation lays at the core of institutional dynamics.

Von Beyme (1983, 345–353) has proposed two strategies for making the analysis of intra-party decision-making better: to seek to which extent the leaders have internalized the formal rules or by observing actual decision-making. Although a survey is always a possibility (for example see Bäck 2008), it includes a risk for ‘naively asking the political leader to tell us … the whole truth about his or her organization’ (Lawson 1990, 107). As the organizational configuration has a direct bearing on intra-party democracy that is a normatively delicate matter, there’s a risk of receiving a sugared version that aims to hide oligarchic practices. Therefore, this study follows the idea that intra-party power should always be analyzed in concrete decision-making situations (Wiberg 2000, 171). The study of decision-making process locates itself between the formal structures and influential actors by asking: ‘how the organizational structures and rules operate in practice’?
(Heidar 1984, 7–8). The analysis on how the ‘formal structures are actually handled’ aims to reveal the ‘[L.]ocation of the facto centres of power’ (Poguntke (1987b, 618–619). Recent experience shows that despite its very laborious nature (Heidar 1984, 14) in-depth analysis of actual intra-party practices can yield convincing and exiting results that run counter to general expectations (Loxbo 2013). The next section describes an analytic approach that tries to set some systematic guidelines for such an analysis.

### 3.4 The study of actual decision-making power: reconstructing significant intra-party decision-making processes

As it was pointed out already in the introduction, ‘the absolutely basic common core to, or primitive notion lying behind, all talk of power is the notion that A in some way affects B’ (Lukes 2005, 30). That is to say – as Lukes clarifies in the next sentence – that power implies causal interaction. Reviewed measures of intra-party power lack this quality. They can reveal actor’s expected capacity to induce change in their political environments but the effect remains hypothetical; it’s based on an assumption that resources are used in certain ways and for certain purposes. *Without following actual uses of capacity we can never be certain whether the hypothesised effect materialized or not.* The party’s central office workers might be preoccupied with tasks that mainly benefit the PPG or democratic looking formal decision-making procedures might never be applied in practice. Possession-based measures lack the most important general feature of power: causality that builds the temporal link between capacity and outcome. This feature is especially important in decision-making where strong normative motifs to apply democratic principles encourage deliberate obfuscation of organization’s real workings.

Highlighting power’s causal nature shifts attention from possession to processes. The question ‘who should decide?’ turns into ‘how decision came about’ and, more specifically, ‘whose contribution mattered?’ Viewed like this, decision-making power is not a commodity whose relevance can be decided ex ante but rather a relational quality whose relevance unfolds over time, in actual practice. Compared to formally driven style of analysis such viewpoint emphasises the specificity of certain contexts and the sequential nature of political action (Fenno 1986, 5–14). Recently, a research method that focuses on such processes has gained prominence in political science (George & Bennett 2005, Collier 2011, Mahoney 2012, Beach & Pedersen 2013, Bennett & Checkel 2014). Process tracing
offers analytic tools and heuristics that can upgrade the study of actual intra-party decision-making power from anecdotal descriptions to more reliable, rigorous, transparent and comparable level.

A simple way to incorporate causality in the analysis of actual decision-making power would be to identify formal decision-making authority (in Finnish parties this is usually a relatively wide party council that represents sub-national parties between party congresses) and investigate its participation in the final decision, which is usually widely publicized. The problem is that public party decisions (like decisions of any other legally/formally regulated public organizations) do not likely violate their own rules in an overt manner. This does not mean, however, that the entire decision-making process worked exactly as the rulebook pictured it. Ambiguity of rules allows manoeuvring and decision-making processes involve several stages (initiation of the proposal, its modification, evaluation and affirmation, etc.), which can invite multiple forms of power, from overriding opposition (Dahl 1957) to manipulation of the agenda (Bachrach & Baratz 1962) and preferences (Lukes 1974) to authoritative legitimation (Hindess 1996).

Assessing the causal linkage between denominational authority and actual decision-making power demands a deeper look. This is exactly what process tracing does: it tries to move ‘beyond correlation’ by scrutinizing rigorously the process that links causes to effects with the aim of separating spurious links from true causality (Mahoney 2000, 412; Beach & Pedersen 2013, 5).

Process tracing is a within-case method. Its aim is to explain individual cases – case being ‘an instance of a class of events’ like ‘revolutions, types of governmental regimes, kinds of economic systems’ and so on. Here, it refers to a single intra-party decision-making process. Unlike methods that hail from the Humean tradition where claims of causality are based on constant conjunction of cause and effect in the level of events (X and Y), process tracing ‘attempts to identify the intervening causal process – the causal chain and causal mechanisms – between an independent variable (or variables) and the outcome of the dependent variable’. At the heart of this method lies careful description, which pays special emphasis to conjunctures and sequence of events. Process tracing bears much resemblance to traditional historical explanation and it is, in a way, self-explanatory; its logic is very intuitive compared to, for example, multivariate statistical analysis. However, it differs from traditional historiography by explicitly linking empirics to theoretical concerns. Its proponents have developed a set of concepts, guidelines and tests for assessing studied cases rigorously. (George & Bennett 2005, 6–7, 17–18, 206–207; Collier 2011, 823; Beach & Pedersen 2013, 1; Bennett & Checkel 2014, 6–10.)
A central concept in process tracing analysis is the causal mechanism, the underlying web of interactions that bridges X to Y. Unlike methods that posit causality in the level of events, process tracing builds on mechanistic conception of causality, which requires considering the relevance of all independent events (or ‘activities’) that transmit causal force between X and Y. Each ‘cog in the machine’ is necessary yet not independently sufficient cause for the overall outcome. (Beach & Pedersen 2013, 29–32.) Broadly speaking, two types of intervening ‘events’ exist: events that only transmit power and events that alter the path of causal force. While the former are also important as missing a step might prevent the overall mechanism from actualizing (consider a single domino in a line of falling dominoes that fails to fall) the latter types of events bear stronger significance as they can alter the causal model; here, a variable Z emerges between X and Y. (Bennett & Checkel 2014, 6–11.) In the previously mentioned example of intra-party decision-making such a factor could be, for example, delegating power to craft proposals to a more concentrated leadership unit. While the wide body might still take the final vote, this intervening step would crucially alter the end result by incorporating into the process significant agenda-setting powers. If the wider representative body does not take part in the actual formation of policies but instead limits its participation on ‘acclamation’, it has less power than in a situation where it also crafts the policy, and so on.

Process tracing can proceed deductively (by testing a specific theory) or inductively (for creating one). If sufficiently well elaborated theory exists, a theory-testing variant can be used. In it researcher first unpacks the theory to its constituent parts and makes all intervening steps clearly visible. This is followed, first, by a careful definition of step’s observable implications and the kind of evidence that is needed to prove the hypothesis and, secondly, collection of relevant data and execution of tests. In the inductive, theory-generating variant a researcher might know the end result (Y) but sufficiently clear prior knowledge that attempts to explain it (i.e. a theory) does not exist. Here, empirical material goes through extensive ‘soaking and poking’ with the aim to find ‘clues about the possible empirical manifestations of an underlying causal mechanism’. In reality process tracing usually operates in cyclical manner, by combing induction and deduction. A well-specified theory allows clearer hypothesising but as too strict

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93 Beach and Pedersen (2013) use auto engine as an example to characterize causal mechanisms. While pushing the accelerator causes the car to move, underlying lays a more sophisticated mechanism that needs to be revealed in order to explain the phenomenon.

94 ‘Soaking and poking’ refers to iterative method of processing qualitative data in order to create theory. It was originally developed by Richard Fenno (1978).
priors do not leave enough room for alternative explanations (that is a key requirement of good process tracing) and add proneness towards confirmation bias, total closeness should be avoided. (George & Bennett 2005, 207–217; Beach & Pedersen 2013, 3–17, 93–94; Bennett & Checkel 2014, 7–8, 17–19.)

Emphasis on causal mechanisms leads to a distinct logic of inference. Instead of strengthening confidence to theorized correlations with quasi-experiments and statistical controls that aim to exclude potential intervening variables process tracing reminds of a ‘court trial’ where ‘prosecutor’ presents many types of evidence to increase the plausibility of a certain story. (Beach & Pedersen 2013, 75–76, citing McKeown 2004.) In the vocabulary of the previous example: to reveal the ‘real culprits’ in intra-party decision-making process tracer needs more than mere correlation between denominational authority (party council) and final decision-maker (party council). He/she needs to empirically establish all relevant steps, like the delegation of the proposal making powers. Without identifying the intervening leadership unit researcher’s story is not able to provide a truthful picture of the process.

From this inferential logic follows a distinct approach to data. It can be clarified by making a distinction between data-set observations (DSO) and causal process observations (CPO). DSO’s correspond with the kind of data that is used in statistical analyses. The main idea is to score specific variables over a sample of cases that represent a larger system of observations to which the findings can be generalized. On the contrary, CPO’s are highly context-specific pieces of information that only reveal a certain ‘corner’ in a certain chain of events. (Collier 2011, 823–824; Collier, Brady & Seawright 2010, 184.) Two things follow. In process tracing 1) ‘some pieces of evidence provide higher inferential power than others’. Unlike in a study where the likelihood of truth increases along with the number of observations in process tracing even ‘a single meeting or memo may prove to be the crucial piece of evidence that instantiates one explanation or undermines another’ (Bennett & Checkel 2014, 16, 24–28.) Because of this 2) the assessment of observation’s evidentiary value forms a major part of the research process (Beach & Pedersen 2013, 73, 120–121). Several qualitative sources can be used to reconstruct causal chains. These include histories, archival documents, interviews (George & Bennett 2005, 6–7), memoirs, public speeches and newspaper articles (Beach & Pedersen 2013, 140–143).

To increase process tracing’s analytic leverage a set of tests that assess the validity of evidence in relation to the hypothesis it aims to prove have been put forth. Building on Van Evera’s (1997, 31–32) seminal work Bennett (2010, 210),
Collier (2011, 825–828) and Mahoney (2012, 571–574) have described four tests where evidence’s probative value is tied to its ability to provide necessary and/or sufficient backing for a hypothesis. Two main variants are the hoop test and the smoking gun test. In the former, a piece of evidence can establish necessary but not sufficient conditions for the hypothesis to be true. For example, if a murder suspect was in the city during a murder it is possible that he did it but his guilt remains uncertain. While hoop test cannot confirm a hypothesis, failing one can eliminate it: if the murder suspect was abroad at the time of the murder, he/she cannot be the murderer. On the contrary, smoking gun test can confirm a hypothesis but not eliminate one. While smoking gun in a suspect’s hand strongly implies that he/she is guilty, a lack of a gun cannot prove his/hers innocence. A doubly-decisive test simultaneously confirms a hypothesis and eliminates all others. As such situations are rare in politics (Van Evera’s example is security camera footage), researchers may need to execute a set of subsequent hoop tests in order to eliminate all but one explanation. When decisive evidence (to direction or another) is missing, we are left with straws-in-the-wind that can only strengthen or weaken hypotheses but never confirm or eliminate them. However, several pieces of information that bend the straw into the same direction can of course build stronger inferences.95

According to Collier (2011, 825) these tests shouldn’t be treated rigidly as the observation’s evidentiary value relates to a researcher’s background knowledge, study’s assumptions and on the way hypotheses were presented. Nonetheless, they provide an important heuristic approach for narratives, which can easily suffer from rhetoric and other forms of stylistic persuasion.

Methods of process tracing requires much more from a causal analysis of intra-party decision-making power than a simple comparison of denominational and public decision-makers. It disassembles the whole decision-making process into as many sub-events as it is necessary to explain the full trajectory of party power – from initial proposals to final decisions. This calls for identifying key actors, diffuse interests and crucial moments, and explicitly showing their connections to the sequence of events. If party actors are able to affect, obstruct or direct party leadership’s initiatives, proposals and decisions, such in depth examination should be able to reveal these interventions if sufficient data is available. Moreover, careful depiction of event structures (see Griffin 1993; Griffin & Korstad 1998) enables over time

95 Admittedly, such logic comes to resemble the logic of frequentist probability where the likelihood of truth increases due to subsequent similar observations.
comparison and building leverage to make claims about changes in intra-party power balances.

3.5   This study’s methods and data sources

The analytic toolkit used for tapping changes in parties’ internal power distributions in the forthcoming chapters leans strongly on existing techniques. This study aims to improve them in two ways. The main methodological contribution is the critique against an overly formal approach to decision-making power and the subsequent effort to analyse the actual decision-making processes more systematically with process tracing method (see below). Second improvement concerns existing techniques, which the forthcoming section tries to enhance by focusing on the deficiencies that were detected above. The overarching aim has been to tie observational techniques closer to the concept of intra-party power and shorten the gap between formal capacity and actual uses of power. Following the above distinctions, the forthcoming analysis divides intra-party power into three analytic dimensions: presential, asset-based and decision-making (which in itself divides to positional power and actual practices). The analyzed primary data extends from the early 1980’s to the early 2010’s, except in the Greens that were formed in 1988.

In the dimension of **presential power** this study seeks a threefold improvement. Firstly, it explicitly acknowledges the need to study presential power alongside with decision-making system (as Katz and Mair 1993 hoped). The obvious gain of this rule is that it enables measuring party organs that are actually important for parties. At least in Finnish parties the national executive committee – Katz and Mair’s choice – is markedly an EPO organ in the overall party structure and the idea of treating it – ex ante – as parties only command centre is too strongly tied to the mass party model. As not all parties have emerged from mass party origins (see next chapter), it should be at least doubted whether its importance travels throughout the party spectrum – and time. If the NEC does not bear much relevance in the overall party structure (as might be expected from traditional cadre parties, for example), it does not make much difference how many of its

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96 This is why the analysis of positional power is presented before presential analysis in chapter 5.

97 It is interesting that Katz and Mair (1993) decided to measure presential power from this angle as Mair (1994) and Katz and Mair (1995) strongly argued against taking mass party model as the yardstick for party analysis.
representatives are MPs. Aside that some parties encase even smaller formal leadership units within the NEC, two informal organs (i.e. relatively well-defined bodies that convened somewhat regularly but were not defined in the statutes) emerged through high-ranking party officials interviews (see below for details).

The second improvement is to acknowledge these units in the empirical analysis alongside with the NEC. The first one of them is so-called party ‘presidium’98, an amalgamation of EPO leadership (party chair, deputy chairs and party secretary) and PPG leadership (chairs and general secretary) that at least in old parties has gathered regularly since the 1990’s (see chapter 6 for details). While NEC’s composition might not reflect the idea of the ‘inner circle’ as it usually includes formal representation from various ‘faces’ and auxiliaries (subnational parties, youth and women’s organizations, language minorities, trade union representatives, etc.) it seems reasonable to assume that being a member of the ‘presidium’ signals a standing in party’s absolute core leadership. The other ‘informal’ unit that is under investigation here is the ministerial group (MG) – according to many interviewees the main site of action when party enters the government. As the Finnish constitution has never mandated that ministers need to be MPs and the party council (‘the party congress between party congresses’) normally at least formally ratifies ministerial nominations, changes in MG’s MP representation provides another good test for the ascendancy of the public ‘face’ thesis. Data on party actors (members of the leading party organs) has been retrieved from parties’ official annual reports that were collected from party archives and parties central offices. Data on MPs has been collected from the Eduskunta’s MP database and ministerial data from Council of State’s (the Finnish government) ministerial database. The measurement is based on simple name-by-name comparison.

More modest improvements to the presential power dimension relates to the important but difficult notion of competence. Although systematic in-depth analysis of the relevance of all party leaders from a 30-year period is clearly out of this study’s reach, chapter 6 that presents the results of process tracing of major intra-party decisions in different time periods tries to accommodate the most important changes in party leaderships, as they appear in biographies, interviews, research literature and press releases. While these notions are in no sense systematic but rather anecdotal, they reveal some important power related ramifications that a change from weak to strong leader might have.

98 This is the name that is used by Social Democrats. Conservatives have called theirs ‘the fist’. While it’s more uncertain whether the Greens have such an organ, it’s nevertheless obvious that such group encases party’s core leadership.
**Asset-based power** is about the distribution of ‘means of production’ between and within party ‘faces’. The most significant deficiency in this ‘power dimension’ has been the limiting of analysis to aggregate level data from where parties’ real preferences are hard to deduce. The overall strength of party ‘faces’ is no doubt important as it reflects – at least in the long-term – how the ‘big picture’ is changing. However, a more nuanced analysis is needed for assessing party-specific differences and other subtleties. Therefore, the subsequent analysis is divided to three levels, proceeding from system-level ‘bird’s eye’ view to a detailed assessment of changes in the use of intra-organizational assets. The uppermost level focuses on the development of state provided party resources. Aside from presenting the development of overall subsidies that are paid to each party ‘face’, the analysis presents information on the development of state-provided personnel resources that the PPGs and MGs started to gain in the end of the 20th century. The data was collected from state budgets, the Eduskunta’s annual reports and secondary literature.

The intermediate level analysis moves inside parties and presents the over time development of party ‘faces’ overall staff and financial assets. Here, the focus is on ‘face’ vis-à-vis ‘face’ comparison, over time and between party types, much like in Katz and Mair’s project (1992, 1994). Such effort requires party-level data on each ‘face’s’ total staff numbers and gross incomes. Staff numbers were collected from annual reports, which usually include a review of central offices workforce. To keep the focus on long-term macro changes analysis includes only the permanent workforce – not, for example, temporary campaign workers. The criterion was that a position should be filled for at least 6 months of the year. To analyse financial matters more thoroughly the financial statements of parties were collected from party archives (1983–1987), the Ministry of Justice that was the main supervising organ between 1987 and 2009, and from National Audit Office that has been the main supervisor of party funding since 2009. While such data is not entirely unproblematic (see below) overall incomes and expenditures could be extracted in reliable manner.

These measures are well known from previous studies. The more novel improvement in this ‘power dimension’ is the in-depth examination of EPOs’ internal resource allocation. This undertaking was motivated by a passage in the ascendancy of the public ‘face’ thesis that borrowed heavily from Panebianco (1988). It asserted that due to the general intra-party transformation party in central office loses its independent relevance and diminishes into a ‘service organization’

99 Missing data is reported alongside with the findings to make the assessment of overall validity easier.
whose main function is now to assist the public ‘face’ to win elections (Katz & Mair 2002, 125–126, also Katz and Mair 2009, 756). In this scenario the party’s central office ceases to be the cultivator of organizational network (a position that produced its power in the mass party era) and develops into a ‘marketing and PR agency’ (see the next chapter for detailed description and hypotheses). In other words, it signifies a major re-distribution of intra-EPO assets.

While such characterizations appear in empirically oriented studies too (for example Webb 1995, 312–314, Farrell & Webb 2000, 119–121) these studies have generally overemphasised new campaign technologies at the expense of more structural developments (Farrell & Webb 2000, 102–103). While we know a great deal about tools that contemporary parties use to ‘sell their ‘products’, i.e. policies, to increasingly fickle audience of voters or consumers’ (for an overview see Gibson & Römmele 2009, 265–266) we know lot less about over time changes in party office’s preferences (i.e. about the alleged transformation of their priorities). Methodologically, studies on campaign professionalization have mostly relied on qualitative cross-sectional case studies, not on quantitative over time analyses (Tencher 2013, 242). This probably relates to the fact already mentioned: data on intra-party finances is very hard to acquire (Katz and Mair 2002, 123; Krouwel 2012, 235; Bolleyer 2012, 113).

The forthcoming analysis tests the professionalization thesis with more fine-grained financial data that can be extracted from the parties’ financial statements. It allows observing how EPOs have distributed their funds into various party functions and how their spending habits have changed over the 30-year period. The hypothesis, stemming straight from the functional adaptation model, is that due to the mediatisation and personalization of politics the traditional mass party work has given way to ‘electoral-professionalism’. The hypothesis is broken down to more specific sub-hypotheses that are then assessed by measuring the over time development of related spending units.

Such financial data is not unproblematic: reports are not required to follow a unified format and occasionally parties’ have changed their categorizations. However, considering that reports need to pass official investigation (state

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100 To my knowledge only one study has taken a comprehensive look at Western parties spending habits. Karl-Heinz Nassmacher’s (2009, 176–192, 394–398) wide analysis on a few European countries that have released such data found some evidence that parties professional spending has gradually increased along with changing communication culture. However, Nassmacher was not testing the professionalization hypothesis per se (i.e. he did not contrast this spending unit against other spending units); he mainly presented all existing information.

101 Sub-hypotheses and spending units will be defined before the analysis.
authorities have monitored the use of party subsidy) and that parties always need to
fulfil a set of basic functions (Nassmacher 2009) limited comparison is feasible. All
modifications made to harmonize units (within and between parties) will be
explained as they appear. In general, such need emerged only when a party
collapsed a set of previously independent items under a single heading while others
continued to provide more nuanced information. In such situations subcategories
were aggregated to a comparable level. This led to a fairly rough analysis, which
was not however a problem because the study focuses on long-term structural
changes. While majority of the rough data remained incomparable (parties financial
reports can be over 20 pages long and include everything from main office’s phone
bills to party’s election’s marketing budget), successful extractions increased the
quality of the analysis of intra-party finance.

The analysis of financial assets is backed with more detailed look on party staff.
This is the second major improvement in this ‘power dimension’. The main
question was what exactly do party clerks do and to which kind of ‘party idea’ does their tasks
relate to? By utilizing staff titles, which also appear in annual report’s staff catalogues
the staff was divided into three rough categories: administrative staff, associational
staff and political planning, publicity and elections. Administrative staff includes
(but is not restricted to) general administrative managers, financial accountants,
office secretaries, janitors, chauffeurs and so on. In short, the category tries to
represent those party tasks that relate to the ordinary operation of the organization.
Two other categories bear more substantial tone. Political planning, publicity and
elections refers to ‘electoral-professional’ workforce and includes planning officers
and secretaries, publicists and media workers, web coordinators and permanent
campaign staff. Contrarily, the category of associational staff encases party workers
whose roles relate to traditional mass party tasks; here, understood as functions
that maintain party’s subnational and auxiliary networks. These include regional
officers, trade union specialists, municipal secretaries, auxiliary liaisons, education
officers and co-op secretaries. To maximise the accuracy of coding every position
and holder name were manually compared year by year. While such a method
might not capture the exact nature of these functions, comparison of classes gives
a rough idea of the changes in overall emphasis.

To enable inter-party comparisons the analysis mostly reports spending or staffing
unit’s relative shares from party’s total expenditure and total staff. This also clarifies the real
trend in over time preferences as the fluctuations in overall expenditure – which
are subject to electoral fortunes and other factors – are taken into account. Another method that was used to control seasonal variation and make the trends
more visible was to use moving weighted averages instead of absolute numbers. In most cases every data point considers two previous and two forthcoming years by giving each a $1/5$ emphasis. As this tends to blur sharp changes, original numbers are reported alongside with the figures. Combined, these measures provide a better picture of the over time intra-organizational asset distributions.

As has been already pointed out, in this study the analysis of **decision-making power** also delves into actual uses of power. Before that, however, it is essential to analyze the development of the formal decision-making framework (i.e. party rules). Here, this is done by focusing on a question that captures the basis idea of the studied phenomenon: to what extent is the EPO able to control/affect PPG’s work? The analysis that aims for inter-party comparison travels along the path that was developed by Janda (1980) and cleared by many others after him. In other words, the main concept (EPO’s power over the PPG) is divided into operational variables that are scored according to designated coding scheme. To provide over time relevance the coding scheme builds on similar studies that were taken in different times (Janda 1980, Gibson & Harmel 1998, Biezen 2000 and Pedersen 2010) and to provide context specific sensitivity it also consults similar Finnish studies (Borg 1982, Sundberg 1997).

The crafting of the framework followed three general principles. Firstly, the main concept (the EPO’s power over the PPG) was extended into a ‘mental scale’ that clarifies the direction of the analysis. It travels from no rule that signifies PPG autonomy towards more concentrated control, from most diffused organs like party congresses and party referenda towards the party council and finally to the party executive (NEC), which signifies the highest form of EPO control. Thus, the higher the overall score, the stronger the EPO’s control. This reasoning stems from Katz and Mair’s (1995, 2002) theory, which conceives leadership/PPO autonomy to be higher when its actions are subject to masses and not activist mid-elites review. It suggests that effective control requires certain unity from the controller; in wide audiences opinions tend to diffuse and, thus, their control potential is smaller. The second general principle aimed to avoid situations where appointed values are based on ‘non-observations’. In other words, instead of relying solely on theoretical-deductive reasoning it was decided that variables and codes should reflect real options and variation. Thirdly, as Finnish EPO statutes

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102 The mathematical formula for the operation is: $(1/5)*[x(t-2) + x(t-1) + 1*x(t) + x(t+1) + x(t+2)]; x(t) = the equalized variable.$

103 Chapter 6 indeed shows that wide collectives that represent geographically wide selectorates tend to be less able to provide counterweight for the leadership as their opinions easily disperse.
rarely mention PPGs (denial of imperative mandates is stated in the constitution) EPO and PPG statutes were treated as equals. Combined, they present the totality of formal rules that limit PPGs’ autonomy. Statutes were collected from party archives, central and PPG offices and – the current ones – from parties’ web pages.

The overall scheme (which can be found in appendix 1) consists of six variables. First focuses on EPO’s role in government formation, which can be considered as one of the most important decisions that parties make. It was divided into two subquestions: who is the author of the final decision and what is the composition of the group that negotiates with other parties? Two next variables connect to Panebianco’s (1988) sixth class of resources, recruitment, which was collapsed to the dimension of decision-making power. First recruitment variable deals with candidate selection and more specifically the extent to which EPO can interfere with it. This is a classic measure that appears in almost all similar studies. As Sartori (2005a, 86) has highlighted, whenever rulers career must travel through parties, methods of candidates’ selection are crucially important. The second recruitment measure focuses on leaders, more specifically, to which extent can the EPO affect PPG’s leadership selection? If the party is able to exert influence, it has better chances to control the PPG. Three other variables too relate to classic party functions (policy formation, monitoring and sanctioning of MPs) and apply similar logic. To avoid quantifying essentially qualitative differences too much, the results are also presented in textual form, which enables highlighting the most important differences and changes.

Finally, there’s the analysis of actual decision-making processes – this study’s main methodological contribution that aims to bring a formidable amount of concreteness over the traditional, quantitatively oriented measures. Essentially, all these choices stem from a need to triangulate; to observe a complex concept from several angles in order to strengthen the inferences. To provide a novel angle to intra-party power chapter 6 process traces significant party decisions in various time points in order to show how the parties’ decision-making systems work in practice and how the actual practices have changed over time.

The chosen outcome variable (Y), i.e. the decision that is explained, is arguably one of the most important party decisions: the decision to join in or abstain from a coalition government. Other relevant party decisions that one could study for contrasting formal and actual intra-party power are candidate and policy selection processes. In the Finnish case they are problematic because formally they are strictly intra-EPO matters. While the parliamentarians and PPGs no doubt try and can exert influence over them, the influence is purely informal, making the
comparison to a formal rule impossible and data collection hard. The government formation process, on the other hand, formally includes the PPGs too in all parties. A government formation process is also significantly easier to confine: the formal negotiation process begins after the elections that determine parties parliamentary ‘weights’ and it ends in the nomination of a new government. Party programs and candidate lists, on the contrary, are developed in longer and weakly defined processes. Also, while the government program defines Finnish parties’ main political commitments for the next 4 years in a relatively concrete fashion, policy program’s and candidate list’s practical relevance can be less certain. Official policy programs are likely to contain mere ‘campaign messages’ too and while candidate selection method can affect PPG cohesion (Rahat & Hazan 2001) the Finnish PPGs have always operated in highly cohesive manner (Pajala 2013, 44–45). Alternative decisions outcomes do not seem to compare to what the use of power during a government formation process can produce. Due to its relevance it can be treated as a proxy of a more general underlying power structure.104 The forthcoming analysis traces government formation processes in 5 different timepoints (1983, 1987, 1991, 1995 and 2011) and in three types of parties, totalling in 15 independent event structures that are compared over time and between party types.

In order to settle a suitable research strategy for these efforts it is integral to consider prior theoretical knowledge. What is the expected nature of the causal mechanism and is there a sufficiently well-elaborated theory to guide a strict theory-driven process tracing? While coalition governments as such have been political scientists’ favourites for over a half of a century their connection to intra-party politics is a fairly recent invention. According to Müller and Miller (2005, 1–3) until the 1990’s coalitional theorists tended to treat parties as unitary actors, making the process of government formation an inter-party rather than intra-party affair. In time the critique against the model’s simplicity forced its proponents to seek ways to accommodate diverging intra-party motivations and in the 2000’s the idea of ‘treating political parties as unitary actors in coalition politics’ came to be treated as ‘highly unrealistic’.

Bäck’s (2008, 74–76; citing Luebbert 1986; Strom 1994; Müller & Strom 1999; Warwick 1996 and Laver & Schofield 1998) comprehensive review generates a hypothesis that provides a general idea of the process and the most important

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104 While the power system is likely to be more diffuse in lesser matters where party activists might have incentives to push forward their more sectional interests, this study is interested in ‘high power'; power to make binding politically significant decision that represent party’s overall view.
players in it. It asserts that 1) party activists are more policy seeking than their leaders whose 2) main motivation is to remain in a leading position. Although 3) leaders would gain more from governing status, 4) they minimize disunity within the party in order to keep their position. However, 5) as internal democracy within parties differs 6) some leaders should be more able to strive for government position while 7) others are more constrained in their policy choices and the level of affirmation they have to seek ‘from below. Thus, 8) internally democratic parties are less likely to enter governments.

What this hypothesis suggests is that in government formation processes party leadership possesses the initiative and party organs react to it – if they are empowered to do so, that is. This resonates well with Thomas Poguntke’s (1987b, 618–619) more general characterization on intra-party decision-making processes. According to Poguntke the leadership always proposes/initiates actions and thus it yields significant leverage over the party’s decisions. However, if other ‘veto points’ exist, the leadership’s autonomy can become constrained. Thus, the first theoretical premise that can guide the forthcoming analysis is that a designated leadership group drives the process within parties and party organs (if they are relevant) respond and react.

In order to enhance the theoretically guided analysis we need information on these ‘veto points’ as well. Another strand of research has delved into intra-party decision-making processes by elaborating the selection of candidates (Hopkin 2001, Bille 2001) and party leaders (Müller & Meth-Cohn 1991). Unlike highly theoretical coalitional studies that rely on deductive reasoning, these studies have approached selection processes empirically, deducing them from party statutes. As already noted, Finnish party statutes usually include an article on government formation process. Although it does not necessarily reflect the process accurately, it can be used to narrow down some potential intra-party ‘veto points’, actors and events. Formal rules – as it was previously noted – set ‘boundaries’ for legitimate intra-party workings. Usually the article comprises of two main components: it sets the composition of the leadership group that negotiates and instructions for final decision (authors and decision-making rules). Sometimes the article also states conditions for additional meetings, directions on how party organs can delegate their powers and rules for nominating of ministerial candidates. Formal rules on government formation vary significantly between parties (see chapter 5 for details) but when combined they can be used to craft a rudimentary theory of the process.

First of all, statutes show that what we are looking at is indeed a multistep process, which builds on interaction between a designated leadership group (which
normally combines EPO and PPG leaders) and various party organs that may react to leaderships proposals. The main ‘veto points’ are the parliamentary party group, party council and the national executive committee. Considering what rules say about the process (initiation, additional meetings and final decisions, etc.) and what its expected outcome is (i.e. a coalition government), some of process’ main events/decisions can also be deduced. Firstly, after election results are revealed the party needs to decide whether to aim for governing or opposing position. Secondly, if the party decides to aim for government, it needs to decide with whom it should coalesce. Thirdly, party needs to decide with what kind of policies it pursues in the negotiation and fourthly, after the negotiations it needs to make a decision whether it accepts the bargain or not. Finally, if the bargain is accepted, the party needs to decide who will serve in the ministerial group. While this framework (players and events/decisions) gives a rough idea of how the process may proceed, the picture is too vague to serve a baseline for strict theory-driven process tracing.

The end result is a hybrid strategy that combines a fairly restricted group of players and events into interaction whose nature can only be hypothesised on a very general level. Limited openness however can be defended from many viewpoints. According to Poguntke (1987b, 618–619) party’s real ‘[W]orking mode’ can only be revealed by ‘focusing on all parts of a party at the same time’. Indeed, while statutes often project a fairly unambiguous idea of intra-party workings and power relations in reality the system can be more complex as intra-party arena can be – or according to mainstream view, is – heterogeneous: party leaders may need to consider many demands (MPs, party activists) simultaneously. Another reason to refrain from strict theory-driven analysis and support a more open-ended strategy is that exclusive focus on a single explanation easily leads to confirmation bias. Being assertive towards alternative explanations is one of the defining aspects of good process tracing. (George & Bennett 2005, 217; Bennett & Checkel 2014, 18–22.) Thus, every party organ’s relevance will be considered in every single decision-making process. Such a strategy allows making judgements about party leadership’s allegiances: does it generally lean over to the EPO or the public ‘face’ – or does it indeed act as an independent power ‘face’?

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While this characterization gives a very systematic idea of the process, the reality might be lot simpler. According to George and Bennett (2005, 212–213) social processes are prone to path dependency where initial choice – no matter how insignificant it may look like in the outset – gets ‘locked in’ and resists further alterations. While ‘identifying key decision points’ is essential objective, one should not be overly deterministic about them.
Finally, it is essential to underline that the forthcoming analysis is not seeking to establish the ultimate reasons why certain parties joined coalition governments or abstained from them. As such, the analysis differs from the textbook model of process tracing where outcome Y is explained exhaustively by revealing all steps in the causal chain. Here, the objective is more modest: only party organs’ relevance in the process is of interest. This strategy leans on the logic of elimination where process tracing is employed for trying the truthfulness of prior expectations in a more demanding and systematic way (Mahoney 2000, 413–414). In other words, the analysis only tries to establish \textit{whether formally designated party organs can affect the actions of the leadership or not}. The elimination strategy has two interrelated benefits. One, it releases researcher from seeking ‘true rulers’ who might have several good reasons to convene unofficially and minimize empirically observable traces of their actions. Two, it helps to narrow down situations that are critical in proving actor’s relevance in the process. Here, this refers to party organ’s official meetings where the leadership presents its proposals and the organs may react.

It can be pointed out that this does not preclude the possibility that party leaders and individual members of party organs hold secret meetings to settle things beforehand. It is quite possible that the leader tries to ‘buy’ a winning coalition in advance and the official meetings are just for show purposes. But while such activity undoubtedly exists, it seems highly unlikely that leadership could simultaneously ‘buy off’ all party ‘faces’ whose interests contradict (at least according to theory). It should also be emphasised that EPO representatives (in the party councils and executives) are chosen by intra-party selectorates (local party activists) who can find out – via internal communication channels – what the leadership proposed and how their representatives reacted. If varying motivations exist, party delegates (including MPs) have reasons to voice them out\footnote{Of course such motivation might also drive towards overemphasising one’s input – especially in party’s internal publicity. Overall, the fact that participants have various reasons to over-/underemphasise their role in intra-party processes should always be taken into consideration when assessing evidence, as Bennett and Checkel (2014) and Beach and Pedersen (2013) note. This is why the forthcoming analysis leans mostly on the sequence of decisions rather than individual actors’ opinions.} and use the advantage of formality to extract bargains for their side. If the leadership is able to direct the process without ever submitting proposals to explicit affirmative processes then party organs simply do not matter. The leadership is indeed an independent power ‘face’.

Chapter 6 presents detailed reconstructions of 13 intra-party decision-making processes whose aim is to decide whether a party joins a coalition government,
with whom and under what terms. The processes start after the elections and end when all participants have accepted the agreement. The process is conceptualized as a dialectic interaction between party leadership who proposes actions and various party organs that might want to affect them. While the analysis does not employ process-tracing tests rigorously, it naturally tries to build conclusive proofs. The most important inferential logic derives from a hoop test—the quintessential method of elimination. Careful reconstructions put focus on the temporal sequence of events and decisions. If a party organ did not convene before the party leadership made a decision, it could not have affected it and therefore its role in that specific step of the process can be deemed irrelevant. The analysis also looks deeper into the meetings, their agendas and decisions as well as the surrounding contexts. While much of the information relates to straw-in-the-wind type clues (stronger or weaker), few instances of a genuine smoking gun exists too when a specific party organ convenes for a public high saliency decision.

While process tracing can provide only provisional conclusions (like any other social scientific method) (George & Bennett 2005, 222) the forthcoming analysis exceeds the quality of anecdotal ad hoc descriptions. The reconstructions utilize most of the previously defined data sources: party minutes, elite interviews, press articles, memoirs and biographies and secondary sources. They will be specified more thoroughly before the analysis. Because of the wealth of the data some more ad hoc type of fragments are presented alongside the processes, in a manner of reputational approach, which can shed some light on issues that are hard to penetrate via formalized accounts (Heidar 1984, 14). A combination of these methods and measures should produce a relatively reliable picture of the changing intra-party power dynamics in the previously described party types.

Bennett and Checkel (2014, 26–27) underline that process tracer needs to make a justifiable decision ‘when to start’ in order to avoid the infinite regress of explanations. One popular method has been to start from a critical juncture, a moment that significantly aligns options for future proceedings. Party leaders undoubtedly probe possible coalition partners well before elections, but it’s the election result that sets the tone for the negotiation. It sets parties negotiation leverages and usually the party that gained largest number of representative seats leads the negotiation and takes prime minister’s office (Isaksson 2014, 150–156). Also, regardless of what party leaders have agreed before elections party organs convene only after the results are known. Of course, as the election result itself significantly affects the end result, it’s one of the most significant independent factors to determine the outcome (Y).
Combining these ‘power dimensions’ to the general hypotheses that were portrayed in the end of the previous chapter produces a more nuanced picture of what is to be expected in the forthcoming analyses. The key is to recognize the expected party type-wise differences that stem from differing initial power distributions. As Heidar (1984, 13) has noted, intra-party power research can be improved by making it comparative, because “more than”/“less than” terminology is clearly less problematic to handle than the absolute denotations’. Expected party changes are easier to conceive if they are contrasted against other, supposedly different parties.

In the presentational power dimension the expectations are rather clear. As the leader-centric electoral party is supposed to be dominated by its publicly leaning leadership, we should witness a strong MP presence in all of its leading organs (the NEC, the ‘presidium’ and the ministerial group). In a representative membership party the EPO leadership should represent party activists and therefore intra-party leaders should have stronger presence in the leadership organs. This also means that the tendency to appoint more presence to MPs should be slower. However, as the organization is based on layered representation and these parties too have endorsed a clear parliamentary ethos, the relative amount of MPs in leading organs should be higher than in a democratic process party that disperses power all the way down to the lowest organized units. While in this party type MP representation is likely to remain stable as the dispersion of power disallows changes, in a representative membership party MPs presence may increase if the central party begins to lean towards the public sphere.

In the asset-based power dimension the leader-centric electoral party should behave like catch-all and electoral-professional theories expect: it should invest all possible resources for the benefit of the public ‘face’. This means that it uses its subsidies (both PPG and EPO) to enhance its parliamentary office’s operating capabilities as far as possible while the central office’s overall resources are reduced to a minimum, only allowing to it to handle tasks that focus exclusively on campaigning. In a representative membership party the central office is not only the historical party headquarters, it is the main responsible for cultivating the mass organization that for this party type is the essence of political organizing. As the EPO leaders who are constrained by the subnational activists have a larger say in organizational re-structuring, this party should spend less for the PPG office and maintain a larger EPO office. Moreover, the EPO office should continue to spend less in ‘electoral-professional activities’ (these are clarified in chapter 5) than
traditional mass party networks. In general, the push towards electoral-professional model should be clearly harder for this party type. The democratic process party’s expected distribution of assets is a more complicated matter. Although the push for grassroots organizing is strong, this party type is also known for its distinct, exclusive and in numerical terms rather limited membership. As the activists should be fairly dependent on public subsidies (because the party lacks major external donors and has a small membership) the party should invest more in ‘electoral-professional’ spending in order to provide sustenance for its core membership.

Finally, there is the dimension that focuses on decision-making power. Starting from the positional power (i.e. party organs’ formal prerogatives as they appear in the party statutes), the leader-centric electoral party should have always appointed clearly more formal autonomy to its PPG than other party types. If its EPO had strengthened prior to the research period for some reason (‘contagion from the left’, etc.) the party that has been historically dominated by the public ‘face’ should try to demolish all leftovers of its power. Unsurprisingly, the representative membership party should enter the research period from a completely different angle, one that appoints to the EPO leadership strong formal means to interfere with PPG’s internal workings. Just like in the case of asset-based power the development towards public ‘face’ dominance should be harder. In fact, considering the nature of this power resource: a lot harder. While the core leadership that operates rather far away from the field organization might be able to manipulate party officials without much effort or attention, changes to party’s official rules are lot harder to execute. Finnish parties’ rule reforms are generally ratified in party congresses. Here, again, the democratic process party is situated in between: while the PPG cannot be as autonomous as in a leader-centric party, the EPO control disperses wider than in a representative party, where the NEC is the main controlling unit. From the previously made definitions follow that the wider the controlling unit is, the smaller are its possibilities to provide meaningful interference. Therefore, democratic process party’s public ‘face’ has better possibilities to strengthen itself.

Finally, while it was decided that process tracing of government formation processes should proceed in a relatively ‘open’ manner, minor working hypotheses can be crafted along these lines. Leader-centric electoral party’s processes should be characterized by two things: a relatively wide leadership autonomy and, in case that any party organ proves to be important, the PPG’s primacy over party organs. In a representative membership party the central EPO organ (the NEC) should be
well represented in the process (more than the PPG) while in a democratic process party the scrutiny of leader’s propositions should be taken down to the widest possible assemblies, again providing to the leadership more possibilities to avoid interference.
This study analyzes the over time development of three theoretically distinct parties under similar ‘environmental’ pressures in order to find out whether their theoretically distinct features (i.e. parties’ historically construed organizational characteristics) can produce variance in their adaptive behaviour. To warrant Finland’s status as a suitable ‘site’ for probing the plausibility (Eckstein 2000) of the elaborated theory of intra-party power change that was developed in chapter 2, it is essential to present good reasons why the Finnish case (parties and ‘environmental’ factors) fits so well into it. This is the current chapter’s primary purpose. The secondary purpose is to provide background information that helps to set forthcoming observations into a relevant context.

The first section explains the party case selection. As the method of structured and focused comparison requires, the comparable cases were not selected because they are ‘interesting’ but in order ‘to provide the kind of control and variation required by the research problem’ (George & Bennett 2005, 83–84). In other words, the selected cases connect to the leader-centric, representative and democratic process party types. The first section describes the emergence and development of party types’ real life counterparts. It will be shown that the activist groups that erected these organizations adhered to very different ideas on legitimate intra-party rule and although they have converged over the decades, the detectable differences continued to exist in the beginning of the research period.

The second section explains why we should expect to witness the ascendancy of the party in public office in Finland. It shows that all the ‘push factors’ stemming from Katz and Mair’s (2002, 2009) framework have been clearly present in recent history of Finland. Although the factors have also been present in most other Western European polities, due to Finland’s ‘late bloom’ (modernization, internationalization, etc.) some of them have progressed in an exceptionally rapid and pronounced manner, making Finland an extreme case of societal change among Western countries (Karvonen 2014, 2, emphasis is original). Moreover, the research period encompasses a rare grand-scale institutional reform: a regime change from presidentially dominated semi-presidentialism to almost purely
parliamentary government. Parliamentarism should produce stronger parties and more centralized decision-making structures (Gerring et al. 2009, 329–330). Against general European trend towards deparlamentarization, the Finnish Eduskunta has actually strengthened (Raunio & Wiberg 2014, 7–14). Simultaneously, it has been argued, party leaders have strengthened (Paloheimo 2005). Overall, the recent changes in the Finnish political landscape have produced a very auspicious backdrop for the studied phenomenon. If the ideologically bound organizational heritage can affect parties’ proneness to resist ‘environmental’ pressures, Finland is a good ‘laboratory’ to test it.

4.1 Three distinct organizational cultures

The fragmented Finnish party system that still mostly leans on cleavages that emerged during the two first decades of the 20th century has produced a plethora of different party types, from pure elite cliques to army-like devotee parties (for a comprehensive overview, see Mickelsson 2007). This review focuses on three of them, to those that most clearly correspond with the theorized ideal types. The conservative National Coalition Party (NCP) that emerged in 1918 as a merger of two old ‘internally created’ elite parties is a traditional cadre party, which plays the role of a leader-centric electoral party type in forthcoming analyses. The Social Democratic Party of Finland (SDP) (founded ‘externally’ in 1899 as Finnish Labour Party) was the original and for a long time the only genuine Finnish mass party. It is viewed as a sample unit of a representative membership party type. Democratic process party is played by the Green League (Greens), which emerged in the 1980’s, first as a PPG (in 1983) and after a burdensome organizing process as a genuine party organization (in 1988), strongly emphasising participatory grassroots democracy.

4.1.1 The formation of the ‘old parties’ and their foundational differences

The first wave of the Finnish party formation was set in motion in 1860’s, when the Estates begun to convene again after the Crimean war. Language issues were the driving force in this conflict. The Fennoman movement that evolved into the Finnish Party (the direct ancestor of the NCP) politicized against Swedish nobility that formed the Svecoman movement and the Swedish Party (ancestor of another contemporary Finnish party, the Swedish People’s Party of Finland). (Borg 1965,
The Finnish Party was not a pure elite party. Its founders did not represent the established nobility but rather their challengers, the emerging first generation of 'self-made' Finnish higher class (Lahtinen 2006, 64). It was, however, clearly an upper class movement that consisted solely of professors and the like that disliked the idea of the organization, which was unnecessary in the estate system anyways (Leino-Kaukiainen 1994, 15–23). Diet parties were not parties in the contemporary sense of the term. They were loose groupings of notables that gathered around a few leading figures (Mickelsson 2007, 58–59.) At the turn of the 1900’s, the Finnish Party’s founding elites had developed a tight network, bound by marital and familial ties. As the bourgeois forces had begun to disperse to several competing directions (most notably to the Young Finns that was formed in 1894), it became obvious that the Finnish Party could not become a wide mass party. Instead, they focused on active upper class citizens who made the core of their ‘vanguard’ cadre. (Leino-Kaukiainen 1994, 237–238.)

Interestingly, the first incarnation of the organized worker’s movement had a bourgeois origin, too. In order to avoid worker radicalization, the movement’s central founding figure, furniture manufacturer and a member of the nobility Viktor Julius von Wright begun in the early 1880’s to organize worker’s associations in order to improve the worker’s living standards. However, although still in 1890’s several members of the estates took part in the associations that were not directly political but rather aimed socially and economically, socialism started to take root and the movement begun to radicalize. The number of workers increased towards the end of the century and eventually they challenged the movement’s bourgeois organizers. In 1899 activists from several parts of Finland gathered at a general conference in Turku and the worker faction that had a majority over the estate members set up the Finnish Labour Party. At this point the organization was still fairly limited and controlled by a small group but when the first period of oppression begun in the same year, the party begun to build a vast mass organization. In 1903’s legendary congress, the party took a radical turn by assuming a clear socialist program. It was also renamed the Social Democratic Party in Finland. (Soikkanen 1975, 19–39; Paastela 2006, 76–77).

The second wave of organizing – which created the ‘real parties’ – took place in the middle of the first decade of the 20th century, when the first period of Russification (1899-1905) ended into the general strike of 1905, which paved way for the parliamentary reform (1906) that introduced the modern unicameral

108 In this sense The Finnish Party corresponded more to the British Liberal party than the Conservatives.
parliament and universal suffrage and, eventually, the first parliamentary elections (1907). The reform forced the diet parties to reach out and two new parties (SDP and Agrarian League (AL)) organized outside of Eduskunta (Borg 1965, 26). In duvergerian terms, old parties were formed ‘internally’, SDP and AL ‘externally’ (Mickelsson 2007, 61).

Although before 1905 the bourgeois parties were nothing more than leadership groups with no membership organizations behind them and the parliamentary reform was the spark to their organizing, they had begun to grow tighter (Borg 1965, 36; Nousiainen 1998, 34). On 28.6.1905, shortly before the general strike, the Finnish Party created a three-tier organizational structure (local, regional, national) that was later copied by all the other Finnish parties and is still in use today (Mickelsson 2007, 77). However, while masses of voters put pressures on conservatives (Borg 1980, 1), they tended to emphasize individual skills and merits in the founding decades of the Finnish democracy (Nousiainen 1998, 30). Even after their organizing, the Finnish Party and other bourgeois parties (including the Agrarian League) continued to function in the cadre party style, putting the emphasis on party leadership and the considerably autonomous PPGs while the field organization activated only during the elections (Rantala 1982, 17; Mickelsson 2007, 77). While the level of the Finnish Party’s organizational activity in the first decade of the 1900’s is somewhat uncertain as nearly no documentation exists, in the second decade (1910’s) the Finnish Party’s membership activity was very weak; the organization was only activated during the election periods – like the cadre party model assumes (Leino-Kaukiainen 1994, 151–154; Hölttä 1984, 5).

The SDP was the first and for a long time the only real mass party. Its organizational strengthening and solidification towards becoming a continually working political machine that incorporates large masses of trained members began well before the general strike, already under auspices of the Labour Party. (Borg 1965, 27, 35–36; Soikkalen 1975; Rantala 1982, 17; Hölttä 1984, 5; Nousiainen 1998, 34). However, its expansion took a very rapid burst at the dawn of the parliamentary reform. In the 1906 congress SDP copied Finnish Party’s three-tier model and between 1905 and 1906 its membership doubled. In 1906 SDP was – relatively speaking – the world’s largest political party, boasting with over 80 000 members and almost 1000 local branches. (Soikkalen 1975, 113, Rantala 1982, 17.)

In the 1906 congress the party also decided – under pressure from the radical leftist faction that tensed the situation inside the party up until the civil war after which they were eradicated – to focus on the parliamentary representation instead of the revolution. In the first free elections (1907) the party had a landslide victory,
winning 80 seats out of 200. Procedures between the party leadership and the PPG were not very clear in the beginning. The NEC and PPG – that were largely composed of same persons – mainly focused on their own tasks, PPG on parliamentary matters and the NEC on the rapidly growing organization. Only during 1910’s the NEC begun to take a more active role in political matters (Soikkanen 1975, 98–99, 124–126, 146–148). Comparatively, however, SDP paid a ‘relatively large amount of attention’ to their PPG from the very beginning. The group endorsed a strict majority dominance, which was enforced if needed. The group meetings were highly formal (the PPG crafted statutes already in 1907109) and decisions had to be ‘brought under the selectors’ knowledge’110 (Von Bonsdorff 1982, 371, 391–392, 402.) In the first congresses the activists claimed rights to not only review and criticize the PPG, but also to give it direct orders. Its reports were submitted to a vote and local branches were able to sanction individual MPs. There was no question that in SDP the MPs were seen as delegates (in the Pitkinian framework). As Borg wrote: ‘Eduskunta was clearly seen as a forum where party representatives advocate objectives derived from party program and leadership’. (Borg 1982, 511–518). The difference to the Finnish Party was obvious; the differences continued at least until the middle of the century.

In 1918, after the Finnish civil war, the majority from the Finnish Party joined forces with a minority from the Young Finns and they formed the National Coalition Party (NCP). The NCP begun to build its organization on the Finnish Party’s three-tier network, but regardless of its formal subnational reach, the party followed its elitist style. Power centralized considerably in 1921 when a sparse union model was introduced. It centred most powers to a small council that hid from the base through multilayered representation, which did not work in passive organizational culture. As Vares put it: until the late 1940’s, the NCP was mostly a ‘combination of an electoral machine and PPG than continuously and coherently working organization’. (Uino 1994, 385–390; Vares 2008, 143–147.) The fact that the organization was at the same time very sparse, centralized and personalized (Hölttä 1984, 48) is not very surprising considering that in the interwar era the NCP’s ideal of political representation was mainly to gather the ‘cream’ from the upper societal strata to its central leadership organs (Vares 2007, 367–369). It was a

109 For comparison: the NCP PPG’s first rules were crafted in 1976.
110 Another interesting comparison is that while the SDP gave its own press rights to participate in the PPG meetings already in 1919, the NCP’s PPG appointed this right for its press in 1962 (Von Bonsdorff 1982, 427).
‘professor-statesman-leaders’ cadre party (Mickelsson 2007, 204–206; Lahtinen 2006, 64).

Unexpectedly, in this constellation the PPG was very autonomous, both externally and internally. The EPO did not have powers over its functioning while the MPs had wide right to participate in its affairs. Within the PPG the MPs championed their independent mandates and the group voted rarely. (Borg 1982, 464–467; Von Bonsdorff 1982, 417–418, 422–424, 430). The PPG’s annual report on its doings in Eduskunta that was dealt in every party congress is an illuminating example. In general, it received very little attention in the first half of the century. Until the early 1930’s only a few comments were made about the PPG’s actions and its passing was never voted. PPG’s autonomy was not questioned. Between the 1930’s and 1950’s the report’s status weakened even more and in the 1955 congress its presenter Felix Seppälä defined the report as ‘a necessary evil’ and apologized to the audience for presenting it. Eventually, its full presentation was removed from the agenda. (Borg 1982, 519–525.)

In the wider organizational realm the NCP also continued its ancestor’s ways: the membership activity was weak, the branches were poorly connected and the organization activated only during the elections (Hölttä 1984, 52–53). The idea of a membership funded party organization (i.e. a mass party) did not work because the party lacked active members and even the members themselves viewed party work negatively (Uino 1994, 458–462). Although the NCP tried to organize further in 1920’s and 1930’s as its main competitor AL was strengthening, the membership remained small and passive (Nousiainen 1998, 59–60). In 1930’s subnational party activity was almost non-existent (Vares 2007, 332).

Before the World War II the SDP had been the only true mass organization with a vast and active, comprehensively cultivated and actively participating membership and a solid network of local organizations (Hölttä 1984, 17; Sundberg 1985, 306–307; Nousiainen 1998, 59–60; Mickelsson 2007, 91.) In the interwar era the SDP expanded its ‘democratic revolution’ by penetrating the periphery after the 1917 Law of municipal elections made them free for competition. Soon the party’s need for members extended from organizational tasks to representative functions in the municipal councils and other local offices. (Sundberg 1994, 158–163). At the national level the party’s relationship with the PPG remained tense. Until the late 1920’s, the annual report was often submitted into a vote after a long, heated and critical discussion. Although votes were avoided after 1926, the report continued to arouse vast interest in every congress until the mid century. (Borg 1982, 511–518). An illuminating example of the ideal EPO/PPG relationship can be found in the
party’s procedural guidelines that were accepted in the 1930 party congress. The PPG’s task was straightforwardly defined as ‘to conquer for the working class as many rights and societal improvements as possible that are defined in the party’s program’. The instructions maintained that the PPG and the party ‘should always stay in most proximate contact’ and that the group must regularly report about its activities and control its members. The instructions also maintained that the party’s leading organs should always ‘support and help’ the group with ‘advises, statements, demonstrations’ and other means and, when needed, to criticize it ‘correctly and constructively’ (cited in Borg 1965, 203–204). The constitution forbade imperative mandates, but these definitions were not too far from them.

In the pre-war era the SDP and the NCP differed significantly in their organizational styles and corresponded well with Duverger’s (1967[1951]) classic party types. Before turning to the more recent developments it must be noted that in the post-war party discourses the SDP was not often considered as the Mass Party of Finland. This title was usually reserved for the Agrarian League (founded in 1908), which in the middle of the century produced the largest and the most effective organization in the Finnish party history. The reason why this study has chosen to focus on the SDP instead of the Centre Party (to which the AL’s name was changed in 1965) is that only the former was born as a mass party and is therefore able to fulfil the criteria of the founding activist elite’s organizational preference that established a specific organizational trajectory. Although the AL created a modern three-layer party organization in 1908 (like the other founding bourgeois parties, the Finnish Party in 1905 and Swedish People’s Party in 1906), its functioning remained strongly leader-centric and organizationally weak until the civil war (Hölttä 1984, 6–7). The AL strengthened its organization in 1920’s, but still in late 1930’s it worked like a cadre party: the PPG was dominant (sometimes it ran the party apparatus too) and the organization mainly worked during election times. Although it had increased its membership to a mass party level, the membership activity was weaker than in the SDP. (Rantala 1982, 20; Mickelsson 2007, 128–129). As noted before, there is nothing unusual about cadre parties trying to gather members at some point of their career. The main difference between a cadre party and a mass party is not, however, the extent of the membership: it is what they actually do and how the founding units work and are tied together (Duverger 1967[1951]). A cadre party does not become a mass party by enrolling new members unless the members are empowered (Ware 1987a, 9). The difference is not quantitative, it is qualitative.
4.1.2 The post-war party developments: the emergence of the professionalized mass bureaucracies

Mickelsson (2007, 137–138) has named the period of 1940–1965 as the era of fighting interest parties. It was characterized by a clear societal division and the class-based party forces that represented it. During this period the party organizations began to converge – much like the ‘contagion from the left’ (Duverger 1967[1951]) predicted. This period was the ‘golden age’ of mass parties in Finland, too. After the World War II, communists retained their freedom of assembly and began to strengthen quickly. In 1944, the Finnish People’s Democratic League – a major socialistic cooperative that was centred around the Finnish Communist Party – built the second mass party organization in Finland, attracting over 70 000 members already by 1946. During these ‘years of danger’, it was generally feared that Finland would succumb to Soviet rule, so bourgeois parties had to build a counterweight. The Agrarian League was the next to develop an expansive mass organization that, as Rantala put it, the NCP ‘imitated as well as it could’. The ‘professor-statesman-leaders’ cadre party sought also to become a mass party, and began to establish local branches and auxiliary organizations. (Rantala 1982, 30; Sundberg 1994, 158–163; Mickelsson 2007, 166, 204–205). During this era all parties adopted the mass party pyramid structure and also the organizational styles converged to some extent. The strengthening of the NCP’s organization diminished some of the PPG’s autonomy. The SDP evolved from an educational into electoral institution, giving more prominence to its PPG. It has been argued that organizational differences between the Finnish parties largely faded during this period. (Von Bonsdorff 1982, 429; Nousiainen 1998, 60–62, 71–72). However, as Rantala (1982, 82) has noted, while the pure mass and cadre party types weakened, the historical basic characteristics and differences remained. A good example is the NCP’s ‘mass partification’ effort.

The NCP’s elite-centred organization faced problems in 1930’s. While its main competitor, the Agrarian League had started to reach out to the masses already in the 1920’s, the NCP had held onto its elitist character. When the old elite style begun to lose its vogue in 1930’s, ‘raising’ new elites became harder. (Vares 2007, 367–369.) In the ‘quality-oriented’ mental framework structured organizing had been conceived as something that only lesser men needed. When the younger generation of leaders that had witnessed the war and understood the power of the mass took over, the support for a mass organization strengthened. The layered union model was demolished in the turn of the 1950’s and a more accessible and less elitist organizational framework was introduced. Paradoxically, however, while
the memberships increased, the members still did not feel a need for active engagement. (Vares 2008, 143–147). The NCP did not turn into an active machine (like in the AL and the SDP) simply because the idea of a collective and active dues paying membership did not fit into its supporters’ mentality. (Vares 2008, 267, 271, 284–285; Rantala 1982, 93). While the numbers suggested that the NCP became a mass party in the 1950’s (Rantala 1982, 83), its membership activity did not reach the leftist parties’ intense internal working style (Mickelsson 2007, 204–205).

Similar discrepancy between the formal organization and the actual practise remained in the upper party echelons. The 1950 rule reform made the NEC the highest decision-making organ. In reality it could not compete with the PPG and the linkage between them was generally weak; MPs often complained that they had no idea what the EPO organs were thinking and at the same time they held strongly onto their autonomy. (Vares 2008, 143–147, 267, 271, 284–285). Also Mickelsson (2007, 204–205) has noted that while the organizational expansion created some mass party like qualities, the PPG’s strong position in relation to the party organs was emphasised and therefore the NCP retained central cadre party qualities.

In the 1960’s, the PPG’s holy status became somewhat contested. The annual report started to receive more attention: long debates were held and once (1965) it was even voted on. The party was experiencing a generational change that brought in people who questioned the PPG’s total autonomy and harboured more positive feelings towards party rule. However, while the new EPO centred ethos was one of the reasons that tensed the PPG/EPO relations, it was not the only one. The party was divided on its foreign policy stance; its critical tones had kept it out of the government. The NCP’s drive to govern had increased as it had quietly developed into the largest bourgeois force in Finland in the 1970’s. To become a relevant player in the governmental game it needed unity, which was hard for a party that had traditionally defended MP autonomy. All internal debates were topped by strong interpersonal disagreements. Still in 1979 the PPG leader Pentti Sillantaus strongly defended the PPG’s autonomy against the EPO leader Ilkka Suominen who had a more positive view on EPO dominance. (Borg 1982, 511–525). Although the EPO had clearly got stronger, it seems that the only lawful lawmaker (the PPG) had not submitted.

If the NCP lost some of its cadre party nature after the wars, the SDP travelled in the other direction – at least to some extent. As was already pointed out, during the ‘second formation’ the SDP’s role as an ‘educational’ institution developed towards a more electoralist style and the PPG gained a more pronounced status
(Nousiainen 1998, 60–62, 71–72; Von Bonsdorff 1982, 429). The traditionally rigorous review of the PPG’s report waned in the latter half of the century. Only twice (in 1957 and 1969) did the congress attendants make remarks about the report but they were not subjected to a vote and it transformed into an ‘almost complete formality’. It should be noted, however, that during this period the report’s format changed: long textual accounts were replaced with numerical information, which did not arouse debate as easily. The general orientation in party work begun to shift to future oriented planning (see below). (Borg 1982, 511–525.)

Although the SDP sustained the FPDL’s challenge in the 1940’s and in fact increased its membership, in the late 1950’s the party suffered yet another split. The splitting fraction (Social Democratic Union of Workers and Smallholders) took 20 000 members and a significant amount of auxiliary organizations. (Mickelsson 2007, 167–169.) The SDP put less emphasis on its membership organization during long governing terms (the SDP had appeared in most post-war governments) and it made a surprisingly few efforts to get members back from the leftist fractions (Rantala 1982, 93). Yet in the 1960’s, the party begun to strengthen again and between 1965 and 1980 its membership increased from 51 000 to over 100 000 (Mickelsson 2007, 212). Despite of the PPG’s increased presence, intra-party representation was still considered among the most important intra-associational norms and the idea that the party organs (especially party congress) had power over the PPG was strongly defended and publicly questioned by no one at the turn of 1970’s (Mickelsson 1999, 106–107).

The general spirit of party work begun to change in the late 1960’s. The change can be divided into membership and upper party echelon levels. Without making any claims on causality, it seems clear that these trends conditioned each other. The rapid organizational growth that took place in the 1950’s tamed fairly quickly and by 1970’s the major Finnish parties had fairly equal sized and mostly stagnant memberships. The members’ roles changed too: the passionate fights for defending or changing the prevailing society gave way to formalized representation in various subnational representative bodies (municipalities, unions, church parishes etc.) that were created during the ‘partification’ era in the 1960’s and campaigning took a more prominent role in the activists’ chores (Sundberg 1994, 158–163.) While even during the ‘golden age’ only a small minority of members had participated actively in party branches’ work, aside from the relatively limited activist radicalization in the 1960’s the general motivation to partake in party work decreased — especially in the 1970’s that witnessed a strong counter movement against the overly politicized atmosphere of the 1960’s (Rantala 1982, 96–100).
At the same time the party elites’ work professionalized. Especially important was the Party Act (1969) that formalized the parties’ political standing, ‘standardized’ their organizations and provided them a member-independent resource base: public subsidies. (Sundberg 1994, 158–163.) The ‘etatization’ transformed parties self conception: they changed from society-grown free social movements into state institutions among other state institutions who did not require external legitimation (Nousiainen 1998, 47–48.) According to Rantala (1982, 50–55, 84–85, 103–111), the change connected to the enlargement of political sphere. As the scope and the complexity of politics increased, the parties needed to come up with rational and efficient models to control it. This created a heavy emphasis on policy planning that then called for new organizational actors (working groups, specialist committees, etc.), which institutionalized expertise and undermined the importance of the traditional party work. The ‘partification’ pushed the parties deeply into various state-related representative bodies, strengthening their role as the quasi-state ‘departments’ that had special responsibilities in the public authority structure that kept things in motion. As the parties inserted their trustees to the state administration, they became service organizations that through patronage provided career opportunities to their most active members. As party work became a highly technical, complex and time consuming full-time job, traditional participation got harder (Nousiainen 1998, 68.)

The combined effect of these tendencies was that the power begun to shift to the party elites. As Rantala (1982, 110) put it: ‘[P]arties’ operating scope widened but the deciding circle narrowed’. Many observed the formation of new cadre partiesque tendencies and especially the increasing centralization of power into the party leaders’ offices. They developed into efficient electoral and political machines that public subsidies made financially independent (Nousiainen 1998, 68). According to Mickelsson (1999, 155–162, 286–287; 2007, 202, 213), in the 1970’s the party leaderships begun to emerge as independent power units which ran their ‘machines’ without contestation and demanded strict internal discipline to enforce the ‘party line’. The chairmen transformed into permanent and often highly personalized professional politicians, party leaders, who demanded unanimity from their followers because otherwise the party’s political ‘steering’ capabilities would be jeopardized. This reduced intra-party pluralism and the activists’ motivation to take part in party work. (Rantala 1982, 103–111, 244–245.)

However, although in the turn of 1980’s all the major parties had created similar sized organizations and the pure forms of mass and cadre party had ceased to exist, the parties’ internal dynamics hadn’t become similar (Sundberg 1985, 309, 315).
‘[A]lthough these parties [SDP and NCP] have converged in many terms, they also continue to incorporate fundamental differences’ concluded Rauli Mickelsson in his in-depth analysis that tracked the SDP’s and the NCP’s ‘self-conceptions’ between 1965 and 1995. The differences in their fundamental ground values were clearly detectable still in the mid-1990’s. The NCP never let go of its individualistic leaning while the SDP continued to highlight equality and communality – features that are strongly supported in intra-party procedures, too. The mass party identity, which the SDP assumed in the beginning of 1900’s has always been more important to it than to the NCP, which has leaned on ‘statesmanship’. (Mickelsson 1999, 286–291; 2007, 267–268). These differences reflected in the other party dimensions, too. Although the PPGs had by the turn of the 1980’s transformed from trustees to party arms, the parties’ hold was still smaller in the rightist than in the leftist parties (Rantala 1982, 192–194). Also, despite of decades of heavy state regulation, the distribution of formal power within Finnish parties varied still in the 1990’s, from ‘extremely egalitarian to the extremely hierarchical’ – more or less according to the left-right continuum (Sundberg 1997, 108–114). In short: while the ‘old parties’ have arguably changed and converged from their early 1900’s configurations that were very different, they entered the 1980’s in forms that still inhibited traces of these old differences.

4.1.3 The diffusion of power: the emergence of the Green League

The timing of the formation of this study’s democratic process party is important: it took place amidst the professionalizing and centralizing tendency described above. The Greens’ founding momentum built heavily on anti-bureaucratic counter movement spirit and their highly laborious and conflict-ridden organizing process highlights unique organizational ideas. They were not an established elite geared towards securing old power positions (like the old rightist parties) nor even a homogenous social class that set out to fight for joint interests (like the socialists and the agrarians), although their central idea to create an alternative model to existing political movements resembled the early 1900’s worker’s and agrarian movements (Mickelsson 2007, 251). Initially, they were a ‘motley crew’ of

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111 It should be noted, though, that both SDP and NCP situated clearly to the right hand side (‘hierarchy’) – NCP to the far end and SDP few points to the left. The Left Alliance and Greens were located to the other end of the continuum. (Sundberg 1997, 108.)
independent activist groups that melted spontaneously together during a course of events.

The movement’s spiritual background lay in the 1960’s new leftist youth radicalism. The generation who created the movement were the ‘little brothers and sisters’ of the 1960’s radicals, who the old parties managed to assimilate under their ranks. The ‘little brothers and sisters’ did not connect to the general strike era parties, leaving them ‘politically homeless’. The 1970’s witnessed a creation of several associations and co-operatives that worked outside of the established party politics. This group consisted of anti-nuclear activists, traditional ecologists, feminists, advocates for the third world countries, vegetarians, alternative journalists, punks, disabled people, and so on. The movement also attracted some members from the established parties, mainly from liberals and communists. In the late 1970’s these groups took independently part in several minor escapades. The campaign that is often considered as the Greens’ founding moment took place in 1979 in Lake Kojärvi, where activists employed civil disobedience to protest against a drainage project. The campaign gave the activists a sense of joint purpose and bound the dispersed movement together. The other benefit was publicity: pictures of activists tied to bulldozers spread around the media quickly, causing effects in the electoral arena too. Ville Komsi, the founding figure of the movement and a Kojärvi activist, had run unsuccessfully in 1976 for the city council of Helsinki. He was elected in 1980, following the successful Kojärvi campaign, and to everyone’s surprise Komsi and Kalle Könkkölä – a wheelchair-bound pioneer of the disabled movement and the first chairman of the League – were elected to Eduskunta in the 1983 parliamentary elections. (Borg 1988, 6–10; Mickelsson 2007, 250–253; Sohlstén 2007a, 27–32; Paastela 2008, 63.)

From 1983 to 1987 this two man PPG and its office was the movement’s only organized national level organ. It managed funding and founded the party paper Green Thread. Although the PPG office (assisted by several future party leaders like Osmo Soininvaara and Pekka Haavisto) coordinated some subnational action and was, in a sense, the most important continuing linkage aside from the informal ‘folk meetings’, the overall functioning of the movement was highly autonomous: the candidates were selected in open, ‘improvised’ meetings and no public spokespersons existed. (Sohlstén 2007, 35–37; Paastela 2008, 64). As the only other organized ‘faces’ were the municipal council groups (in 1984 elections the movement gained over 100 seats), the movement developed a strongly parliamentary character (Sohlstén 2007a, 43) – which still carries consequences (see
After the 1983 elections the movement began its 5 year long march towards a party organization, which eventually builds counter weight.

It was extremely hard for the Greens to set up a party organization (Paastela 2008, 62). The main reason is rather obvious: the atmosphere inside the group was very anti-partyist, which is not very surprising considering that most of the participants were motivated by the movement’s anti-establishment ethos. According to Sohlstén (2007a, 41–44) many felt that the party organization would inevitably lead to hierarchic power structures, the religion of authority and the loss of unlimited deliberation and communication. Also Mickelsson (2007, 253–255) notes that the organizing discussion that begun already in 1983 took place in a very anti-partyist atmosphere that echoed Michels’ ideas, which had become popular (Michels’ book was translated into Finnish language in 1986). The general fear was that an institutionalized party would succumb into the establishment and from there ‘colonize’ the movement and destroy its original purpose. (Mickelsson 2007, 253–254). However, at the same time the need for unified stances and communication channels were also recognized and many became tired of the endless discussions that did not lead anywhere. Moreover, as only the registered parties were entitled to party subsidy, the movement (that had very few members) suffered from constant lack of resources. (Sohlstén 2007a, 41–44.) Despite the explicit resistance to the ‘iron law’, it was, in as sense, already in motion.

Throughout the years, several more or less informal gatherings were held that touched upon the questions of organization. However, no decisions or alignments were made. One development that emerged in the beginning and proved later on to be very important was the division of the group into the fundamental ecologists and the ‘builders of society’ (moderate reformers) who thought that the movement had other also objectives than saving the planet. The ecologists championed a tight and centralized organization, which would best serve their important mission, while the moderate wing favoured decentralized and informal forms of gathering. However, when the organizing discourse heated in 1986, some influential moderates (several coming party leaders) begun to favour a ‘real party’ more openly. (Mickelsson 2007, 253–255). One of the most important figures in the Greens’ organizing process was a Kojärvi activist, a future MP, the party chair and first green minister Pekka Haavisto. In the summer of 1986 Haavisto argued in Finland Magazine (Suomi-lehti) that the method of deliberation towards unanimity was inefficient because the movement could not keep pace with the others and ‘some possibilities for influence will pass us by’. Haavisto also pointed out that the traditional party vices (group cohesion, hierarchy, organizations as end in itself etc.)
could be tamed in an ‘alternative party’ model that employed leadership rotation, municipal autonomy, transparency of funding and dismissal of group cohesion demands, which meant total autonomy for the PPG. (Haavisto 1986). Similar organizational models circulated in several meetings and writings.

In 1986 the movement held two meetings reserved for organizational matters: one for probing organizational models and setting up a working group to prepare options and another for deciding on the initial model. Three options emerged: 1) a loose project organization without any permanent organs, 2) a national association of associations that operated as a coordination and communication channel without significant independent powers and 3) a real party. Although the working group’s proposal did not carry any special status (at this point everything was deliberately as informal as possible) the latter meeting voted for the options. Mainly the ecologist wing who were in the minority supported the party option and the meeting decided to continue with the association model. The Green League, which was only set out to become a contact forum for ideological and regional fractions, was set up in February 1987. In line with the movement’s strongly anti-bureaucratic ethos the activists set two sets of rules, formal and informal. (Mickelsson 2007, 253–256; Sohlstén 2007a, 47–55.) Kalle Könkkölä, who dropped out from Eduskunta and became the council’s first chair (i.e. the party leader) emphasised its and the PPG’s independence and defined the leadership as the council’s ‘stooge’. (Press release 15.4.1987.) The council operated under heavy rotation rules and it had no rights to make statements on behalf of the League. Even its own statements required a 5/6 majority, echoing the strong deliberative unanimity ideals. It was also underlined that electoral rallying could not be the local organizations’ main purpose. (Paastela 2008, 64–65). After all, the League was not a party, it was merely a union of associations.

It did not, however, end the organizing problems. Those who had opposed the League feared that it would soon turn into a regular party while those who favoured the strong party organization (mainly the ecologists) considered it too loose and therefore irrelevant. (Mickelsson 2007, 256). An increasing amount of prominent activists begun to support the party initiative in 1987 (Paastela 2008, 65). The rift between the ecologists and the rest ignited in October 1987 when the ecologists marched out from the first general conference to form their own party. Motivated by this, Pekka Haavisto proposed immediately to set up a party in order to avoid ‘the laws of the jungle’. Haavisto considered the loose organizational structure giving loud minorities too much leverage over party decisions. In February 1988, only after 4 months of preparation and under competitive and
financial pressures, a decision was made to register the Green League in the party register and make it a ‘real party’.

This decision, however, did not make Greens a bureaucratic machine. The party law defines only the minimal conditions for democracy in order to prevent explicitly autocratic organizations and therefore leaves the parties a rather extensive freedom to choose how to organize (Sundberg 1997). In many ways the Greens, who still strongly supported ‘anti-authoritarian anti-party sentiment’ (Paastela 2008, 65) made use of these wide boundaries. Like other West European Green parties, it aimed for power dispersion and erected strict rotation rules to prevent the accumulation of power. This principle was extended to the EPO and PPG relations too: a ‘silent contract’ was created that mandated that the party chair could not simultaneously be an MP. Interestingly, the PPG also strived for autonomy, dispersing power even further. The MPs were given freedom to diverge from the party line and the PPG as a whole was clearly separated from the party apparatus. (Sohlstén 2007b, 64, 83–86.) The existence of clearly separated strong organs is the essence of power diffusion.

During its first five years the party also normalized. After its formation the party begun to erect similar electoral and auxiliary organizations that the old parties already had (Mickelsson 2007, 257). Already in 1988 the party’s organizational structure, rules and working methods had strengthened and several new associations had joined. The council also set up a working committee to help with the workload. In 1989 the organization begun to focus on programmatic work and develop district branches for elections. The council was the main decision-making unit and the working committee acted as its ‘stooge’. As the council convened only every two months, the committee sometimes reacted to current issues independently, causing ‘thorough discussions’ in the council. In 1990 ‘an even greater amount of council’s decision-making was delegated to the working committee’. (Greens’ annual reports 1988–1990.) The rule stating that the party leader could not be an MP attracted criticism because the leader could not supervise the PPG, which gained power while the party council was reduced to a rubber stamp (Paastela 2008, 66). In 1993 the rule was dismantled and the Greens’

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112 According to one interviewee (GREEN 2) a major factor that explains the rapid ‘partification’ was a realization that old practices and rituals gave advantage to old parties, especially in electoral matters. When the movement was outside of party register they had to collect a separate electoral list election (‘We stood there outside in the rain to collect names, while others campaigns were already running’) and they were not eligible for party subsidy.
leader’s role changed. Previously he/she had been considered as the leader of the party office and the link to the public ‘face’ was deliberately uncertain. Now, the leader of the Greens began to resemble the other party leaders: he/she was made the party’s public figurehead while the organizational matters were left to the party secretary. Another fundamental change was the creation of a national executive committee (NEC) and a similar three-tier structure that the ‘old parties’ had used since the beginning of the century. As the party also enhanced its electoral organization and communications, many criticized that it had evolved into another ‘old party’. (Remes 2007, 112, 126–130).

This critique was premature as it focused only on the party’s structures. Several peculiar practices show that in the dawn of the new millennium the Greens still harboured organizational ideals that differed from the old parties’ centralized features. When Pekka Haavisto became the first European Green minister in 1995, he resigned from the party chair’s post – and from Eduskunta (albeit not by choice). As other members filled these positions, the PPG and party organs became tightly involved in government policies. This was mandatory because the party council (that held the formal right to end the party’s time in the government) was highly sceptical about the whole venture. (Ylikahri 2007, 188–191). Another example of the Greens’ peculiar organizational culture that highlights the chairman’s weaker position took place in 2002 when Eduskunta voted for a new nuclear reactor during the Greens’ second government term. The Green leadership was divided on the issue whether the party should leave the government or not. Although the chair Soininvaara supported the party’s staying in government, the decision was submitted to the PPG’s and the party council’s joint meetings (as the rules mandate) and the meeting ended the Greens’ term in government. (Tontti 2007, 218–220). Two things in this process mark a difference to the established party practices: 1) the chair did not put his career on the line in order to win (as a ‘last resort’ and 2) the chair did not lose his seat even though he clearly lost (Soininvaara, who continued as a chair until 2005, was one of the 8 who lost against the majority of 38) (Paastela 2008, 69). Despite gradual ‘normalization’ of the party’s leadership, it did not evolve into an uncontested power clique, but remained subject to the other organs’ interests.

113 As will be shown below, Greens governmental practice differs from ‘old parties’ to some extent because of MP’s and PPG’s enjoy autonomy. As party’s minister cannot force anyone behind government proposals, he/she needs to explain and persuade the PPG.

114 As Michels (1968[1911]) already noted, party leader’s resignation threat is one of his/hers strongest sources of power as in reality party activists are highly dependent on the leader.
According to Paastela (2008, 71–72), in the first decade of 2000’s the Greens did not fit into any clear party types. Due to low member/voter ratio and somewhat concentrated leadership (NEC) that included central figures from all party ‘faces’ (MPs, central EPO activists, regional activists) they could have been classified as a cadre party. On the other hand, the NEC’s composition could also be interpreted as a sign of diffusion, which was also supported by the fact that the candidate selection took place in the lowest organizational levels. At the same time the PPG continued to avoid group discipline and imperative mandates from the party. In conflict situations both the PPG and the EPO leaderships had split internally and the power between them seemed to be in balance. The Greens was a mixture of a cadre and an amateur-activist party – and clearly not a mass, a people’s or an electoral professional party. Although the party had ‘normalized’ over the years, the activists still played a crucial role, giving good grounds to expect differences in the Greens’ adaptive behaviour.

4.2 Societal change in Finland: an extreme case?

These three organizationally different parties faced severe ‘environmental’ pressures in the latter quarter of the 20th century. According to the functional theory of party change, this collision should have produced severe changes to their internal power balances. To recap, the public ‘face’ ascendancy is expected to stem from 1) the ‘thawing’ of social class structures and the weakening of the partisan and participatory feelings, 2) the emergence of ‘governmentalized’ politics, 3) the mediatisation and personalization of politics, 4) the emergence of state-centred party income and 5) the growing complexity in the political domain that results from the internationalization of politics and the economy (Katz & Mair 2002; 2009). This section gives a short overview of each factor, mainly to bolster the view that Finland fits well with the theory. More detailed information about ‘environmental’ pressures will appear alongside the forthcoming analyses. These ‘independent variables’ will be connected more carefully to the observed party changes in the concluding chapter.

At the bottom of all post-war developmental party theories lies an idea of societal modernization that is rooted in the socio-economic change. The transformation from the agrarian into the post-industrial society has not only taken place in Finland, but in terms of pace and depth it can be considered extreme (emphasis is original). Finland modernized later than the other European countries.
In the 1920’s almost 70 % of the Finnish workforce worked in the primary sector (agriculture, forestry, fishing, etc.). In ten culturally and politically ‘most similar’ European countries this sector employed only less than a third of the population. In the 1950’s still almost half (46 %) of the Finnish population continued to work in the primary sector while in other countries nearly 80 % (79.3 %) were already employed in secondary (industry and manufacturing) and tertiary (commerce, services, etc.) sector jobs. Finland’s late industrialization produced a dramatic change: between the 1950’s and the early 2000’s 40 % of jobs transferred from the primary sector to other sectors and nowadays the inter-sectoral balance equals other European countries. In addition to the rapidity of the change, Finland is the only Western European country in which the secondary sector was never the largest. Finland developed rapidly from the pre-industrial model to the post-industrial phase, from ‘being a poor agricultural country to a wealthy post-industrial society’. (Karvonen 2014, 24–31.) The modernization process and the erosion of vocationally designated subgroups were extremely fast.

Related political changes can be observed in three levels: in the political attachment among the masses, in the party system, and in the operating dynamics of the upper political echelons. Starting from the bottom, it is interesting to note that the overall electoral turnout in Finland has declined almost coincidentally with the modernization process. In the 1960’s, electoral participation was an average of 85 % and decreased in four decades to a mere 65 % in the 2000’s (Paloheimo & Raunio 2008, 210). Although this is of course not exceptional, the extent of the decline is above the European average (Karvonen 2014, 148). Another marked change is that while less people participate, those who do tend to switch allegiances more frequently. Before 1970 the Finnish electorates were very stable, but since then they have entered the ‘high-trend ranks’ in electoral volatility (Drummond 2006, 632–633). The decreasing citizen attachment shows clearly in the intra-party arena too. Parties’ field organizations reached their zenith in the late 1970’s, but they began to diminish right away in the early 1980’s and have continued to do so ever since. The accumulated membership in the five largest parties peaked in 1980 (565 000), 26 years later it has dropped down almost by a half (330 000). (Mickelsson 2007; 404; Karvonen 2014, 54–56.) Although this too is not certainly a unique development and there are countries that have experienced a sharper decline, in relative terms Finland ranks above the average (Biezen et al. 2012, 34). Membership decline shows in the local branches too: their numbers have steadily declined since the 1980’s in all established parties (Mickelsson 2007, 405; Karvonen
Combined, these observations suggest that the process of citizen detachment from established participatory channels is clearly present in Finland.

As the freezing hypothesis suggests, the party system has been more resilient than the social structure (Lipset & Rokkan 1967; Sundberg 2003). The parties that were formed around the original cleavages in the beginning of the 20th century still dominate the Eduskunta. The founding powers of the Finnish party system that organized in the aftermath of the 1906 parliamentary reform (social democrats, agrarians and the Swedish speaking minority) and the civil war of 1918 (conservatives and communists) gathered over 2/3 of the total vote in the 2011 elections. However, the gradual emergence and consolidation of three new parties (the Christian Democrats, the Greens and the new populist right party True Finns) has increased the share of the ‘others’ from the early 1960’s by more than 15 %.115 While changes are still modest, the Finnish party system arguably opened at the latter quarter of the 20th century, signifying the increasing demand for more agile party leadership.

Alongside these transformations that reflect the weakening of the deep partisan ties among the citizenry another set of changes – one that echoes Kirchheimer’s (1954, 1966) observations and the ‘governmentalizing’ tendencies more generally – have taken place at the top of the political hierarchy. A general feature of the post-1970’s political development has been the decreasing intensity of political conflict. Since gaining independence (in 1917) up until the 1960’s, the level of ideological polarization in Finland was strong; the political parties were separated into clear and easily recognizable ‘camps’ and ‘every social group lived separately’, as Mickelsson has noted. In the 1970’s, not long after the employers, agricultural producers and trade unions reached their historical general agreement in 1968 ‘consensus replaced conflict as the overarching principle of Finnish political culture’ – again, seemingly fast. (Karvonen 2014, 24, Mickelsson 2007, 44–46.)

The changed atmosphere is reflected in the governmental domain, too. Up until the 1970’s, the Finnish governmental practice was markedly tumultuous. Since the early 1980’s, it has clearly ‘governmentalized’: significant opposition parties do not exist anymore and all parties join governments in recurring intervals. The Finnish governments that used to be notoriously volatile have since the early 1980’s become the most stable ones in Scandinavia. Finland has since 1983 been governed by stable ‘surplus majorities’ so fears of collapse – or effective opposition – are

115 It should be noted that True Finns landslide victory in 2011 elections accounts around 10 % of this increase (Karvonen 2014, 25). Nonetheless, as Arter (2012) has argued, the emergence of ‘big bang’ elections as such can be regarded as a sign of increasing party system polarization.
long overdue. The lack of a dominant party and the existence of a highly fragmented party system has given birth to a very flexible coalition practice where since 1987’s ‘blue-red’ (the SDP and NCP’s historic coalition) and 1995’s ‘rainbow coalition’ (that included the offspring of communists, alongside with the NCP, the Greens, the SDP and the Swedish People’s Party) any conceivable ‘cocktail’ has been possible.\textsuperscript{116,117} In 1991 the practice where the leader of the largest party automatically assumes the formateur’s and the later prime minister’s position was institutionalized. The system is highly executive-dominated: 99\% of successful bills come from the government whose leader, the prime minister, acts like a ‘managing director of a major corporation’.\textsuperscript{118} (Paloheimo 2003, 233; 2005, 246–256; Paloheimo & Raunio 2008a, 17, 21.) Unsurprisingly, a system marked by strong ‘inter-party cooperation and accommodation’ leaves only little room for effective opposition (Arter 1999, 235). According to the general conception, Finnish politics may nowadays be influenced only from inside the government. This gives the parties and party leaders strong incentives to attain a governing position.

The ‘governmentalizing’ tendency has been enhanced by a grand institutional change, a constitutional reform from presidentially dominated semi-presidentialism to almost pure parliamentary government. Although the presidency still exists, the reform, which began in the 1980’s with President Mauno Koivisto’s piecemeal alterations and was finalized in 2000 in a completely new constitution, removed all significant presidential powers from domestic politics, including the right to dissolve the parliament, veto bills and form the government. All these powers were transferred to the prime minister and government, who survive with Eduskunta’s

\textsuperscript{116} According to Nousiainen (2006, 294) the new coalesional practice that begun to stabilize in 1980’s has been characterized by 1) increased relevance of election results, 2) the significance of ‘three large’ parties’ (SDP, NCP and Centre) mutual relations (two form the base for a new coalition and one stays in opposition), 3) aim for full-term long cooperation, 4) diminution of opposition through the abolishment of minority protection laws (in 1992) and 5) political emphasis on general instead of sectorally-based objectives.

\textsuperscript{117} A notable example of this practice is that unlike in Sweden where the new populist/extreme right-wing party Sweden Democrats have been systematically left out from government by all established parties even though it has become one of the largest parties, Finnish populist new right party Finns were inducted to the government only 4 years after they reached the threshold of a ‘large party’.

\textsuperscript{118} The principle of governmental unity started to tighten already in the 1970’s along with prime ministers enhanced status. The practices, which aimed at securing the stable functioning of the wide coalition governments, were thoroughly formalized in the 1980’s and 1990’s in binding inter-party agreements. The basic idea was that a pre-negotiated plan can only be altered through a new negotiation and a party cannot divert from government’s plan without leaving the government. (Nousiainen 2006, 308–309).
blessing. The prime minister’s central role and the parliament’s heightened significance have strongly empowered parties and party leaders in the legislative process. (Arter 1999: 231–232, 237; Nousiainen 2001; Arter 2006, 131–132; Raunio & Wiberg 2014, 11–15.) The development has been connected to the ‘presidentialization’ of politics: the emergence of a strongly personalized leadership practice that exists in parliamentary systems, too (Paloheimo 2005). The coexistence of a general decrease in political attachments among the electorate and the increase in the legislative strength and co-operative capabilities of parties give strong grounds to expect changes in the parties’ internal power distribution.

A central factor in Katz and Mair’s thesis is the gradual replacement of voluntary party resources (that at least theoretically make the party leadership dependent on the membership) with ‘non-binding’ state resources. Here, too, the Finnish case reveals a clear change. In the first half of the century the Finnish parties funded themselves with small contributions and larger donations depending on the party type. In the mid-1960’s two contradicting tendencies challenged the traditional income logics. The generalization of television publicity increased the demand for party money. At the same time, the party activists began to grow reluctant at providing their financial assistance to the parties. Sweden had introduced public subsidies for parties in 1965. Encouraged by this, the Finnish MPs’ eyes began to turn towards the state, too – especially in the left side of the political field that was more dependent on member subscriptions. In 1967 party subsidy was included to the state budget for the first time and in 1969 it was made permanent along with the enactment of the party law. (Sundberg 2003, 127–135; Wiberg 1991, 55; Venho 2008, 36). The subsidy has increased almost annually and today it is the main source of party revenue: roughly 9 out of 10 Euros comes from the state purse (Wiberg 2006, 62; 2008, 183). This has made the Finnish parties the most dependent on state money in the Western world (Pierre et al. 2000, 13–14).119 Subsidies are so generous that the parties could survive without members (Wiberg 2006, 62) and therefore they are now much less dependent on mass organization than they used to be (Sundberg 2003, 149). Unsurprisingly, the tendency has been connected to the centralization of power within the parties (Wiberg 1997, 122–125). As campaigning has simultaneously become more capital intensive, it’s not

119 However, it needs to be qualified that Finland is one of the few European countries where EPO’s have received lion’s share of the subsidies (Katz & Mair 2014, 363). Although this provides EPO leaders more leverage over the PPG than in cases where party organization is dependent on PPG’s goodwill, it must be remembered that the level of overall subsidy is dependent on party’s electoral success. Thus, regardless of the unusual discrepancy, Finnish parties are very dependent on electoral gains and therefore strong incentive exists to invest heavily on electoral-professionalism.
hard to see why the overall cost of the party activists’ ‘exit’ has decreased and the expectation of the ascendancy of the public ‘face’ has increased.

The last two changes relate more to the parties’ wider operating contexts. However, the transformation of political communication has also a rather direct connection to the intra-party sphere. In the interwar period the national and regional party newspapers dominated communication within ‘party camps’ and intra-party communication was highly concealed. Slowly, the papers began to cut their ties to the parties and simultaneously the National Broadcasting Company’s (YLE) political radio programs started to reach wider audiences. In the 1950’s and 1960’s the number of papers continued to decrease and many well-known large papers opted for independence. At the turn of the 1970’s, when television had begun to assume a greater significance in politics, political publicity had largely escaped from the ‘party camps’. In the 1980’s when the Finnish politics finally mediatized more generally the party newspapers became marginalized and the parties began to direct their publicity efforts towards general media markets. (Mickelsson 2007, 131–132, 177–179, 216–219, 271–219).

When the highly restricted media market was opened for competition in the early 1980’s, it quickly commercialized and soon ‘mass appeal’ and personalized politics became journalists’ primary objectives. By allowing televised campaigning in the turn of 1990’s, Finland became freer than most European countries in terms of political advertising. (Herkman 2012, 187–195.) Already at the turn of 1990’s the parties were criticized for transforming into ‘media parties’ where the traditional membership had no meaning and the public party leaders were highlighted (Mickelsson 2007, 258). In today’s Finland, it has been argued, politics 1) enters the media in real time, 2) predominantly takes its form there and 3) is strongly personalized (i.e. presented through individuals rather than parties), because the major ideological differences do not exist anymore and the issues are complex and technical (Paloheimo (2005, 263–264). A steady, albeit not a dramatic increase in the personalization of politics has been detected in several studies (Borg & Paloheimo 2009, 17; Karvonen 2009, 121–122; Karvonen 2010; Karvonen 2014, 148).

The final notable change factor is the internationalization of politics and economy that complicates the national political processes and pushes the ordinary party activists further away from relevant party processes. It’s not too far-fetched to claim that this change was exceptionally pronounced in Finland. One special factor sets it apart from the other Western countries: the considerable effect that Finland’s great eastern neighbour had on its development. Even before the emergence of the
Soviet Union, Russia had a profound impact on Finnish party formation and inter-party relations, and this situation lasted until the very last decade of the 20th century. When the Soviet Union suddenly collapsed and a ‘factor that had conditioned Finland’s internal politics was suddenly gone’, Finland quickly sought to become a member of the European community. (Karvonen 2014, 31, 38). Still in the late 1980’s Finnish politicians were highly constrained on their European ambitions and no parties advocated the EC membership openly. When the situation in the Soviet Union begun to deteriorate, the supporters activated. Already in the fall of 1991, immediately after the collapse of the Soviet Union and Sweden’s positive movement towards the EC, Finland reached for the membership. The negotiations began in 1993 and in 1994 the issue was submitted for an advisory referendum. Later that year a large majority approved the initiative in the Eduskunta. (Raunio & Wiberg 2000, 12–13, Raunio & Wiberg 2001, 11.)

In less than five years Finland, a remote and a relatively isolated country whose political existence had been strongly characterized by a tight bilateral relationship with its neighboring superpower (Luukkanen 2009) changed direction completely by joining other Western European countries in the EU. Unsurprisingly, the new situation blurred traditional political boundaries (Arter 1999, 239). As Raunio (2008, 195–196, 203) has noted, supranational cooperation strengthened the public office holders because relevant information flows through the Eduskunta and not through the party organs, and parties – especially when they are in the government – have to react quickly. This change, along with the rapid social transformation and the constitutional reform, provides extra reasons to expect a bottom up type intra-party power transfer in Finland.

All these changes have contributed to the production of a new incentive structure that produces more advantages for national public leaderships and less for intra-party actors. Over the years the Finnish citizens have become lukewarm towards traditional participatory avenues. Decreased attentiveness and the cooling of polarized conflict have paved way for developing consensual practices in the upper rungs of the political ladder. Constitutional change has legitimized the practice as the parties may now independently choose how to proceed without a need to consult the president. The party leaders now control Finnish ‘high politics’ – in constitutional and in practical terms. Changes in political communication and context support this tendency. Since the early 1990’s, the party leaderships have invaded the public sphere. Nowadays they are clearly the most important framers of the public agenda. Owing to the ever-increasing levels of European integration, national agendas have become deeply embedded in the supranational context,
while purely national questions exist hardly at all. Combined, these developments have produced conditions that are auspicious for the ascendancy of the party in public office. We should witness a major power shift towards the public ‘face’ in all party types – unless they are able to resist it.

This chapter examines how the leader-centric (NCP), representative (SDP) and democratic process (Greens) parties have adapted to the pressures described in chapter 4 in terms of positional, asset-based and presential power resources. In relation to the main hypothesis, the chapter’s main questions are: 1) Have the EPOs formal prerogatives over parliamentary groups weakened? 2) Have the public ‘faces’ financial and staff-related assets increased? and 3) Have the MPs taken more prominent roles in the parties’ leadership organs during the research period? The developments are also contrasted against the party type-wise expectations that were crafted in the end of chapter 3. The analysis of the primary data that extends from the early 1980’s to the early 2010’s builds over similar previous findings and in most cases this enables tracking changes from over a 50-year time period. The time series data is supplemented with more contingent insights on major innovations (for example in legal regulations and party funding) that have made their mark on intra-party power balances during the research period.

5.1 Positional power: EPO control vs. PPG autonomy

This first section deals with the party organs’ formal prerogatives; more specifically, the extent to which the extra-parliamentary party can formally interfere with the parliamentary group’s workings. In addition to these issues being dealt in the parties’ statutes, the national legislation has set some limited demands, too. These developments are reviewed shortly before diving into the intra-party arena.
Since the birth of the Finnish unicameral parliament (Eduskunta), MPs’ work revolved around organized parliamentary groups that were connected to extra-parliamentary organizations (Borg 1982, 459–460). While parties’ status as ‘primary societal organizations’ had also been recognized at least since Finland received its autonomy in 1917, prior to the late 1960’s Finnish legislation did not recognize political parties (Nousiainen 1998, 47). According to Rantala (1982, 36–38), the old constitution (1919) was written under a ‘liberal-representative’ ethos that appointed the highest state power to the people and their representatives, not to parties. An extreme manifestation of this ethos was that the constitution explicitly forbade imperative mandates. As parties were legally considered as private associations, their functioning took place under the auspices of associational law. However, because the Act of Associations (1919) mainly forbade militant forms of organizing, only a few extreme movements were directly affected by it: the Finnish Communist Party in the 1920’s and the ultra-nationalist Patriotic People’s Movement after the Second World War. The law’s loose formulation left plenty of room for manoeuvring and resulted in significant intra-party differences. (Sundberg & Gylling 1992, 276–277; Sundberg 2008, 63–64.)

The parties’ ‘etatization’ in the post-war era culminated in the late 1960’s, when in 1967 party subsidies were included into the state budget, leading to wider reconsideration of the parties legal status and soon to the ratification of the Party Act (1969). (Nousiainen 1998, 47.) Four reasons explain its emergence: 1) a positive understanding towards parties’ necessity for the political system had increased over the years, 2) the parties’ societal power had increased to the extent that it needed to be legally regulated, 3) the electoral reform (that was also made in 1969) required a definition of a party and 4) the terms for party subsidy needed to be legally codified (Rantala (1982, 36–38). At the turn of the millennium, the parties were mentioned in three laws and one decree: the Party Act (1969), the Law of Elections (which in 1998 combined separate election laws, parliamentary (1969), municipal (1972), presidential (1991) and Euro (1995)), the Act of Associations (that was reformed in 1989) and the Decree on party subsidies (1967) (Wiberg 2000, 165–167). Compared to the other Scandinavian countries, Finnish parties have been exceptionally regulated (Sundberg 1997) and in these terms Finland is a prime example of a cartelized party system: parties have voluntarily entered into a deep alliance with the state apparatus, which is cemented in the national legislation (Sundberg 2012, 133).
However, while the arm of the law is relatively wide, its grip on parties’ organizational features is not very tight – especially in terms of EPO/PPG relations. The most significant organizational consequence of the Party Act (and perhaps the most important reason for its enactment (Venho 2008, 36)) was the consolidation of public subsidies, which unified parties’ income logic and made them more or less independent of membership subscriptions and other private endowments (for example Sundberg 2003). The consequences of public subsidies for intra-party power relations will be assessed below, alongside with other asset-based power resources. Besides that, the Party Act’s organizational ramifications are not too demanding; the parties must follow democratic principles in their internal decision-making and the Ministry of Justice controls this by collecting parties’ rules (Party Act 1969, § 2, 9). The nature of democracy is specified in the Act of Associations, which states that the power in the association belongs to the members that use it in the association’s meetings. Members may also delegate power to designated representatives and the association must have a responsible executive. The associations may also hold membership referendums on limited questions. (Act of Associations 1989, § 16–23, 35). The party law’s vague formulation – that is in line with how parties organized before the law that they enacted – gives the parties much room to interpret what is democratic. Thus, significant inter-party variation continues to exist and the law’s main point is still to prohibit extreme organizations. (Sundberg 1997, 108–113.)

For the current research task, the most important thing is that without this one (indirect) exception, the national legislation does not say anything about the EPOs’ and the PPGs’ relationship. Like the old constitution, the new one (Constitution 2000, § 29) also includes an explicit denial of imperative mandates and therefore, as Wiberg (2000, 166) has noted, the Party Act’s demands only refer to the EPOs’ internal workings, i.e. how the party organization is ruled. The only legal regulation that connects the party apparatus and the PPG concerns the selection of candidates. Before the late 1960’s, the selection was unregulated and exclusively in the hands of parties, resulting in a variety of selection methods. When the Party Act and the Law on Parliamentary Elections were enacted in 1969, candidate selection was submitted to subnational party polls and the selection methods were harmonized. (Sundberg 1997, 103–104; Wiberg 2000, 166). The law was supplemented in 1975 with a provision that appointed the party executive’s power to change a ¼ of selected candidates (Law of Elections 1998, § 117). Theoretically, this gives the executive a chance to punish MPs whose actions they have not
supported. In general, the reforms increased the EPOs’ power over the PPGs to some extent.

The PPGs were first formally recognized in 1967 when they began to receive an office allowance (a form of public subsidy paid directly to PPGs, see below). Since the late 1980’s, their legal status has improved considerably along with the parliamentarization of the Finnish political system. In 1987, the rules of government formation were altered with a constitutional amendment: major alterations were now submitted under the PPGs’ and Eduskunta’s speakers’ hearings. (Wiberg 2000, 166.) In 1991 the PPGs gained a more pronounced status as the government program was submitted under Eduskunta’s review (Paloheimo 2005, Jansson 1993). The new constitution heightened the PPGs’ role significantly by removing presidential prerogatives altogether and appointing the main responsibility for government negotiations to the PPGs and the approval of the prime ministerial candidate to the Eduskunta (Constitution 2000, § 61). Considering that the importance of the government program (and negotiations) has increased simultaneously, the Eduskunta’s and the PPGs’ status in national legislation has clearly strengthened (Raunio & Wiberg 2014, 29).

5.1.2 The SDP: a century of EPO dominance

The SDP’s formal organization is very old. The basic organizational choices, which have continued to echo long after, were forged in the first decade of the 20th century: the first EPO rules were ratified in 1906 and the PPG rules in 1907. In line with the mass party thinking, the SDP has throughout its history favoured the party organization over the parliamentary group. The party council approved the PPG’s first rules. The tradition stuck and was later formally codified. Although the group made independent decisions in the Eduskunta, they were expected to follow the party decisions and the group’s actions were tightly monitored. The EPO’s control over the PPG was intensified after the civil war (1918), because a strong communist fraction operated within the PPG. The review of the PPG’s report was extended from the party congress to the party council, and was made happen in annual basis. The new rules also mandated that the group should hold joint meetings with the council whenever the PPG, the NEC or the council requested it. For a short while (1919–1922), the party rules even included a section that demanded – against the constitution – that ‘PPG is responsible for party congress’. After the communists left the party, this clause was erased. (Borg 1982, 464–467.)
In the early days, the party organs were relatively independent in terms of participation rights: the MPs were almost completely excluded from the EPO organs but the party officials couldn’t participate in the PPG either; it independently decided who could take part in its meetings. Slowly the situation changed – to the EPO’s benefit. After the civil war, the NEC received the right to be present when the PPG was settling ‘most important procedural issues’. In 1939, the NEC, the party council and the ministerial group all received unlimited participation rights in PPG meetings and in 1967 the party secretary gained an automatic right to participate in the PPG’s working committee, the ‘inner circle’ that prepares all the PPG’s actions. The leadership coalescence reflected more general change in intra-party affairs: retrospective monitoring was replaced by the EPO’s tighter presence in the PPG before decisions were made. This helped to dismantle the dualism between these organs. (Borg 1982, 464–466, 468, 472.) The PPG’s autonomy decreased.

A common thought in the early 1960’s discussions was that the ‘party’s central position’ should be strengthened, ‘especially in relation to party press and the PPG’ – the organs that could challenge the leadership. The idea stemmed from the party’s internal struggles: the new leadership that took power in the late 1950’s ruckus wanted to consolidate its power. Nonetheless, the new restrictions were codified in the party statutes and most of them continued to live on. The EPO had previously only approved the PPG’s new rules but now it took part in the reform process too. The 1960 reform mandated that the new PPG rules had to be prepared in a committee where a half of the members represented the NEC. Coincidentally, the EPO increased its presence significantly in the party’s decisions relating to government formation. No previous rule existed but congress clauses had appointed the task to the PPG and the NEC. 1960 rules increased the party council’s power by giving a final say to it if the NEC and the PPG could not come to an agreement. In 1975, the final decision was appointed completely to the party council, but it could delegate the right to the NEC. The PPG was almost completely surpassed from this important process; it maintained only its representation in the negotiating group. (Borg 1982, 468–471.) Overall, as Sundberg (1994, 172–176) has observed, the PPGs’ autonomy decreased in the post-war era, due to the party organizations’ institutionalization.

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120 According to interviewees, SDP 1 and SDP 2 councils have always used this right.
Figure 1. Positional power 1983–2013

EPO’s formal power over PPG

Note: The lines represent parties’ scores in additive EPO power index. The index consists of six variables that examine to which extent the EPO control’s/takes part in 1) the government formation, 2) the candidate and 3) the PPG leadership selection, 4) policy coordination, 5) the dispersion of information on the PPG’s actions and 6) the sanctioning of MPs. Full information on variables and scoring principles are presented in Appendix 1.


Since the beginning of the 1980’s, the development has been a lot less dramatic; only a few changes have been made to the SDP’s key formal arrangements and more or less the same applies to the other parties (see below for details). The most marked (yet of course not surprising) thing is that compared to the other parties, the SDP’s EPO has always had and still has lot stronger formal control over its PPG. How does the control manifest? A simple, yet effective example is the party’s decision-making procedures in government negotiations, as has already been mentioned. Their importance is naturally tied to the fact that it is one of the most important decisions that the parties take (alongside leadership selection). Already in 1960, negotiating was handed over to a joint committee of 9 participants: the chairman leads, one half of the members are chosen by the NEC and the second half by the PPG. If the party chair is counted as an EPO representative, the EPO retains a majority. As was already mentioned, in 1975 the final decision was appointed to the
party council. The decision is made over the negotiating group’s (NG) proposal, to which both the NEC and the PPG can give their comments before the decision is made. The council can also delegate its powers to the NEC. When rules were changed in the early 1980’s (SDP EPO rules 1981), this article remained unchanged. In the 1990’s and 2000’s a few semantic revisions were made that better acknowledged the PPG’s constitutionally strengthened status, but these revisions did not add to the PPG’s powers. In 1990, the PPG received a right to give a statement after the final decision, without right to overturn it (SDP EPO rules 1990). After the new constitution came into power, some wordings were corrected. The negotiating group’s nomination was handed over to the PPG (previously the NEC’s and the PPG’s joint task) but the actual content remained essentially similar: still ‘at least half of the members [of the negotiating group] should be presented to the PPG by the NEC’. Also, the council still defines the party’s stance on governmental program, decides whether the party joins government or not and who’ll represent the party in the ministerial cabinet – unless it decides to delegate these decisions to the NEC. (SDP EPO rules 2002.) Compared to the NCP (see below), the extra-parliamentary organs are very powerful.

While the central EPO organs’ rights to affect the PPG’s composition via candidate and PPG leader selection have been modest,121 the SDP’s rules include a clear idea how the party’s policy formulation and the PPG’s work connect. In the early 1980’s rules (SDP EPO rules 1981, SDP PPG rules 1967) the EPO organs (the congress, the council and the NEC) were defined as crafters of the party’s policy objectives while the PPG worked ‘in spirit and for practical execution of objectives that are presented in the Social Democratic Party’s manifesto, congress and council’s action programs and procedural decisions’. In the 1980’s, the PPG’s formal organization included two subgroups whose explicit task was to monitor the connection. Besides committee groups whose task was to ‘represent group in different committees ... so that party’s programmatic objectives and groups decisions and views’ are sufficiently presented in committee work, the ‘initiative committees’ task was to supervise that ‘all most important motions from party’s concrete objective program become submitted’. The most significant change in the SDP’s formal rules is the disbanding of the ‘initiative committee’ in 1990. Committee groups continue to exist and the task descriptions have remained pretty much intact in the new millennium.

121 By the courtesy of Law on Parliamentary Elections (1969) party activists and regional parties impact is of course significant.
Another party dimension where the EPO’s strength shows quite clearly is its formidable rights to receive information on the PPG’s actions. While they have slightly reduced over the years, they continue to be significant in relative terms (see below). Two components were observed to assess this power dimension: the review of the PPG’s annual report and the EPO representatives’ participation rights in the PPG’s meetings. The clause included to the party rules in 1919 that assigned inspection of the report to congress and council (Borg 1980, 27) was intact in the early 1980’s (SDP EPO rules 1981). However, the congress’ participation in this process was removed in 1993 (SDP EPO rules 1993). Another significant change in this dimension is that in 2005 the party council’s total participation rights in the PPG’s meetings were reduced: the right was reserved for the council leaders only. Alongside the disbanding of the initiative committee, these are the clearest indications of the PPG’s strengthening. Still, however, compared to the NCP and the Greens, the SDP’s EPO is strongly represented in the PPG: the party secretary still enjoys the right to attend the working committee, and the NEC’s right to attend the PPG’s general meetings has remained since 1939. In the NCP the NEC has never had an automatic access to the PPG’s meetings.

Finally, the EPO’s and the PPG’s relationship was assessed in terms to which extent the EPO is able to sanction individual MPs. This is largely a question of whether the MPs need to be party members or not, and what does the party membership entail. If the MPs need to be party members and if the party has individual members that the EPO organs can punish, the EPO might be able to lay effective sanctions directly over the MPs as for example suspension from the party also entails a suspension from the group. The main difference between the SDP and the NCP is that only the former has direct individual members (see below). Until 1990, the SDP’s PPG rules defined a group member as an MP who ‘belongs to the party’ (SDP PPG rules 1967). In 1990, the membership was clarified to mean MPs who are members in the SDP’s local branches (i.e. official members) (SDP PPG rules 1990). While the old formulation was somewhat ambiguous, there are reasons to believe that the SDP MPs were required to be official party members even prior to 1990. The leading EPO organs have enjoyed vast possibilities to punish individual party members. While according to the 1981 rule

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122 This interpretation is based on Borg’s (1980, 48–49) discussion on the NCP’s MP membership requirement that was coded only in the 1960’s, which insinuates that in other parties the PPG membership required membership already prior to this. Thus, 1967 loose formulation has been interpreted as a mistake.
(SDP EPO rules 1981) that is still in effect that the main sanctioning units are the local party branches, the party council can propose permanent suspension and thus evict MPs. The NEC can only propose temporary suspension but if it takes place during the elections, it is enough to prevent re-election.

To summarize, the EPO’s formal strength over the PPG in the SDP has held well against ‘environmental’ pressures, as hypothesised. The central EPO organs retain notable powers in various tasks. Even the new constitution that put the PPGs in the limelight was not able to reduce the EPO’s central role in government formation and the policy link between the EPO and the PPG is still quite clear. In the current PPG rules (SDP PPG rules 2011) the group’s task is defined as to represent citizens in a way that the party’s objectives (program, congress, council) would actualize. Similarly, the EPO’s possibilities to receive information about the PPG’s actions are still relatively vast. The most notable – albeit in the ‘big picture’, fairly modest – changes that have strengthened the PPG are the disbanding of the ‘initiative committee’, the removal of the PPG’s report review from the congress agenda and the limiting of the council’s possibilities to participate in the PPG’s meetings. Despite the strong conservative tendency that clearly supports the institutional hypothesis, minor centralizing tendencies have also taken place. However, there’s still a long way to go to the level of PPG autonomy that the other two parties harbour.

5.1.3 The NCP: from PPG autonomy to its partial submission – and back

As the theory and the party’s formation process leads to expect, the NCP’s PPG enjoyed a larger formal autonomy in its formative years. Tellingly, the PPG that was formed in 1918 received its first rules only in 1976.\textsuperscript{123} Thus, prior to the late 1970’s, all formal arrangements were codified in the EPO statutes. In the first half of the century, the EPO’s control over the PPG was almost non-existent while at the same time MPs’ formal presence within the party apparatus was relatively large: the MPs enjoyed unlimited participation rights (to be present, to speak and to vote) in the party congress and they could attend the party council, too. Considering what was said about the NCP’s elitist ‘professor-statesman ethos’ in the previous chapter, this makes sense. When the NCP begun to build its organization after wars, the MPs’ participation rights started to decrease. In the 1950 reform MPs’

\textsuperscript{123} As it was already pointed out, SDP’s PPG that was formed in 1907 was formally codified already in the same year.
voting rights in the party congress and participation rights in the council were completely removed and the presentation of the PPG report was made mandatory (in 1959 it was submitted under debate, with consequences already mentioned). More importantly, in 1967 MP representation in the NEC was restricted to less than half. In other words: a majority of NEC members had to be ordinary party activists. To increase its effectiveness, a working committee was created inside the NEC. It was also mandated that the MPs had to be official party members. Before, mere ideological compatibility had sufficed. (Borg 1982, 482–484.)

A decrease of PPG autonomy continued in the latter half of the century. Perhaps the most significant showing of the EPO’s increased prominence was the demand to hold joint meetings between the PPG and the party leadership about the most important questions like those that dealt with the party’s participation in a coalition government. In 1975 the rule was strengthened significantly: now all important decisions had to be made in the council’s and the PPG’s joint meetings. When the PPG ratified its first rules in 1976, the ties between the EPO that were already codified in the party statutes (or practiced informally) were consolidated. However, unlike in the SDP, the rules included an explicit reference to the constitution’s § 11, the denial of imperative mandates. (Borg 1982, 482–487.) While the long-term development clearly decreased the PPG’s autonomy and brought the NCP closer to the SDP, their differences were clear in the beginning of the research period. Therefore, the historical party type specific differences that were laid down decades ago managed to persist over the strong institutionalizing phase caused by the emergence of the party law and other legal/formal restrictions and the ‘golden age’ of mass mobilization.

Again, the best example of the formal EPO/PPG power relationship is the rule about ‘government issue’. Although the EPO’s position was gradually strengthened in 1959, 1967 and 1975 reforms, the early 1980’s formulation which is still in order left clearly more leverage to the PPG compared to the SDP. The negotiation group’s formation was defined only in the PPG rules and only the PPG’s representation was specified: its leadership (1+2) forms the group together with (unspecified) party representatives. The PPG defines its view on the ‘government issue’ and the decisions are made in the council’s and PPG’s joint meeting. The national executive committee does not have a formal role in the process, even as a council’s delegate (NCP EPO and PPG rules 1983). In 2003, the negotiating group’s composition was completely discarded from the rules (NCP PPG rules 2003). As according to the standard interpretation, the non-existence of a rule advantages the PPG that is the lawfully elected body that represents voters
(Pedersen 2010), the PPG was strengthened. The PPG’s and the council’s joint meeting is the only remaining formal rule that connects the EPO to this important issue. Compared to the SDP where the EPO organs dominate the negotiating group and all decisions, the difference is crucial.

In the early 1980’s – when the NCP’s ‘mass partification’ had reached its apex (measured by membership and the number of local party branches) – the policy link between the EPO and the PPG in the level of task definitions was equally specific compared to the SDP. Its direction echoed the mass party ideal: the party organs crafted objectives, the PPG enhanced them in the parliament. Of course, the NCP’s PPG did not have ‘initiative committees’ and the rules included the explicit denial of imperative mandates. (NCP EPO rules 1983, NCP PPG rules 1983). The link weakened during the research period. Already in the 1987 PPG rules, the demand to follow the party’s decisions was replaced with ‘NCP’s principles’ and on the same year the committee group’s tasks were toned down by removing a passage that required the MPs to report all deviations from the party program to the PPG. (NCP PPG rules 1987.) In 2003, the committee group’s demand to oversee the party’s programmatic objectives was completely removed, leaving the rules devoid of any references to the party’s programs. Instead, the denial of imperative mandates is still in the rules. (NCP PPG rules 2003.) The SDP’s task definitions are still a lot clearer about the mass party linkage and no such thing as the PPG’s constitutional autonomy has ever been present. This difference echoes organizational heritages that stem from the initial choices that were made in the parties’ founding moments.

Also in the terms of information control, the NCP and the SDP had some similarities in the early 1980’s – but also grave differences. Both the party congress and the council inspected the PPG’s report like in the SDP and the party leader was well represented in PPG meetings (including working committee). However, the EPO/PPG compound was clearly more concentrated: unlike in the SDP, the party council and the NEC were not allowed in PPG meetings and the party secretary was only allowed to attend general meetings. The EPO’s strength increased slightly during the research period: in 2003 the council chair received rights to participate in the PPG’s general meetings and the party secretary was allowed in the working committee. (NCP EPO and PPG rules 1983, NCP PPG rules 2003.) The annual report’s status has weakened. In 1991, the inspection was changed to a hearing and the council’s role was ejected from the council’s tasks (NCP EPO rules 1991) – and later from the PPG rules too (NCP PPG rules 2003). The PPG’s responsibility to present the report to the council and the congress is
still however codified in the general EPO rules (NCP EPO rules 2012). The main difference to the SDP is that the NEC has never had participation rights in the PPG’s general meeting. The SDP’s NEC gained this right in 1939. Again, this echoes the core difference between the ideal typical mass and cadre parties.

Whether the EPO can sanction individual MPs or not depends on the PPG’s and the party’s membership requirements. In the NCP, the explicit demand that an MP needs to be a member of a party branch was codified in 1967 (Borg 1980, 48–49). However, a significant difference remains: unlike in the SDP where membership is direct (i.e. the party has individual members, which it may sanction), the NCP’s actual members are the party branches who have the right to sanction individual members (Local associations model rules 1979 § 11; NCP EPO rules 1983). If the EPO organs want to punish individual MPs, they have to suspend the whole branch, which seems rather unlikely. Thus, sanctioning individual MPs is the PPG’s prerogative. Up until 2003, the working committee made the suggestion and the group made the final decision. As the party chair was a member of the committee, he could affect the proposals. In 2003, the right to suggest suspensions was transferred to the PPG leadership, completely discarding the EPO’s power in this matter. (NCP PPG rules 1983; 2003.)

The NCP’s EPO clearly strengthened its hold over the PPG in the latter half of the 20th century, but it never resulted in a similar ‘party governance’ model as in the SDP. Although there’s no turning back to the early 1900’s situation when the PPG was basically autonomous, the EPO’s hold has always been weaker than in the SDP and it slightly decreased during the research period, as figure 1 shows. To be sure, the decrease has not been nearly as dramatic as was expected – clearly, the formal party rules are generally very hard to change. For the most part the explicit prerogatives have just become vaguer. The most evident sign of the PPG’s strengthening is that when the constitution gave the PPGs the main responsibility in government negotiations, the party’s representation in the negotiating group was discarded from the rules. In a similar vein, explicit notes on the EPO/PPG policy link disappeared almost completely while the explicit denial of imperative mandates and the NEC’s poor status in the PPG are still in place. While the change is not dramatic, the NCP’s PPG has been able to move towards the public ‘face’ dominance faster than the other parties, as other developments also show (see below).
In its active organizing phase – roughly between mid-1985 and early 1988 when the decision to register the Green League as a party was made – dozens of organizational schemes and related rule drafts were put forth within the community. As one of the Greens’ founding motivations was to create a completely new kind of a political organization that could withhold against the oligarchic and bureaucratizing tendencies, many of these initial organizational ideas differed from the traditional party models. One of them was of course the union model that was chosen in late 1986 and set in force in February 1987. However, the organizational setup that the community chose for the party in February 1988 was not radically different from the traditional party organization (in a sense that it included normal party chairs and councils) and the main differences to ‘old parties’ (rotation rules, lack of the NEC, etc.) reduced shortly after. Because the Greens emerged and institutionalized during the research period, their formal organization has experienced the most dramatic changes. In line with the party institutionalization that took place in post-war era, the changes have mainly strengthened the EPO. However, as in this study’s other parliamentary born party (the NCP), the Greens’ PPG has been and continues to be very autonomous.\(^\text{124}\) While this could be interpreted as going against the theoretical expectations, the overall analysis shows that the Greens’ power dispersion extends well beyond grassroots. This, in fact, creates a genuine diffusion: as the both party ‘faces’ are empowered, the formation of super dominant power concentrations seems highly unlikely.

In most cases the EPO’s control over the PPG is low because the rules do not mention anything about measured attributes. Over time, a few indicators have turned upside down, transforming them from complete PPG autonomy to a very strong EPO control, resulting in a minor strengthening of the EPO. The decision to join or abstain from a coalition government is one of the few formal organizational aspects where the Green EPO has always been relatively strong and has clearly strengthened over time. Already in 1989, it was mandated that the decisions to join and leave governments should be submitted to the PPG’s and the party council’s joint meeting. In 2004 the government program and the ministerial nominations were added to the list of the joint meeting’s responsibilities. What

\(^{124}\) Interestingly, Duverger’s (1967) predictions on the consequences of internal and external creation still seem to hold some truth: regardless of the differences in formation times (the Greens organized 70 years later than the NCP and 80 years later than the SDP, under very different circumstances), the internal creation results in more autonomous PPGs.
differentiates the Greens from the NCP where decisions are made in similar joint meetings is that the Greens’ statutes specify decision-making rules: all participants have one vote, the MPs and the activists are equally powerful in relation to the end result. (Greens EPO rules 1989, 2004). What makes this rule important is that the Green council has always been vastly larger than the PPG (roughly a 4:1 ratio). Unlike in the ‘old parties’ where the councils mainly ‘baptize’ the end result, the Green council has actually used its power several times. As already mentioned, in 2002 a joint meeting ended the Greens’ time in the government – against the party chair’s wishes (Tontti 2007, 218–220). In 2011 the council nixed the PPG’s and party leadership’s plans to enter a bourgeois coalition (see next chapter for details). Joint meeting also ended the Greens’ path in the government in the fall of 2014.

The EPO got stronger in 2004 when a negotiating group was defined for the first time. The chairman became the explicit leader of the group in which at least a half of the members have to be appointed by the NEC (Greens EPO rules 2004) – like in the SDP. Interestingly, however, the Greens’ NEC that was created only in 1993 has not emerged as a similarly strong player like the SDP’s national executive. It does not, for example, take any part in the decision-making. However, its 2004 empowerment can be interpreted as a part of the power diffusion scheme.

In other aspects the PPG has been very autonomous. The EPO has never had any possibilities to interfere with the candidate and the PPG leadership selection. Prior to 1992 neither rules mentioned anything about the party’s policy formulation and how it translates to parliamentary action. Instead, the PPG rules stated that the ‘Group member has a right for opinions that diverge from group’s majority’s stance and he/she may adduce it in public as well as in parliamentary work, voting included’. This rather strong and explicit denial of imperative mandate is still included in the rules; in the turn of the 2000’s it was even transferred to the front page. (Greens PPG rules 1992, 1999–2000, 2013). Formal guidelines on how to form the party’s policies clarified during the 1990’s and the 2000’s. In the 2010 reform the party council and the congress were defined as crafters of the party’s programmatic objectives and an advisory membership ballot was introduced too.125 (Greens EPO rules 2010). While these minor changes have brought the Greens closer to the old parties, formal links between party decisions and the PPG’s actions are still missing. This emphasis is reflected also in the MPs’ sanctioning, which has always been only the PPG’s prerogative (Greens PPG rules

125 In 2011, for the first time in Finnish party history, the Greens selected the party leader in an open membership ballot. As the law prohibits binding referendums when selecting the members of the executive (Law of Associations 1989, § 19, 23), the decision had to be ratified in the party congress.
Even today the PPG membership in the Greens does not require a party membership (Greens EPO rules 2010, PPG rules 2013). In the old parties this has been a standard procedure for decades.

Similarly, formal information channels between the EPO and the PPG have been weak, especially compared to the SDP, where the EPO inspects a wide report from the PPG’s actions and enjoys extensive rights to participate in its meetings. The Greens’ PPG has never had to present reports to the EPO organs. The only information, less than a one page description of the group’s composition and the group office personnel is included in the NEC’s annual report. Until 2010 it was presented to the council and the congress, after that just to the council. (Greens EPO rules 1988, 2010). More importantly, the EPO representatives have never enjoyed automatic participation rights in the PPG’s meetings (Greens PPG rules 1992). However, as the forthcoming analysis shows, during periods of important decision-making the central party organs’ representatives have participated in the other party organs’ meetings in a rather ‘facile’ manner. The lack of formal information channels might just highlight the irrelevance of such ‘early 1900’s’ methods, which are not considered as very meaningful in contemporary party life.

Overall, and against the idea of total grassroots control, the Greens’ PPG is an autonomous unit. In its formative phase it was more autonomous than the NCP’s PPG. The denial of imperative mandates is still posited in the front page of the PPG rules. No formal information or policy channels exist and the PPG takes care of the sanctioning. Only in relation to government formation has the party gained formidable formal powers, which also increased during the research period when the EPO received a majority in the negotiating group and the scope of joint meetings decisions increased. This development might be connected to the EPO’s consolidation, which also shows in the gradual diminution of rotation rules, which prevented same persons from occupying council seats for longer than a few years (Greens EPO rules). Elite interviews, which are examined in the next chapter, corroborate this interpretation: the EPO organs have sought to strengthen their position vis-à-vis the PPG in the 2000’s. Still, as will also be demonstrated, the Green MPs hold tightly to their autonomy that is strongly embedded in the party culture.
5.1.5 Conclusion: the end of EPO empowerment, the continuing inter-party differences and the constitutional strengthening of the PPGs

Firstly, the most obvious general development in positional power in the long term has been the gradual strengthening of the EPOs. In the beginning of the 20th century the PPGs were generally freer although clear party-wise differences existed. The PPGs were freer in the rightist parties, the leftist parties controlled them more. Due to the gradual institutionalization of parties that accelerated in the post-war era and reached its apex in the turn of the 1970’s when party legislation was enacted, the EPOs got stronger and the PPGs lost some of their autonomy. The MPs’ vast participation rights in party organs changed to the party officials’ strong participation rights in the PPG, establishing a firm EPO presence and shortening the gap between these two organizational ‘faces’. Although a similar tendency exists in both old parties, it was stronger in the NCP, which started out as a group that was almost completely dominated by its parliamentary-based elite. (Borg 1982; Sundberg 1994, 172–176.) These developments were tied to the ‘golden age’ of mass mobilization based party politics, which is not of course in any way unique to Finland but rather a very typical European tendency (see for example Bardi et al. 2014b; Scarrow 2015, cph. 3).

Secondly, the most important long-term conclusion is that while the PPGs have not generally strengthened (as the main hypothesis expected), the EPOs’ strengthening stopped in the turn of the 1980’s.\(^{126}\) Aside from the Greens’ experience that can be explained by the party’s formation in the middle of the research period, neither of the old parties, not even the SDP that significantly strengthened its EPO until in the mid-1970’s have increased the EPO’s formal powers since the early 1980’s. Although this development does not bend to the expectations of Katz and Mair’s hypothesis, it lends to it minor support as the ‘democratizing’ efforts have clearly gotten harder/less appealing in the new electoral climate.

Thirdly, it is also important to notice that the parties have not generally decreased the EPOs’ powers significantly either (at least to the extent that the theory expected) and therefore another general conclusion that can be drawn from this analysis is that the formal party rules do not change easily. If they are viewed from a historical institutionalist viewpoint, which highlights the struggle for power distributions

\(^{126}\) It should be noted that as this analysis did not measure exactly the same features as Borg (1982), these studies are not directly comparable. However, as many of Borg’s concerns (the PPG’s reports, participation rights in the PPG, the decisions on major issues, etc.) were dealt here too, this conclusion seemed warranted.
(Mahoney & Thelen 2010) this makes sense: when a rule favouring an organizational player is established, they have reasons to hold on to it.

This leads to the fourth general conclusion that stems from this analysis: the parties’ historical differences have never waned. Even after the post-war institutionalization, marked dissimilarities that echo the old parties’ initial organizational leanings continued to persist (Borg 1982) and as showed, they continue to exist today, too. The NCP’s PPG has always been more autonomous than the SDP’s PPG, which continues to be strongly constrained especially by the social democratic parties’ historical powerhouse, the national executive committee. Its role in the SDP’s formal configuration is markedly more pronounced than in the NCP. These results clearly support the institutional hypothesis over the functional one.

But, fifthly, it also seems that these organizations are not equally rigid. While the SDP has steadily moved on to the direction it set already a century ago (albeit to a lesser degree since 1980’s), the NCP’s development reflects periodical trends. When the mass party organizing popularized in the 1940’s, it quickly jumped in to the bandwagon. When the electoral climate changed — to fit the cadre party’s operative logic – the intra-organizational power pendulum started to shift back to the parliamentary arena, as rule changes show (figure 1). Von Beyme (1985, 50–52) has noted that the Conservatives have always tended to be more flexible in terms of ideology. Interestingly, this might apply to their organizing, too. Conversely, the SDP hails from a mass party tradition which builds heavily on the linear improvement of equality, so turning back to elite autonomy should be very hard. As Kitschelt (1994, 207–208) has noted, many social democratic parties have chosen organizational arrangements that enhance stability, not flexibility.

Finally, it should be noted that while the parties’ internal formal arrangements have not changed much during the past 20 years, the wider legal-formal framework around them has. While the pre-1980’s legal developments tended to favour the EPOs, the constitutional change since the 1980’s has put the PPGs in a very strong position. Although this is not an intra-party matter, strictly speaking, the coming analyses also emphasise that the most important factors that affect the intra-party functioning may indeed emerge from the outside.
5.2 Asset-based power: mass party cultivation vs. electoral-professionalism

This section approaches the development of intra-party resource distribution from the viewpoint of the ‘means of production’. It examines the over time changes in parties’ internal allocation of the most significant organizational assets, money and manpower. The objective is to assess the claim that in the late 20th century the distribution of party assets came to favour public ‘faces’; that is, more resources were directed for the benefit of the parties’ activities in the national parliamentary sphere and less to the traditional mass party activities. The analysis is divided into three subsections and it progresses from the macro (party ‘faces’ overall resources) to the micro level (concrete use of resources within parties).

5.2.1 The big picture: the ‘etatization’ of party resources

In the first half of the 20th century, the parties’ and the PPGs’ resources were based on private and voluntary efforts. Neither parties nor state institutions assisted the PPGs; they collected ‘taxes’ from the MPs (Von Bonsdorff 1982, 396). Party organizations’ income stemmed from several small contributions: membership fees, donations, lotteries, capital (interests and properties) and private loans. In terms of human labour, parties were dependent on their own and their affiliates’ members. This changed in the 1960’s, when a few technical-social changes altered parties’ financial demand and supply. Television became the most significant information medium and survey methods surpassed close links between parties and their members as rapid urbanization extended the gap between them. In the 1960’s, members also begun to grow more reluctant in providing their assets for party work, shrinking the supply side. The idea of public party funding that Sweden had introduced in 1965 became popular. (Sundberg 2003, 127–130, Wiberg 1991, 55, Mickelsson 2007, 177.)

Party subsidy. The initial push for public party funding came from parties. To be exact, from the leftist parties that had fewer connections to big businesses and were therefore more dependent on their members whose enthusiasm to finance the revolution had begun to cool down (Sundberg 2003, 133–134.) The hardened membership situation was used as an argument for subsidies: collection efforts took time away from parties’ ‘real’ tasks. Proponents also emphasised parties increased significance in state affairs and they underlined that political money
should emerge from reliable sources.\textsuperscript{127} On the contrary, opponents from the right of the political spectrum argued that public funding would tie parties too close to the state and jeopardize their autonomy. Opponents also suspected that income system that works independently from the membership and other stakeholders would centralize power within parties. (Rantala 1982, 41–42). Eventually, however, all parties welcomed subsidies for national parties\textsuperscript{128} and they were included in the state budget in 1967 (Sundberg 2003, 134–135). As was already pointed out, this raised the issue of parties’ legal status and ignited the formation of the party law, which then consolidated the subsidy system (Venho 2008, 36). Since its inception, the subsidy has increased almost annually and evolved into parties’ clearly most important income source (see below for details).

Although the Party Act’s article on party subsidies (Party Act 1969, § 9) has been refined many times, the most important part – that defines its overall level, distribution and legal use – has not changed: ‘Within the limits set by the state budget, a political party represented in Parliament may be allocated financial assistance in order to support the public activity that has been defined in its rules and general programme. Such support must be divided in proportion to the parliamentary seats won by the parties in the most recent parliamentary elections’ (translation from Wiberg 1991, 73). The law does not mandate exact sums, they are decided separately in the Eduskunta’s budget hearings.

Despite the subsidy’s discretionary nature, parties became dependent on it very quickly (Rantala 1982, 41–42). Never has the Eduskunta failed to appoint money for parties and it seems extreme unlikely that something like this would ever happen (Venho 2008, 37). Strongly echoing the cartel theory’s spirit, this financial instrument was brought up by the parties, paid up by the parties, for parties. As party memberships have declined (Van Biezen et al. 2012) – along with membership fees’ importance for party finance (see below) – and stricter monitoring now makes donations more transparent (Law to change the Party Law 683/2010), it is hard too see how parties could change this – and why would they even want to. The costs of party work are externalized to the taxpayers and the leaders are relieved from material ties to the membership. In financial terms it dissolves the bargain between the leaders and the members, and \textit{significantly decreases}...

\textsuperscript{127} Early 1960’s witnessed several political scandals that involved money from foreign intelligence agencies and businesses (Mickelsson 2007, 216).

\textsuperscript{128} Finland is the only Scandinavian country where subsidies are paid only to the national parties (Sundberg 2003, 135). However, the budget clause mandates that a portion (around one tenth) has to be directed to the regional parties.
the costs of a member’s exit. Also, the more dependent the party leadership is from public funding that is paid according to electoral fortunes, the higher are their incentives to structure the whole organization for vote maximising purposes.

Figure 2. Party subsidy 1967–2014

Note: Real values in 2014 prices

Note: In 2008 press subsidy was merged to party subsidy. It has been deducted from 2009–2014 figures.


Already in the 1970’s it was pointed out that the party subsidy’s value should contour the annual price development (Karvonen & Berglund 1980, 95). As figure 2 shows, this is pretty much all that it has done. While its nominal value has increased almost annually, on average its real value has stayed almost at the same level. In other words, the EPOs’ financial resources – into which subsidies make the most significant contribution – have not strengthened considerably. On the other hand, they have not decreased either. The first and only real drop (i.e. deliberate decrease that was not caused by inflation) took place in the 1990’s, during Finland’s great depression. This had severe consequences for the party offices (see below) but the subsidy begun to increase again when economy got better. At least it has been very persistent.
This probably relates to its importance for parties. Immediately after the emergence of the party subsidy, other incomes (support payments and membership fees) began to decrease and already in the 1970’s public subsidies were clearly the largest income source. Combined, the party and press subsidies (see below) created more than 2/3 of the parties’ gross incomes (Rantala 1982, 46–48, Wiberg 1991, 82–85). Between 1983 and 2012 combined subsidies made on average around 75 % of the old parties’ incomes – in the Greens the average between 1990 and 2012 was 85 % (Parties financial reports). Thus, overall roughly 4/5 of the parties’ incomes have emerged from the state purse during the research period, making it clearly their most important source of revenue. While in the 1930’s membership fees contributed a rough ¼ of the SDP’s central organization’s total income, in the late 1970’s the share had decreased to 6 % and in the late 1980’s they made only 4 % (Nousiainen 1998, 73). Between 2000 and 2010 the annual average of the membership fees’ portion from the total central party income in the SDP was less than 2 %. It’s no wonder why Wiberg (2006, 62) has claimed that the parties could survive without members.

In general, the emergence of the party subsidy delivered what was asked from it: it replaced the traditional incomes and provided stability, continuity and predictability to party work. While the parties’ dependence on businesses and other external funding sources decreased, their vulnerability against electoral shocks increased. (Wiberg 1991, 107–115.) This has become evident in modern times when even in the largest parties electoral losses can result in layoffs. As noted, this dependency can build strong vote-seeking incentives for the whole organization. Another potential consequence of a highly vote-dependent income structure is that it can accumulate resources for large parties that can then use them to overpower challengers in a capital-intensive electoral market. When alternative funding sources do not exist, public subsidies can become a strong cartelizing force, limiting entry to the electoral market effectively.

**Press subsidy.** The parliamentary press subsidy that is paid to the EPOs was included in the budget in 1974. In terms of size it has been a very significant component in the party income. It quickly reached the party subsidy’s level. (Rantala 1982, 43–44.) Although it increased the parties’ gross incomes, the press subsidy’s use as been strictly restricted. According to the budget clause its objective was to ‘support pluralism and diversity in domestic press and communications’ by giving parties a chance to support ‘press and equivalent electronic publishing sources’ (State budget 2002). In other words: the press subsidy was intended for the promotion of traditional party press. In the 2000’s, the EU became interested...
in the practice as it violated the EU competition policies. As a result, in 2008 it was merged into the party subsidy (Ministry of transport and communications 2008). This proved out to be a very important reform for the parties as its usage restrictions were loosened considerably: now the parties could use it to ‘support their publicity and communications’ (State budget 2009). At first the governing parties’ secretaries agreed to continue to direct all subsidies to the traditional party papers and affiliated Internet publications, but when the party incomes declined precipitously following the 2008 elections funding scandal, the money begun to found its way to less traditional uses. (Grundström 2009). Today, after decades of party press decline (Mickelsson 2007) and under increasing campaign costs (Moring & Mykkänen 2009, 37–41) it provides the parties yet another survival strategy because the loose usage restrictions allow it to be used in various media functions. This issue will be dealt more thoroughly below.

Office subsidy. Consolidation of state subsidies released the MPs from paying ‘taxes’ to the PPGs. The office subsidy that was also included into the budget in 1967 was justified with the PPGs’ increased importance and the neighbouring countries’ examples. It emerged ‘in the shadow of party subsidy’, causing significantly less consternation. At the beginning, it was significantly smaller: the first year’s total amount was 240 000 Marks (the first party subsidy was 10 million Marks). Unlike its ‘big brother’, the office subsidy has never had legal basis; its annual size, division principles and functions are decided every year in the budget hearings. The shares have been based on parliamentary seats and its usage has been defined in fairly loose terms. For example, the 2004 budget clause only stated that ‘the subsidy may be used to hire secretaries and other office personnel that are mandatory for the group’s functioning, as well as to other group expenses’. Compared to the party subsidy, it has been monitored very mildly. Until 2000, only the parliamentary groups themselves monitored its use; in 2001 the monitoring was handed over to the Eduskunta’s financial office. (Venho 2008, 95–97.)
Perhaps because of this, the office subsidy’s real value has increased almost uninterrupted for the past five decades and it is now worth tenfold compared to its initial value. Although this is partly explained by the modest initial level, this is still an objective and significant increase in the parliamentary parties’ resources and thus a clear indication of the strengthening of the public ‘face’. According to Venho (2008, 98), the raises have been justified with increased expenses but it remains somewhat uncertain whether this refers to the price development (i.e. inflation) or the magnitude of acquisitions. For example in 1996 the increase was justified by referring directly to the need to increase the number of assistants. However, the raises have still not caused visible criticism. In relation to this, perhaps the most important development took place during the 1990’s depression: while the party subsidy was cut back by 15% in 1991–1995 (see picture 2), the office subsidy grew faster than ever. As will be shown below, this had severe and lasting consequences for the party ‘faces’ overall resources. When the Eduskunta’s financial office started to monitor the subsidy in the early 2000’s, its growth rate decreased significantly as figure 3 shows.
The office subsidy has not been the only state-related perk that has strengthened the ‘public faces’. The Finnish parliamentarians and the parliament more generally have professionalized and strengthened, too. Already in the late 1940’s, the MPs’ daily allowances were transformed into fixed salaries and the MPs began to enjoy traditional work-related benefits (pensions, health care, etc.). More importantly, the Eduskunta’s staff has increased significantly over the last four decades. In the 1970’s it employed around 160 persons. In the late 1980’s the workforce had increased to around 400. (Noponen 1989.) Between 1997 and 2003 the number of tenured positions increased from 305 to 420 (Eduskunta 2003, 25) and in 2014 a total of 617 individuals worked in the Eduskunta. As 168 of them were employed under the MPs’ assistant system in non-tenured positions (see below), a comparable number is 449 (Eduskunta 2014). Although the growth rate has clearly decreased, the increase from the 1970’s is paramount. The parliament's strengthening received a physical monument in 2004 when the Eduskunta’s annex building (commonly known as ‘Pikkuparlamentti’, the ‘little parliament’) was opened.

A change that more directly concerns the task at hand is the gradual increase of the public ‘face’ representatives’ (ministers and MPs) personal staff resources. The first ministerial special assistants were nominated in 1970 and already in 1972 the system was consolidated: every minister was appointed a personal assistant. In 1989 all the government parties received extra assistants and the prime minister’s ‘entourage’ enlarged. The total number of ministerial assistants increased to 23. (Westerlund 1990, 357.) The number of assistants has continued to increase and today other government parties’ leaders also have several special assistants (Wiberg 2008, 180). In the current government the prime minister is assisted with a total of five special assistants while the other ministers employ 2–3 each. In addition, the parties’ government groups employ separate special assistants. At minimum, then, Sipilä’s government is assisted by a total of 39 special assistants. (State council 2016).

Another new ministerial resource is the state secretary system. The state secretary is a politically appointed high-ranking ministry official who assists the minister in political planning and coordinating. The state secretaries may also replace the ministers in overseeing preparation processes and they may also work on the minister’s mandate in other tasks, too. Holkeri’s government introduced the first state secretary in 1990 into the state council’s (i.e. government’s) office. A plan to extend the system to all ministries was put forth during Paavo Lipponen’s 1st government (1995–1999) and it was approved in the Eduskunta in 2004. The first
full round of state secretaries took office in 2005. (Wiberg 2006, 222; Wiberg 2008, 180.) The timing and the extent of the reforms reflect the ‘governmentalization’ of Finnish politics, which strengthened along with the diminution of presidency.

Finally, and considering the task at hand, most importantly all the MPs were appointed personal assistants in 1997 (Wiberg 2000, 169). At first the MPs received only 3800 Marks (around 650 Euros) for an assistant’s salary and therefore the job was not considered full-time. The salary however increased rapidly. (Ruostetsaari 1998, 44–45). Already in 2002, the payment definition was based on the idea that the assistant’s position is a full-time job (State budget 2002). In 2012 the Eduskunta’s office (where the assistants are formally employed) released a collective labour agreement, which defined all the aspects and the nature of the job; the monthly assistant salary was set at 2315 Euros (around 13 750 Marks). (Eduskunta’s office 2013). Although this is still less than a public sector worker’s median income, an almost fourfold increase in the salary that has secured the task’s full-time character is a substantial investment to the MPs’ resources. The assistant system has benefitted the PPGs more generally as the assistants often work in party matters too (Wiberg 2008, 165). In 2012, a so-called group office model was introduced. In it the assistants are employed by the PPG instead of the Eduskunta’s office and they work for the whole group. The SDP tried it first and it is still the only one that uses it.

Two general conclusions can be drawn from this examination. First, the parties’ incomes have almost completely nationalized. Compared to the first half of 20th century, the parties’ income logic is now completely different: back then all the financial resources had a private origin, now a sheer majority stems from public sources (see Sundberg 2003). The most obvious consequence for intra-party power is that the party leaders are no longer financially dependent on their members. On the other hand, they have become very dependent on electoral performance as the results determine the amount of subsidies. But as the subsidies comprise a lion’s share of all party money, it is not only the leaders but all the organizational ‘faces’ that encounter vote-seeking incentives. The overall development favours the public ‘face’ and it is likely to weaken traditional ‘mass partyesque’ juxtaposition between the ‘party men’ and the public officials as the ‘party men’ too are now heavily

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129 According to Statistics Finland (2016) the median monthly income for a full-time public sector employees in 2014 was 3482 €.

dependent on electoral victories. Secondly, the overall development of the state’s resources has clearly favoured the public ‘faces’. While the party subsidy has maintained its value, the office subsidy has increased considerably. Developments during the 1990’s depression were especially important (see below). Perhaps even more important however is the emergence and consolidation of various assistant systems that have decreased the public officials’ dependence on party apparatuses and built them an excluded resource base to the parliamentary sphere.

5.2.2 The development of the party ‘faces’ overall strengths

The next two subsections turn the focus inside the party organizations. This first one takes a ‘bird’s-eye view’ by examining the long-term developments in the party ‘faces’ overall operating capacities, which are predominantly measured by their overall staff resources. The objective is simply to determine which party ‘faces’ have strengthened and which have weakened. Each ‘face’ (parliamentary, central, subnational) is dealt separately and all the examinations start from a review of previous findings, which shows how the emergence of state subsidies affected the ‘faces’ strength in 1970’s and 1980’s. The analysis of the primary data (1983-2012) aims to illuminate whether the trajectories that were set in motion in the 1970’s continued later.

Central party offices. The party subsidies increased the central party organizations’ incomes substantially (Sundberg 2003, 136). Already by mid-1970’s the SDP’s and the NCP’s central offices’ total incomes had increased four times – in the SDP from 3 to 13 million Marks and in the NCP from 2,3 to 9,5 million Marks – and in the late 1980’s both the old parties’ total incomes exceeded 40 million Marks. (Wiberg 1991, 82–83, 92). Encouraged by the new income source, the parties quickly expanded their activities (Rantala 1982, 48) and the central party organizations begun to grow rapidly; ‘the biggest increase in the number of party officials coincides with the introduction of public subventions’ (Sundberg 1994, 173–176). The central offices’ staffs increased 2,5 times in the SDP and the NCP between the early 1960’s and the late 1980’s. In the early 1960’s, before the public subsidies were introduced, less than ten political functionaries worked in the SDP’s central office. During the 1970’s, the amount doubled and in the 1980’s the

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131 While this study focuses on the relationship between the central and the parliamentary party, this section makes a quick detour to the subnational party sphere in order to give a fuller picture of the development of the parties’ wider networks.
political staff numbers reached to almost 30. The NCP employed a total of 16 persons (on average) in the 1960’s, doubled the amount in the 1970’s (30.5 on average), and added ten more employees in the 1980’s.\textsuperscript{132} (Sundberg & Gylling 1992) However, the growth stabilized already in the 1980’s (Wiberg 1991, 71–72) and according to some newspaper sources the party office staffs begun to decrease in the 1990’s (Ruostetsaari 1998, 48). Mickelsson’s scattered observations hinted towards a similar tendency (2007, 267).

Figure 4. Central party offices’ workforce 1983–2012

As figure 4 shows, the central offices got significantly smaller in the 1990’s. While the decline started slowly already in the late 1980’s it accelerated rapidly in the early

\textsuperscript{132} The SDP’s numbers include only the political officials, the NCP’s numbers include also the technical staff (office secretaries etc.). Thus, the numbers are not directly comparable. (Sundberg & Gylling 1992, Sundberg 1996, 125, Ruostetsaari 1998, 46). This explains why in this study’s data the SDP’s numbers from the 1980’s differ from Sundberg’s observations. They correspond well with his observations on the NCP’s staff.
1990’s. Two external shocks caused this: the 1990’s great depression that encouraged the Eduskunta to cut back the party subsidy\textsuperscript{133} and the old parties’ major losses in the 1991 parliamentary elections jointly created a major decrease to their incomes (see figure 5). The interesting is thing is that when the party subsidy begun to increase again in 2001 (it reached its nominal record value only in 2008), \textit{neither of the old parties increased their central office staff resources}. Thus, it seems that the early 1990’s shocks had a lasting effect to the EPOs’ strength. However, it should be kept in mind that computers begun to replace more traditional office equipment at the turn of the 1990’s and the increased productivity has surely decreased the need for physical labour, too. Nonetheless, it is clear that in terms of workforce, the central offices’ strength has decreased after the 1980’s.

\textbf{Figure 5.} Central party offices’ gross incomes 1983–2012

Although the long-term trend is universal (with the exception of the Greens), significant party type specific differences continue to exist too. In the NCP central office, workforce plummeted before the 1990’s. Already in the late 1980’s, they laid

\textsuperscript{133} In 1991 the party subsidy still reached its record level (75 700 000 Marks) but by 1995 it had decreased by almost 15 \% (to 64 200 000 Marks).
off a third of their permanent workers (from 1985’s 36 employees to 1990’s 24). When the depression hit and the party lost 13 seats in the 1991 elections – this resulted in 23.35 % decrease in their total income – the central office staff decreased very rapidly. A few months after the elections the NEC appointed a development team to plan how to lighten the organization (Annual report 1991). In four years, the central office staff almost halved to 13 officials (in 1995). The SDP’s central office staff, which in the 1980’s was significantly larger than the NCP’s, begun to decrease, too, in the 1980’s but more slowly: from 1985 53 the number of the party office workers was reduced to 45 in 1990. The decrease took place only after the subsidy cutbacks, which after the SDP’s 1991 electoral loss (8 seats) resulted in 22.54 % income decrease. Although the SDP’s NEC was also planning a ‘flexible professional organization’ (Annual reports), the SDP’s central office still employed more than double the NCP’s strength in 1995 (29 persons). Although the SDP’s over time reduction has been significant – in intra-organizational terms – their central office was still significantly larger than in the other parties in the early 2010’s. In 2010 the SDP was electorally weaker than the NCP but it had 24 full-time employees against the NCP’s 14. The Greens have increased their central office strength as the party has consolidated. As picture 4 shows, however, this has been done gradually and cautiously and over time they have approached the NCP’s current level (in 2010 12 employees worked in the Greens’ central office). Overall, however, compared to the 1980’s situation, the parties’ central offices have clearly weakened.

Parliamentary party offices. As was pointed out earlier, before the office subsidies were introduced, the PPGs were dependent on the MPs’ ‘taxes’ (Von Bonsdorff 1982, 396–398.) Although clearly smaller than the party subsidy, the increase that the office subsidies made to the PPGs’ incomes was significant and this was reflected in their workforce. Between 1967 and 1991 the total number of PPG workers increased over threefold. (Sundberg 1994, 173–176, Sundberg 1996, 128.) The PPG offices’ slightly larger relative increase (compared to the EPO offices) is partly explained by their very modest starting point: in the early 1960’s neither of the old parties had paid the workforce. The first PPG office clerks emerged in the late 1960’s and ten years later the SDP employed 5 and the NCP 4 persons. Both continued to increase their parliamentary resources in the early 1980’s – the SDP up to 8 persons and the NCP up to 6 – but the late 1980’s averages do not diverge much from the early 1980’s situation (Sundberg & Gylling 1992; Sundberg 1996, 128). A newspaper article (Ruostetsaari 1998, 48) and
Mickelsson’s (2007, 267) fragmentary findings hinted that the PPG offices continued to grow in the 1990’s too.

**Figure 6.** The PPG offices’ workforce 1983–2011

![Graph showing PPG staff, total over time](image.png)

Sources: SDP and NCP, PPGs’ annual reports 1983–2011; Greens, party’s annual reports 1990–2011

As figure 6 shows, the turn of the 1990’s was not only a turning point towards weaker central offices, it was also a turning point towards stronger parliamentary offices. A stable – and still ongoing – increase of the PPG staffs took place in all parties’ right after the turn of the 1990’s. As digitalization has naturally affected them as well, increases are fairly modest and gradual – but clearly existent and unidirectional.\(^{134}\) This change can also be at least partly attributed to the changes in the state subsidies. In 1991, also the office subsidies reached their historical record level (13 416 000 Marks). Unlike the party subsidy that was cut back by 15 % between 1991 and 1995, the office subsidy (which makes almost all of the PPG offices’ incomes\(^{135}\) increased by almost 24 % (to 16 612 000 Marks in 1995). While the

\(^{134}\) The SDP’s decreases in 2007 and 2011 can be accounted by the consecutive electoral losses.

\(^{135}\) The SDP PPG’s financial reports include no other income sources. The NCP and The Greens have usually collected some private funds too, but only for a few tens of thousands (at most) that make an insignificant fraction in the gross total.
EPOs were forced to lay off employees, the PPGs were able to recruit new staff, decreasing their dependence on the party. The most important aspect about this event is that both decisions – to decrease the party subsidy and increase the office allowance – were made by the MPs, that is, the parties’ public ‘faces’. Combined with the emergence and consolidation of various assistant systems during the same period (in the 1990’s), it seems that the PPGs took a deliberate attempt to strengthen their position vis-à-vis the central offices.

Party-specific differences are not significant. As all the PPGs are highly dependent on the office subsidies, the incomes have increased in all the parties and staff levels show only minor differences. If the PPG office strength is adjusted to the party’s parliamentary strength (staff members/MPs) the Greens’ PPG office emerges as clearly the largest one: on average it has been twice as large as the SDP’s group office in 1990–2011 period (the ratio in the Greens is 0.35 and in the SDP 0.17) and significantly larger than the NCP’s office, too (where the ratio between 1990–2010 is 0.21), which does not differ much from the SDP. Fluctuations seem to live according to the electoral fortunes. For example, the SDP’s major win in 1995 increased the number of PPG officials up to 10 but the 2007 and 2011 losses decreased it back below the 1980’s level. When the group office model was introduced in 2012, the SDP’s parliamentary office’s manpower increased substantially. Currently it employs a total of 28 persons, which is 3.5 times more than the average in the 1980’s, more than any other PPG office and most importantly more than their central office. Although 22 of the employees are MPs’ assistants, the increase in the PPG’s strength in a party that should weight its EPO office the most is a significant proof for the general trend.

**Subnational parties.** Before delving more thoroughly into the ways in which the central party organizations have used their resources, a short ‘detour’ to the subnational party organization’s general developments is in order. This provides a fuller picture of the overall direction of the party change in Finland by better acknowledging the ‘party on the ground’. As it was already pointed out in the introduction, the Finnish parties’ subnational network has consisted of local party branches, municipal associations (if municipality hosts more than two to three local

136 Although this analysis has not extended to the Eduskunta’s memos, there are reasons to believe that this was indeed a deliberate attempt to swing intra-party power balance over to the PPGs. During the 1991–1995 term when the cutbacks were executed, Finland was ruled by the Centre’s and the NCP’s bourgeois coalition. During this period the NCP was internally divided; the feud concerned especially the party office’s and the PPG’s relationships. One interviewee pointed out that the institutional arrangements that were made during this period consolidated the PPG’s power vis-à-vis the party. (For details see the next chapter).
branches) and so-called district organizations, regional branches that organize the party’s actions within electoral constituencies (Sundberg 2008, 64–68).

The parties’ subnational networks were built for electoral purposes after the 1906 parliamentary reform, which divided Finland into electoral constituencies. In the early 1900’s general division of labour, the national parties provided the program, the district organizations took care of the candidate selection and the local branches handled campaigning. Campaign work was voluntary and amateurish. Dissatisfied with the local activists’ efforts, in the 1920’s the SDP established a countrywide network of specialists whose task was to direct campaigning efforts in the local communities. After the wars, the SDP’s networks affectivity encouraged others to follow and optimization in tightened competitive atmosphere resulted in hierarchical campaigning machines. While the local branches and the party presses still carried the main responsibility, the national leaderships interfered with the candidate selection and coordinated the overall functioning. The emergence of the party laws, which made the candidate selection subnational parties’ prerogative helped to disable the ‘authoritarian’ campaigning network system. Other 1960’s developments – the popularization of television and polling techniques – pushed campaigning towards more public and capital-intensive forms and the local branches’ and the party press’ importance begun to decrease. In the early 1970’s, the candidates started to build independent support groups, which shortly assumed most campaigning duties. These loose groupings do not have any formal ties to the party organizations and group membership does not require party membership. Today, a majority of campaigning activity takes place through support groups. (Sundberg 1995, 45–56, Borg & Moring 2005, 47, Paloheimo 2007, 291–299.) Thus, the original reason for the local branches’ existence has largely faded.

It is not a surprise that along with the membership decline and the decay of the party press, the overall number of local branches has decreased significantly (Karvonen 2014, 55). Between 1983 and 2010, 600 SDP branches (out of around 1500) closed and between 1983 and 2001 the NCP shut 126 branches. The Greens have naturally expanded their subnational network but its current magnitude is far from the heydays of local party activity: in 2012 the Greens had 218 local branches. (Parties annual reports 1983–2012.) Their activity has also diminished. According to Ruostetsaari (1998, 49–50, 2005, 22–30, 50–51), in the 1990’s the number of paid local officials declined to near zero. The restructuring of the municipal board system decreased the number of trustee positions and the amount of ‘party taxes’. While some branches receive subventions from the district organizations (and
perhaps a portion of the membership fees), the local parties mostly operate on voluntary basis. Thus, while the national parties have professionalized, the local parties continue to operate like ‘hobbyist’ clubs. Some branch activity consists of meeting rituals but menial electoral preparations, which are strictly controlled by the district organization, take most of the time. The branches no longer ‘raise’ future political elites; nowadays people join parties after they have been selected or decided to run for the office. While the municipal branches have stronger connection to actual politics via municipal councils, the ‘centre of gravity’ has shifted from associational work to supporting council groups there, too.\footnote{In essence, the ascendancy of the party in public office means the shifting of weight from the party organizations to the elected officials. It is not restricted to the national parties; it includes the change in the parties’ local activities as well (Katz & Mair 1993, 2002).}

The most important organizational level is the district organization. They oversee the local and municipal parties, set candidates for parliamentary elections and decide about electoral alliances. The districts’ combined efforts determine how large a party’s support is in elections. Therefore at least the larger parties have paid the workforce in the district offices. (Sundberg 2008, 67–68.) The central parties begun to appoint substantial shares from the party subsidy to the subnational organs in the 1970’s (Karvonen & Berglund 1980, 107). Between 1969 and 1976 one third of the SDP’s and the NCP’s party subsidy was directed to ‘lower levels’\footnote{It remains uncertain whether this refers only to the district organization or to the other affiliate organizations (women and youth associations) as well.} (Wiberg 1991, 85–86). While the SDP’s subnational staff did not increase significantly from 1960–1989 (as their subnational organization was well built before 1960’s) the NCP made a six fold increase between the early 1960’s and the late 1970’s. However, the districts’ growth halted too in the 1980’s. (Sundberg & Gylling 1992, Sundberg 1996, 125.) Overall, the subnational parties strengthened less than the central and the parliamentary offices. In the turn of the 1990’s ‘they continue[d] to work with only one party official, sometimes assisted with one or two secretaries’ (Sundberg 1994, 174).

Some data fragments that were extracted from the parties’ annual reports suggest that Sundberg’s characterization holds well 25 years later. In the SDP all district organizations employ a leader figure – before 1993 he/she was called the district secretary, and after the executive director – and one to two auxiliary officials. The number of secretaries seems to have decreased over time. (SDP annual reports 1990–2014.) In the NCP only the leader figures (executives) were mentioned by name between 1990 and 2003; each district had one. As the 1990
report also mentions 54 auxiliary staff members, the districts probably employed secretaries too.\textsuperscript{139} After 2004 a complete list of the district office staffs has been included into the annual reports. 2004–2010 the average of the total number of officials was 26, which equals to 15 executive directors (according to 15 electoral districts) and around 0.75 auxiliary officials per district office. (NCP annual reports 1990–2010.) During this period the SDP’s average was 23, which equals to 15 directors and around 0.55 auxiliaries. The general conclusion is that while the district offices’ strengths have decreased to some extent after the turn of the 1990’s (due to decrease in the auxiliary staffs), they are still clearly relevant for the parties.

The Greens, too, have wanted to build district organizations. The planning begun already in 1989 but while in 1990 their ‘regional organization covered the whole country’, the district correspondents most likely worked voluntarily. (Annual reports 1989–1990.) The average annual subsidy the central organization paid to the districts in the 1990’s was less than 3000 Euros (Financial reports 1990–2000) – hardly enough for a full-time professional. In 2001, the Greens hired 5 regional secretaries – ‘a first in their history’ – to ‘strengthen district’s operation’ (Greens annual report 2001). While these secretaries disappeared in 2004 (they were most likely hired to enhance the party’s performance in the 2003 parliamentary elections), in 2005 the party congress decided to create a permanent district secretary system and the central organization’s subsidies enabled hiring part-time functionaries to all the districts. (Greens annual report 2005). Still in 2014, the district’s general directors worked mostly on part-time basis. (Green annual reports 2013–2014.) The differences in overall incomes (the Greens earn roughly a ¼ of the old parties’ incomes) explain the differences to old parties. However, the fact that at least since the early 2000’s, also the Greens have aimed to build regional networks supports the conclusion that \textit{regional party activity is not a fad from the past; it’s still an important part of party organizing in Finland.}

5.2.3 Have the central party offices transformed into ‘electoral-professional’ agencies?

Although the PPGs’ overall asset-based strength has increased the most, the EPOs’ financial assets are still considerably larger. In 2014, the party subsidy alone was

\textsuperscript{139} According to interviewee the NCP 1 in the 1980’s party council decided the party’s budget. As it was composed of district representatives who ‘had nothing to do with the incomes, their budgets were always overly optimistic’. The district offices grew excessively. After the party ended in heavy debt, the party secretary Pekka Kivelä had to lighten the system considerably in the early 1990’s.
around 18 million Euros and if the press subsidy is also considered – it should be, as the parties may now use it more freely – the EPOs’ direct subsidies are almost ten times larger than the PPGs’ office subsidy (which was ‘only’ 4 million Euros in 2014). In relation to the overall task – i.e. to find out has the parties’ public ‘face’ ascended to unrivalled power position within the parties – the most important question is, then, *for whose benefit are the EPO resources used?* The question stems from the observation that was already discussed in chapter 3: the party’s gross assets may be used in many ways, to support different actors and their objectives. Whether the central office works for the ground organization or the public office bears great significance to intra-party power dynamics. The central office’s position at the intersection of the various party ‘faces’ made the EPOs strong in the mass party era and it has been considered as the pivotal place in the overall power scheme (Katz & Mair 2002). If the cultivation of mass party networks has given way to ‘electoral-professionalism’, the public ‘face’ has strengthened even more.

**Formal regulations on the use of party resources.** Limitations to the parties’ spending can emerge from the national legislation and the party statutes. The Party Law (1969, § 9) is liberal about the use of subsidies: financial assistance is given ‘to support the public activity that has been defined in its rules and general programme’. As was already established, the legally valid party rules mainly prohibit explicitly authoritarian organizations (Sundberg 1997) and although the parties’ programmatic differences are still detectable (Paloheimo 2008), they do not place any demands on the organizational arrangements. Thus, there is plenty of room to manoeuvre. According to Rantala (1982, 45), the worry that the subsidies would lead to ‘state invasion’ within parties was a clear over exaggeration; the law’s definition of sound party activity is very loose and monitoring takes place only afterwards. Rantala’s view is that the law prohibits doing business, but not for example electoral work. Venho’s (2008, 37–38, 42) interpretation is equally permissive: ‘apparently every function or measure that somehow connects with party work has been at least indirectly understood as a part of their “job description”’. The only formal limitations are written into the budget clause, which, of course, is also subject to the Eduskunta’s decision and may be altered every time a budget is approved. Since 1975, a portion of the subsidy has been appropriated for the women’s organizations (Rantala 1982, 45) and in 1987, in the midst of the erosion of local party activity, another 8 % was appointed to the district organizations\(^\text{140}\) (Venho 2008, 38). In 2008 both quotas were increased up to 12 %

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\(^{140}\) This quota reduces the Finnish parties’ difference to other Nordic parties who appoint direct subsidies to the subnational parties, too (Sundberg 2003).
but dropped back to 10% in 2012. Aside from this 20% requirement—which after 2008 has reduced to 10%, because almost an equally large press subsidy is now an unconditional part of the parties’ income—the legal limitations on how the party organizations should use their subsidies do not exist.

The parties may of course limit the use of the party money by themselves. The party statutes do not give specific substantial instructions, but they do usually specify who is responsible for the financial decisions or at least who has the right to monitor the party’s spending. Unsurprisingly, the SDP has been stricter about party money than the NCP. In both parties the NEC uses party assets, but in the SDP the party council and the congress can also make financial decisions. The NECs are also responsible for providing information to the other party organs.

The main differences lie in the scope of monitoring rights. The SDP’s main supervising unit is the party council that approves the budget and processes and approves the final report. The council may also at any time order an inspection of party accounts and, in case it finds something unwanted, it can fire the responsible officials. The council also allocates the membership fees between the party ‘faces’. Until 2008, the processing and approving of financial reports took place in the party congress, too. (SDP rules 1983–2012.)

In the NCP, the party council also processes and approves the final financial report—and the congress processes it, too. The NCP’s council may not initiate investigations or allocate the membership fees and it only processes the budget—since 1991 a ‘frame budget’—, its formal approval is not needed.141 (NCP rules 1983–2012.) Thus, it has less means to affect and oversee the party leadership’s spending. Like in some other aspects of formal organization The Greens have strengthened the EPO’s control in financial matters during the research period. In the first party statutes presentation and approval of budgets and financial reports were appointed to the party congress, which back then convened twice per year. When the NEC became a separate party unit in 1993, the party organ’s tasks were explicitly defined: the NEC ‘handles things’ while the council is a political unit. In 2004 when the NEC’s tasks were re-specified all financial decision-making was appointed to it. In 2010 the council increased its powers when approval of the budgets and financial reports was transferred to it from the party congress. (Greens rules 1989–2012.) In all parties the budgetary powers have centralized over the years.

141 This change is likely connected to the previously mentioned problem that the party leadership had with the council’s financial powers that inflated the district offices.
In general the party statutes leave also plenty of room for imagination. In lack of explicit ‘job descriptions’ the parties’ organizational choices depend largely on the leadership’s interpretation of it and – to a somewhat differing degree, which relates to the theoretical expectations and reflect in the formal regulations – whether the other party organs accept it or not. As was shown in the previous chapters the evolution of the parties ‘electoral environment’ has significantly altered the vote-seeking party leaders’ incentives in organizational matters.

The hypothetical ‘electoral-professional’ party office. In ideal terms the contemporary party office should differ from the mass party era’s ideal in four broad aspects: *it is more professional, smaller, more centralized and in terms of substance, more focused.* First, modern party offices are staffed by experts, not by ‘party men’. Unlike ‘party men’ that hailed from occupational groups that were near parties (workers or entrepreneurs) and worked for maintaining the organization and its ideological purity, ‘intellectual professionals’ are ‘highly-educated personnel of upper-middle class extraction’ who are mainly motivated by careerist purposes. (Panebianco 1988, 220–222, 231–235.) They enjoy professional recognition and autonomy (Katz 2002, 113), and are therefore entitled to higher salaries than ‘party men’. Secondly, as professionalized political competition is also capital intensive (Katz 2002, 98–99) (i.e. there is less to spend on human labour), the offices become smaller. Thirdly, for the sake of efficiency, clarity and control, party’s messages should emanate from a single national source (Katz & Mair 2002, 124–126). When national leaderships engage in ‘permanent campaigning’, they have ‘less need for an extensive party on the ground, and in particular for the labour the activists provide’ (Farrell & Webb 2000, 102, 117; also Webb 1995, 312). While some regional representation is mandatory in regionally wide countries like Finland, leadership’s investments to subnational party activity should not exceed the level of effective campaigning. The new ideal organization is also highly centralized.

This relates to contemporary party office’s final characteristic: the scope of party activity should narrow from the mass party era’s ‘from cradle to grave’ approach where parties provided vast ‘extracurricular’ activities to their members, from leisure (sports, theatre, etc.) and vocational support (trade unions etc.) to civic and moral education (folk high schools, temperance movements, etc.). ‘Permanent campaigning’ calls for well-established campaign departments that put emphasis on direct communication. Targeted campaign messages provide feedback used for adapting the message to suit audiences better. (Farrell & Webb 2000, 106.) Now, programmatic work also requires more technical conviction (Panebianco 1988,
Devoting attention to these tasks eats resources from the traditional mass party activities. Offices should turn to ‘media agencies’.

**Degrowth, capital-intensity and professionalization.** The central party offices have mostly become smaller and even those that have gotten larger (Greens) have not strived for massive staff like the parties did in the 1970’s and the 1980’s. Back then even the Swedish People’s Party, which never got much more than 10 seats in the parliament, employed around 20 political functionaries in their central office (Wiberg 1991, 72). The Greens’ staff now equals the NCP’s staff. As both have mainly increased their support during the research period this level seems to be sufficient for ‘electoral-professional’ purposes. The SDP’s still larger overall staff may indicate that they continue to employ the ‘party men’ too. The level of professionalization cannot be, however, decided on staff numbers only. The central offices’ total personnel costs allows to, first, determine whether the party work has indeed become more capital-intensive and, second, to measure the party workers’ average salary, which operates as a proxy for professionalization.

**Figure 7.** Central party offices’ personnel expenditure 1983–2012

Note: Personnel costs include salaries, social payments, pensions, travelling expenses, etc. Numbers represent the spending unit’s share from the total party expenditure. The press subsidy, which until 2008 was directed straight away to the party newspapers, is included in costs. Presented numbers are moving averages. Sources: Parties financial reports 1983–2012.
As Figure 7\textsuperscript{142} shows, the turn of the 1990’s marked a turn towards more capital-intensive organizing. Even when the party incomes started to increase (in the early 2000’s), the personnel’s share from the total costs continued to decrease. The NCP begun its transformation earlier and executed it faster. In 1992 its staff costs decreased to 12.10 % (from 20 %) and they have stayed there ever since (1992–2012 average is 12.31 %). Although the SDP’s staff costs have decreased too, the development has been slower and the personnel still eats around 5 % more than in the NCP. This equals to 358 758 Euros from the SDP’s average total expenditure in 1983–2012, twice the amount it spent on communications and publicity in the new millennium (on yearly average, see below). The Greens’ spending curve reflects their dependence on electoral fortunes. Again, however, they have approached the NCP’s level.

\textbf{Figure 8.} Professionalization of the central office staff

\begin{figure}[h]
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\includegraphics[width=\textwidth]{figure8.png}
\caption{Professionalization of the central office staff}
\end{figure}

\textsuperscript{142} The NCP included district salaries to total personnel costs in the 1983–1991 and 1997–2012 reports; they were manually deducted. The 1983 district salary share was used in estimating 1984–1991 values. In 1997–2012 the district shares were presented in the reports. The Greens’ district subsidies since 2001 have been deducted when amounts have been present. In other cases (in 2002, 2006 and 2007) moving averages have been used.
Aside that the party offices have grown smaller (in terms of staff) and party work has become more capital-intensive (i.e. the human labour’s share of the total costs has decreased), the old parties have also professionalized. The NCP party worker’s deflated ‘annual wage’143 has doubled from the early 1980’s. While the NCP has always been more professional, the most interesting development took place in the early 2000’s: between 2002 and 2004 the average salary increased by almost 10 000 Euros. In 2004 Jyrki Katainen, 33, assumed the party leader’s position and the party adopted its image-centred, positive and professional electoral party ‘look’ they are known for today. The party regrouped after its 2003 electoral defeat and already in 2006 almost succeeded in making the former chairman Sauli Niinistö the first NCP-based president in 50 years. In the 2007 parliamentary elections Katainen led the NCP to its second best result ever, finishing only one seat behind the winner. In 2011 the NCP finally became the Eduskunta’s largest party and Katainen assumed the prime minister’s post. One year later, Niinistö won the presidency. Herkman (2012, 194) has addressed the 2007’s ‘change of power’ to the NCP’s ‘rejuvenation’ that begun after the election of Jyrki Katainen and led to the youthful and optimistic campaign methods. All subsequent observations also suggest that the NCP made a deliberate attempt to become a modern media party in the 2000’s. In the SDP the development has been much slower and more modest. Their professionalization curve resembles the trade unions’ annual index raises.

The Greens is a party of the highly educated. Therefore, their seemingly non-existent professionalization begs a question. The 17 000 Euro annual average wage makes around 1400 Euros per month, which – after the ‘employment costs’ (taxes, pensions, etc.) are deducted – hardly makes for a living in Helsinki, where the party headquarters are located. It seems that the majority of their staff is working on a quasi-voluntary basis. This might not be too far-fetched. Many young urban professionals – especially the ones who have graduated from humanities, social sciences or arts – have chosen to work in the third sector and in other low-paid ‘ethical lifestyle’ professions, in a field that they really care about. The combination of post-materialistic values (Inglehart 1990) and Finland’s generous unemployment benefits might provide the Greens with a way to survive without mass membership and ties to external donors. As will be shown, they have put their money where it best suits the contemporary ‘electoral climate’.

143 As personnel costs include all costs (taxes, pensions, benefits, etc.) to call it a wage is misleading. However, as it reflects the total sum of money that the employer pays, it might be an even better measure for the value that the party is willing to pay for labor.
Another way to assess professionalization is to see if the portion of party workers who mainly maintain the organization has decreased. Indeed, since the mid-1990’s, the ‘administrative’ positions have clearly decreased, especially the ordinary office staff: in the SDP the number of secretaries and the like decreased from 1983’s 25 to 2010’s 6, in the NCP from 20 to 2. While the effect of technological advancement is clear, there is more: the number of administrative leaders has also halved and the 20 % decrease is relative, meaning that the other worker groups have grown simultaneously. The Greens’ ‘historically free’ development supports this. If the crazy years of the early 1990’s when the party doubled its income after the 1991 victory are not counted, the portion of the administrative workers has never exceeded the 20 % mark. The contemporary party offices are mainly run by professionals.

**Centralization.** Modern central party offices should optimize their effect on national public sphere. Thus, assets should be centralized to party headquarters and the support for other subnational activities than electioneering should be
minimized. Measuring party offices’ direct financial aid to district-level parties provides a way to assess the truthfulness of this claim. If subnational parties participated in the cultivation of the party community in the mass party era (as the theory suggests), then we should witness a general decrease in the level of district support. It should be kept in mind that only a 8–12 % share has been legally mandatory.

**Figure 10. Direct district subsidies 1983–2012**

![Graph showing direct district subsidies 1983–2012](image)

Note: Some years the SDP paid small additional subsidies (for travelling and office equipment), which have been included. The Greens’ 2006 amount was missing; 8 % from the party subsidy was used as an estimate as they have rarely exceeded the legal minimum. Presented numbers are moving averages.


However, instead of a general decrease, we witness substantial party specific differences and a slow convergence ‘to the middle’. Before the 1980’s, the old parties subsidised their ‘lower levels’ fairly similarly. On average (in 1969–1976) the SDP paid 36.3 % and the NCP 39 % from their party subsidy (Wiberg 1991, 85–86). In the 1980’s the parties took alternative routes – ones, which reflect the expected party type differences. Throughout the research period the SDP (the mass party) has paid significantly more than the other parties, and clearly more
than the legal thresholds mandate: the over time (1983–2012) average is 55.8 % from the party subsidy. For comparison, the NCP’s over time average is only 16.6 %. The SDP’s district subsidy continued to increase until the turn of the 1990’s, stayed relatively unchanged almost ten years and then started to gradually decrease in the 2000’s. Keeping the electoral fortunes in mind (the NCP passed the SDP during the research period), it looks like the SDP’s districts have earned some ‘surplus’ (i.e. more than the electoral-professional party work requires). Despite the converging tendency that results from the NCP’s minor increases, the SDP continues to pay around 5 % more (out of their total expenditure). The Greens have never exceeded the legal minimum. Tight budgeting relates to their status as a ‘one-foot party’; that is, the strong dependency on party subsidies and the lack of mass membership base and external donors (Sundberg 2003). The relatively heavy central office (in relation to the membership and the numbers of MPs) and small subnational subsidies are signs of a strongly centralized organization. The Greens’ electoral support has always leaned strongly on large southern cities.

Direct subsidy is not the only way in which the central party organizations can support the subnational parties. They may also channel the membership fees back to the localities and pay the district office’s salaries. In these aspects the financial reports begun to show inconsistencies between the parties and in some cases inside the parties, too (over time). Therefore, instead of direct quantitative comparison, this section presents relevant findings in a party-by-party manner with the aim of making uncertainties transparent.

The SDP financial reports indicate that the party has never paid district salaries. However, it has collected membership fees directly from the individual members to the central register and channelled the majority of them back to the district, the municipal and the local branches. As was already pointed out, the party council decides about the allocation and thus controls a significant financial leverage. For example, in 2009 only 20 % out of the total membership revenue was directed to the central organization while the districts and the local branches took 80 %. While the central organization’s cut is in no way a significant part of its total incomes, these are not small sums: on annual average the council has appointed 655 000 Euros to the subnational party organs.144 If direct district subsidies are considered, the total amount of money that the SDP has appointed to the subnational parties annually equals to about a 25 % share out of their total expenditures’ over time average. Although the share is decreasing (in 2010 only 18.4 %) a fifth of all party

144 Total sum = all membership fees – the central office’s share - collecting expenses.
expenditures is still a significant amount. Considering that this share is a) set by the party council (the party congress between party congresses that represents the subnational party activists) and b) it is ‘freely useable’ (i.e. the terms of its use are not formally tied to the central office’s directives), it provides the districts a formidable source of autonomy. This goes quite clearly against the idea of a centralized party in the public office.

The financial reports indicate that the NCP has changed their ‘mixture’ of subsidies, fee returns and salary payments throughout the research period. The overall assessment of their support to the subnational parties is therefore harder to make. In the 1980’s, the central organization collected membership fees from its actual members (the subnational branches that had collected fees from the individual members) – according to the rate the party council set. (NCP rules 1983–2001.) It remains unknown how large was the portion from the gross revenue that arrived to the central office and how much remained in the subnational offices. Until the early 1990’s, the central office also appointed around 2/3 from its share to the ‘settlements’ (over 2 million Marks per year) and thus it seems that the overall subsidy to the districts was larger than the direct allowance indicates. In 1993 all membership fees (incomes and ‘settlements’) were reduced to zero. It is likely that this is related to the general shutdown of the ‘bloated’ party organization that produced severe cutbacks in the central office too. As the NCP’s council mandated the fee rate, it might have ordered the central office’s cut down to zero to support the district offices more. No NCP financial report from 1993–2003 mentions the membership fees at all, but in 2004 the fee system was centralized. According to the new rules, the party collects all fees straight from the individual members and allocates the actual members’ (the local branches) shares to them. Since 1993 the financial reports have not mentioned the ‘settlements’ and therefore compared to the 1980’s, the central organization’s cut seems to have increased.

Reports also indicate that the NCP has occasionally paid the district officer’s salaries and they have been connected to the extent of the direct district subsidies. Between 1983 and 1991 an estimated 2–3 million Marks were spent annually for the district office salaries and social payments.\(^{145}\) In 1992, the central office’s personnel costs decreased dramatically, from 9.7 million Marks down to 3.4 million. Although this is partially explained by a real decrease in the central office’s personnel costs.

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\(^{145}\) Only the 1983’s district salary sum was presented in the report. Later years’ shares were calculated by defining 1983 share (district salaries/total salaries (%)) and deducting equal share from the annual total salaries.
personnel costs (figure 7), it seems that at this point the central office transferred
the district’s salary allowance to the direct district subsidy as they increased
simultaneously from 1.9 million to 3.5 million Marks (figure 10). Until 1996 the
central office’s personnel costs were very low and the level of direct district
subsidies stayed high. When the district salaries reappeared into the financial
reports in 1997, the level of direct subsidies plummeted. From this time on the
district workers’ salaries have been included in the central organizations finances.

While the overall level of assistance does not differ significantly between the old
parties, one important difference seems to remain: the level of centralization. The
SDP’s district organizations enjoy from significant autonomy as they can control
the allocation of fees via the party council and they can also hire their own
personnel with direct subsidies. The NCP’s fee system has centralized, but more
importantly the salary allowance to the district personnel establishes a stronger
linkage between the central party and the subnational branches than a direct
subsidy.

The interviewee NCP 5 confirms that the central party organization paid a
salary allowance to the districts prior to 2008. However, in this year the system
became a lot more rigid. First the party paid its debts with the money it gained
from the 2007 electoral victory. The same year the party leadership and the district
leaders made an agreement that the remaining funds will be given to the districts in
exchange for their obedience. The party ‘transformed the district managers to party
workers’ and ‘bought for the party secretary a direct directive right to the district
managers’. Their selection became the party secretary’s prerogative, to secure them
‘a team that pleases him/her’. The NEC, which is comprised of the district leaders
(i.e. the district organizations’ elected heads), only accepts the overall campaign
strategy, which the ‘district manager then implements with the instructions he/she
gets from the central party office’. In other words, the NCP’s whole organization
became highly dependent on the central leadership’s direction at the end of research period.

The Green council received budgetary rights only in 2010. This suits well with
the observation that like the direct district subsidies – which the party has never
paid more than the legal minimum – the other support for ‘lower levels’, too, has
remained modest during their short existence. Like in the NCP, the Greens’
membership fee has been levied from their actual members, the subnational
associations. Although the financial reports do not reveal this information, the
member organizations (i.e. the local and regional associations) have probably also
collected separate fees to fund their operations. In 2006 a similar dual model that
the NCP established in 2004 was introduced to transition from ‘ten different fees
into a situation where the Green associations have only two fees: the basic fee and a lowered fee for the poor’. Allocation of the overall revenue – between the central and the other offices – was appointed to the party congress. (Greens rules 1988–2010, Greens Annual report 2006). According to the financial reports the Greens’ central organization has never returned anything from the party’s membership fees back to the subnational parties. The third component of the subnational support, paid workforce, promotes also centralization rather than peripheral autonomy. When the Greens introduced the regional secretaries in 2001, they were put on the party’s payroll. In 2005, the party erected its district manager system, which appointed a part-time manager to every electoral district. In 2006 10 out of 14 were completely paid by the central party. In 2007 the number had increased to 12 and in 2010 all the district managers except the one that was located in Helsinki office were paid by party’s central office. The Greens’ organization is at least as centralized as the NCP’s, if not more.

**New focus in party activities.** The final hypothesised feature of electoral-professional central party office focuses on the substance of its activities, i.e. to the transformation from mass party cultivation to nationalized media politics. If such a transformation has occurred, we should observe significant changes in party offices’ central functions. Five empirical measures that examine the different ‘party tasks’ provide a sufficient answer.
According to the general hypothesis, the relative share of the mass party workforce should have decreased during the research period. However, like in the case of centralization to which this measure is closely related to, the major party specific differences that have persisted pretty much throughout the research period are clearly detectable. In general over 20 % of the SDP staff and only around 10 % of the NCP staff have worked in traditional mass party tasks during the research period. Over time averages are 22.8 % and 10.2 % respectively; the internal changes are not significant nor unidirectional. The only notable change is the Greens’ big leap in the early 1990’s, which stemmed from their six seat win in the 1991 elections (from 4 MPs to 10). The young party was eager to engage with the people and this resulted in various new happenings and events (Greens annual reports 1991–1993). Quickly, however, the scope of activities reduced and, again, this spending unit also adjusted near to the NCP’s level. The convergence with the NCP points towards a ‘periodical’ adaptation model, where the new party adopts
those organizational features, which appear to be the most efficient in that specific context (Van Biezen 2005). This shows in the ‘other side’, too, in the development of electoral-professional assets.

**Figure 12. Staff in electoral-professional tasks 1983–2012**

![Staff, planning & publicity (% / total staff)](image)

Note: This staff group includes (but is not limited to) planning officers, publicists, media workers, permanent electoral staff, etc. Presented numbers are moving averages.

Sources: Parties annual reports 1983–2012.

In the electoral-professional staff group the expected trend is clear: since the early 1990’s this staff group has steadily grown in all parties. From around 15 % level in 1990 (SDP: 15.6 %, NCP: 12.5 %) it has reached up to around 30 %. However, minor inter-party differences exist too. Most important of them is that while the Greens and the NCP started to pay lot of attention to these functions already in the mid-1990’s, it took some 10 years before the SDP increased its investment in this sector and that investment has still not been equally extensive. Between 2005 and 2010 electoral-professional tasks burdened a quarter (26 %) of their workforce; in the NCP 36 % and in the Greens 33 % worked in these tasks. As there are no significant differences in general administrative tasks (figure 9) the difference stems from the extent of mass party tasks (figure 11). The Greens’ preference is clearly the strongest. In 2011, 54 % of their full-time staff worked in electoral-professional
tasks. In 2012, after the major electoral loss in the 2011 elections ate a third of their subsidies, the Greens’ central office kept 44% of their staff in these tasks.

**Figure 13.** Electoral-professional spending 1983–2012

Measuring the specialized spending units from the parties’ financial reports is hard. Sometimes the titles change, the items are dispersed or they discontinue to live. Because the category of communications and publicity spending that can operate as a proxy for more general electoral-professional spending is so important, this study has nevertheless attempted to measure it. The spending unit represents a combination of all the financial report items that could be meaningfully connected to the definition of communications and publicity in the context of a political party. However, due to many uncertainties they should be treated only as directional.

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146 Karl-Heinz Nassmacher (2009, 50, 66) has separated (internal) communications and (external) publicity. However, he also underlined that they are hard to separate empirically because intra-party communication often involves public presentations. Following Nassmacher’s definition (‘group of costs that are incurred in order to buy some means of communication, which address the general public without identifying any specific purpose’) all related items that could be separated from the financial reports were summed up. These include:
What can be established is that the direction and timing of this development is in line with the other observations. In the 1980’s and the 1990’s the SDP’s ‘publicity’ category mainly consisted of a member’s newsletter and the theoretical activist paper Socialist Journal. Only a minuscule portion was appointed to external publicity and in the 1990’s it disappeared from the reports. In the 2000’s, some new components were added (for example ‘party image’ in 2002), but they were short-lived and financially insignificant. Only in 2010 the SDP’s publicity spending increased more significantly, from under 1 % to over 4 %. In the NCP, too, ‘publicity and marketing’ made less than 1 % in the 1980’s. Unfortunately, the 1994–2003 data is missing because in 2004 ‘shareholder activity’ – a name they used until 2008 when it was changed to ‘communications and publicity’147 – made already almost 9 % of their total expenditure. Considering the previously observed increase in the electoral-professional staff, it is probable that also this spending unit begun to increase already in the 1990’s. In the 2010’s, the NCP’s spending on ‘publicity and communications’ increased to over 10 % out of their total expenditure. Although the Greens’ financial reports have always included a designated category for ‘publicity’, only in the mid-2000’s was their investment raised over 5 %. Nowadays, however, it too has doubled. The next graph gives a more detailed explanation.

147 Most financial reports contain a comparison to the previous year. This allows comparing the similarities between spending units in case their names change over time. The 2007 sum that is presented under ‘communications and publicity’ in the 2008 report is exactly the same as the sum that is presented under ‘shareholder activity’ in the 2007 report. Thus, they represent the same spending unit, only the name has changed.
A more reliable way to assess the change in the central party office’s substantive focus is to measure their ‘cut’ from the press subsidy that was released in 2008. The ‘mass partyesque’ alternative would be to continue to subsidise the party papers, the electoral-professional party would naturally spend the money on more electorally lucrative things. The communications subsidy (as it has become to be known) is a very extensive aid. In 2008–2011 it equalled the party subsidy (total of 17 910 000 Euros) and while after 2011 it decreased by a few million, in 2015 15 million euros was still allocated to ‘support the parties’ publicity and communications’. When the subsidy was released, the parties’ reactions differed. For two years the SDP continued to channel the whole aid to its newspapers. In 2010, the party office took 11 % and in 2012 raised its share up to 18 %. The NCP’s central office took 19 % right away and increased its share to 30 % in 2010. Perhaps unsurprisingly, the Greens went furthest. The first year they didn’t take anything and in 2009 a modest 6 % share was kept. In 2010, the share increased up to 11.5 % and in 2011 to 28.5 %. In 2012, the Greens’ central office kept almost a
half (42 %) of their communications subsidy, again signalling a strong electoral-professional tendency. Considering that the party organ Vihreä Lanka (Green Thread) is older than the party itself and it is probably the single most important party community symbol, this was a tough decision. The overall direction seems to be clear: as the party networks continue to decline and the struggle with the campaign expenses is likely to continue, their ‘cut’ will most likely continue to increase. Again, a change in the state-level institutions that the parties executed themselves provided them an efficient survival strategy.

**Figure 15. Parties’ electoral spending 1983–2012**

![Graph showing electoral spending](image)

Note: Numbers (moving averages) represent spending units share from total costs. Text below presents spending units shares from party subsidy in order to provide comparability to older studies.


The final measure to assess the central party offices’ turn towards electoral-professionalism is the most obvious one, the share of the party expenditures that has been appointed to elections.\(^{148}\) During the first eight years of public subsidising of political parties (1969–1976), the SDP used only a minor part of their party

\(^{148}\) Figure 15 presents shares from the total cost, like in other figures, but the text presents shares from the party subsidy to make them comparable with Wiberg’s (1991) figures.
subsidy to elections, on average 3.7 %. The NCP spent already 11.6 %. (Wiberg 1991, 85–86.) In the 1980’s, the SDP begun to clear the difference; already between 1983 and 1992 they increased their share up to 9.3 %, against the NCP’s 13.7 %. During the 1990’s (1993–2002), the averages increased only a little (NCP: 14.5 %, SDP: 10.1 %) and the difference remained, but in the 2000’s the electoral spending has increased considerably in the both old parties and converged: in 2003–2012 the old parties used roughly one fourth of the party subsidy to elections (NCP: 24.5 %, SDP: 24 %). As may be expected, the Greens have invested even more. Already in the 1990’s (between 1993 and 2002), they spent a third (27.8 %) of their party subsidy to elections and in 2003–2012 the share increased up to 39.9 %. Again, this highlights the Greens’ character as a ‘one-legged’ electoral party that has to invest as much as possible on electoral-professionalism to secure the maximum number of seats in the Eduskunta to maintain the flow of revenue. This, of course, is away from grassroots work in the subnational branches.

Few developments in the ‘electoral environment’ can explain the general trend. First, along with Finland’s EU membership (1995), the amount of elections has increased. Since 1995 there have been – alongside the municipal, parliamentary and presidential elections – five EP elections too, in 1996, 1999, 2004, 2009 and 2014. The second explanation is that the campaigning expenses that tend to be common to all participants have increased; nationalized media campaigns simply eat more resources than walking around the town square with a plaque. Although the increased electoral spending is likely to be caused by these rather ‘understandable’ factors, the change bears important ramifications for the intra-party power because when the elections take more assets, there is less to spend to other party activities. Even very mundane developments in the parties’ functions may alter power balances, as resources are always relative to each other.

5.2.4 Conclusion: nationalized assets, electoral-professional practices

This section inquired whether the distribution of organizational assets has come to favour the public ‘faces’. All things considered, the answer is a clear yes; the public ‘faces’ strengthening shows in the all three levels of analysis. In the uppermost level, the most important change has been the gradual ‘étatization’ of party assets – a project where the parties themselves have played a key role. Four developments are especially important. First, the introduction of the public subsidies in the late

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149 Selected intervals do not consider the amount of elections.
1960’s quickly freed the party leaderships from their dependence on members and donators and strengthened the parties’ autonomy against external forces. Simultaneously, the parties’ electoral vulnerability increased and created strong incentives for electoral-professional organizing at all party levels, effectively undermining the traditional mass party idea of competing organizational ‘faces’. Three other instances where the parties – more specifically, the PPGs – used their privileged position to enhance the public ‘face’ ascendancy were detected. First, the decision to cut the party subsidy and increase the office allowance in the middle of the recession in the early 1990’s significantly altered the relative balance between the party ‘faces’ overall strengths (see below). Second, the creation and consolidation of the MP and ministerial assistant systems also helped to build a party-independent asset reservoir for the public officials. The third major instance where the public ‘faces’ used their position to enhance it was the transformation of the press subsidy in 2008. As it may now be used for electoral-professional purposes, too, it has greatly enhanced the public ‘face’ assets vis-à-vis the other party ‘faces’. As all of these are national-level institutions, in a way the changes were imposed upon the party actors, without giving them much possibility to react.

The change in the ‘big picture’ has resonated within the parties too, generally in a manner that has enhanced the relative powers of the public ‘faces’. The meso level analysis showed that while the central party offices’ strengths stagnated in the 1980’s and begun to decrease quickly in the turn of the 1990’s, the PPG offices began to grow rapidly (at least in relation to ongoing increases in general productivity caused by the IT revolution, which generally should decrease the office workforce). The subnational offices (districts) continue to serve as important coordinators in elections, but large-scale subnational party activity has clearly eroded. As the individual support groups nowadays take care of menial campaigning activity, there is not too much to do for the local branches.

At the same time, the central party offices have professionalized, centralized and become more capital intensive in their activities. More importantly, they now more often focus on electoral-professional tasks (‘permanent campaigning’) than the traditional mass party cultivation. This general trend is evident in all measures: the staff structures favour publicity specialists and the spending habits emphasise media-related functions (and elections) while the general administration and mass party networking are on decline. To a large extent the studied parties have adapted to ‘environmental’ demands like the functional theory expects. However, a caveat that relates to the detailed interpretation of this development is in order. While the analysis makes the public ‘face’ (including the PPG) the main benefactor of this
development, only one measure relates directly to the general elections (the parties’ electoral spending). In the spirit of the ‘presidentialization’ thesis, the central office professionalization (in the widest sense) could also be interpreted to favour the party leadership (as Sundberg (1994) did before the thesis was even developed). While these organs tend to get conflated under the joint heading of the public ‘face’ (the leadership’s position of course depends on its leaning), they are not the same. As the analysis of intra-party decision-making processes in the chapter 6 shows, the leadership can indeed develop into an independent power ‘face’.

While the general trend is clear, some theoretically relevant variations also exists, making the functional model’s predictions far from perfect. Mostly the expected differences in the extent and velocity of the adaptation suggest that institutional dynamics are at play, too – but more in the short and medium-range term. The transformation to electoral-professionalism has been especially pronounced in the NCP, as was expected. The NCP wanted to create a mass organization after the wars and at least in terms of membership and the local branch network it succeeded (for example Karvonen 2014). In terms of asset distribution the NCP’s organization did not significantly differ from the SDP’s organization in the 1980’s. In the 1990’s, the party executed in relative terms a very rapid transformation towards a lighter and more focused style of organizing and the development was finalized in the 2000’s. At least according to the annual and the financial reports, the change has been relatively fluid, which is not very surprising if the NCP’s historical character as a leader-centric and electorally motivated party is taken into account.

An illuminating picture emerges from the NCP 5’s characterization that concerns the re-structuring of the party organization in the 2000’s. It followed a specified strategy, which consisted of a few interrelated changes in the party’s aims and means. First, the NCP set out to be the best in policy outlook and dissemination. The plan mandated that its policy should always be topical, positive and dynamic, and strongly aimed for the future. All political openings and reactions were set out to emerge ‘from this mindset’. The party also wanted to be the best in public communications, including external marketing and campaigning and everyday internal communications. Successful execution required working structures and therefore the organization was restructured to make all constituent units to work towards these common goals. The central office was reorganized to meet the new division of labour and district managers were subjugated under its command. Various events, happenings and campaigns were taken to commit people from all the organizational spheres. The party secretary led the organization
and chaired all the relevant affiliates; political issues were left to the other party ‘faces’. The NCP’s success after 2004 signals that these measures worked.

Presented measures clearly suggest that the Greens, too, have adopted the electoral-professional organizational model. However, as the Greens were born into the era of electoral-professionalism, it’s perhaps more accurate to talk about periodically oriented formation (Van Biezen 2005) than a change in intra-party preferences. Nonetheless, strong investments to publicity-oriented workforce and spending, elections and parliamentary office, and modest inputs in the subnational party activity clearly point towards electoral-professionalism. While this operates against the idea of total grassroots control (at least in the traditional mass party sense), in many ways this framework makes sense for the Greens, as it was hypothesised in the chapter 3. The main reason for this choice is that the movement is heavily dependent on electoral fortunes from where the vast majority of their incomes emerge. As losing would lead to the disbanding of the organization (and, thus, organized efforts to enhance green values), this organizational formula has also a direct political reason (for a similar conclusion see Burchell 2001).

While also the SDP has clearly increased its investments in electoral-professional functions and decreased some support for mass party tasks, its reactions have been generally slower and smaller. The central party office was in 2012 significantly larger and the measures of electoral-professionalism – albeit moving to the same direction – were more modest throughout the line. Perhaps the most important difference to other parties, however, shows in the support for mass party functions, in the district subsidies that greatly exceed the legal minimum and in the ‘associational’ party office workforce. Now, while the SDP pays much more direct subsidies to the district organization than other parties, the main difference is not the extent of the support as the NCP and the Greens fill the gap by paying the district officer’s salaries. The main difference lies in the extent to which the central office seeks control over the party’s constituent units. Although the type of contract might not make a huge difference in everyday relationships, the district’s control over their employment and the council’s power to allocate membership fees reflects a more dispersed intra-party power balance and a party culture that appoints the activists with a more than an employee status (see Ware 1987a; Scarrow 2015). To be sure, these differences are not dramatic. Nevertheless, despite reinforcing the institutional hypothesis, even small differences in the reaction speed (that internal power dispersion mainly affects) can cause significant harm in contemporary ‘fast politics’.
This too can be illustrated with an interview excerpt. In an article that was published in the party’s newspaper shortly after the 2011 elections where the SDP lost a second time in a row, the party secretary Mikael Jungner voiced a need for major reorganizing. Aside from the necessary cutbacks in the party offices, Jungner talked about the need to enhance the link between the central organization and the districts by hiring district managers under the central office’s payroll. Jungner also raised the need to rethink the use of the communications subsidy. (SD 27.4.2011.) The newer financial reports (2013–2014) show no signs of these reforms: the district personnel is still not a part of the central organization’s payroll and the party’s ‘cut’ from the communications subsidy has not increased significantly. SDP 6 confirms that while some alterations were made to the usage of the communications subsidy (a few local newspapers were terminated), the opposition from the districts prevented the idea of staff centralization from proceeding into the official arenas. According to SDP 6, the party still incorporates masses of activists who yearn for a strong field organization, although the conditions for such a thing do not exist anymore. The SDP’s active membership is around 5000, which is too little to create a genuine ‘field effect’. Moreover, the activist population tends to be old and mainly detached from relevant societal networks. When the activists mainly want to write to their own newspapers, for others who already ‘believe’, the distribution of the party’s message over its physical boundaries suffers.

5.3 Presential power: the control of the parties’ leading power centres

This third and final section approaches the distribution of intra-party power from the viewpoint of presence, focusing on the control of the parties’ leading power units. As was pointed out in the methods chapter, this approach is based on the simple idea that a) a particular party organ is especially important in intra-party decision-making and b) its internal ‘representation’ (i.e. the amount of MPs contra activist leaders) indicates who has the potential to control it. The main hypothesis suggests that we should witness an increasing dominance of the public office holders (Katz & Mair 1993). If institutional dynamics matter, this tendency should be especially pronounced in the NCP but less so in the SDP, where the EPO leaders have been traditionally stronger and more clearly separated from the public officials. The Greens, on the other hand, should reveal the widest dispersion of central decision-making power. Like previous analyses, this section begins with a short review of what has been unearthed in previous studies.
5.3.1 The control of the leading party units and positions before the 1980’s

Perhaps the most important communication channel between the party and the parliamentary group takes place on the individual level. Naturally, the safest way to ensure the coordinated functioning of two parts that belong to the same organization is when the same people play significant roles in both parts’, wrote Borg (1982). It is not surprising that apart from the party secretary’s position, parliamentarians have traditionally occupied the NCP’s leading positions. All the party chairs since 1918 to 1979 were MPs or had been MPs before their selection. It wasn’t uncommon either that the same person handled the PPG and the party chairs; from the 16 PPG chairs (1918–1979) six operated simultaneously as the party chair – three for several years, three only for a short while. Since 1965, however, these tasks have not ended up in the same hands. Prior to the late 1960’s, the national executive committee used to be heavily dominated by the MPs. From the late 1940’s until the mid-1960’s over 50 % of the NEC members were MPs almost most of the time. The 1967 rule reform restricted the amount of MPs in the NEC to a less than 50 %. Although this was partially a practical solution for the MPs’ increased workload, the new rules had also a more ideological bearing, as was pointed out earlier. (Borg 1982, 484, 527, 532–535.) Deliberate measures were taken to dismantle the inter-org amalgamation in the NCP leadership. Although this fits to the story where the ‘new generation’ challenged the PPG’s supremacy, it is against the hypothetical expectations.

Perhaps even more surprising is that also in the SDP the MPs have always dominated the central leadership positions and units. According to Borg, ‘[I]t is in fact a rare exception that a person who has acted in [the SDP’s] leading party tasks, as a chair, party secretary or a member of national executive committee, has not been a member of the parliament’. Apart from two exceptions, all the chairs and party secretaries, too, have been MPs and a long-term NEC member who has not been one has been a rarity. The dual-leadership model where the party chair chairs the PPG simultaneously has not been common (only two short terms exists) but the NEC has been heavily dominated by the MPs: between 1960 and 1979 the MP/NEC member ratio never decreased below 50 % level. Non-MP representation has mainly increased during internal crises. (Borg 1982, 527–530.)
5.3.2 The national executive committee: a leading unit only in some parties?

Figure 16. MPs in the NEC 1983–2012

These somewhat unexpected characteristics have continued to exist since the early 1980’s. Because the 1967 proviso remained in the NCP’s statutes, the share of the MPs has never risen above a half of the overall amount. In fact, most of the time it is quite far below from the formal quota; all time average (1983–2011) is 30 %. If the NEC is indeed the main leading/operative unit within the NCP, this is a significant change from the 1960’s. The SDP’s NEC has the highest over time average of parliamentarians (49.6 %). It has decreased a little below majority level. During the research period, the MPs have reached majority only half of the time. Borg’s observation on the effect of the internal crisis is reflected here, too. In the early 1990’s, when the party suffered a second consecutive loss of 100 000 votes, it reshuffled its leadership in an additional party congress and decreased the NEC’s MP representation down to 21.5 %. When the party regained its strength after Paavo Lipponen assumed the leader’s duties in 1993 and the party took its largest win in the postwar period in the 1995 elections, MP representation increased rapidly over the 50 % mark. The second major decrease took place during Eero Heinäluoma’s term that begun in 2005 in somewhat uncertain circumstances and
ended a few years later after a major loss in the 2007 parliamentary elections. Interestingly, the activists (who appoint the NEC’s in the party congresses) took control during crises but gave it away when the tailwind became evident. The Greens are the only ones whose development contours the theoretical expectations: only around 20% of the NEC members have simultaneously been parliamentarians. If the NEC is indeed the Greens’ main leadership unit (doubtful, see below), this is a strong indication of deliberate grassroots control.

A party that should be driven by public officials has less than a third of MPs in its central leading units and a party that should be controlled by EPO leaders has a clear parliamentary majority in its leading organ most of the time. How to account for these counterintuitive observations? Two possible explanations exist: 1) the hypotheses about party type differences are false or 2) the measure is not able to capture what it is trying to capture (i.e. the NEC might not be the central leadership unit in all parties). As all other evidence (already presented and forthcoming) largely confirms the idea of the NCP’s more parliamentary-leanin internal power structure, the latter explanation seems more plausible.

The indicator requires a less straightforward and a more nuanced interpretation. Luckily, such a thing exists in recent literature. Van Biezen (2000, 410–413) examined internal power balances in newly formed parties and observed that the picture that this measure portrayed was very different from all the other measures (rules and resources). To explain the anomaly, Van Biezen suggested that perhaps the analytical distinction and theoretically expected conflict between the party ‘faces’ might not reflect reality too well after all and the relationship between the party ‘faces’ is quite probably more complex. She hypothesized that at least new parties are probably dominated by a small elite that works ‘in the intersection’ of the party ‘faces’ in order to root cohesion for the whole organization. Although intra-party dynamics in old and institutionalized parties probably differ to some extent, this skepticism opens a possibility for a more nuanced interpretation.

The main question it raises is this: is the NEC really the leading party unit in all parties? Their general task definitions in the party statutes lead to believe so (see Sundberg 1996, 65–69) but a deeper look reveals a few important differences. Firstly, the NEC’s are chosen differently in different parties. In the SDP both the chairs and the ordinary NEC members are chosen directly in the party congress. The Green council was the formal party executive until 1993 but it chose a working committee, which acted as a ‘proto-NEC’. When the NEC was created

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150 The interviewees confirmed that the council’s working committee acted like a NEC. It was disbanded when the party created the NEC in 1993.
in 1993, its members were appointed by the party congress, like in the SDP. But in
the NCP, a majority of the NEC members have always been elected in the party
council and only the party chairs are directly elected by the party congress. (SDP
selectorate means wider representation. When the NEC is selected in the party
congress that is the parties’ highest decision-making unit, it enjoys the widest
possible mandate and may therefore act legitimately as the highest leadership unit
for the wider party community. When the NEC is selected in the party council that
is first and foremost a representative of the party districts, it is more likely that the
NEC reflects regional interests more than the whole party community’s worries.

Secondly, and more importantly, only the NCP’s NEC inhibits a formal ‘inner
circle’, the working committee. It includes the chairman and the deputy chairs
(until 1985 2, after 1985 3), two additional NEC members and until 2010 a party
treasurer. Its task is to prepare all the NEC’s motions and to oversee its actions.
Throughout the research period the unified chairmanship has been able to control
its agenda: before 1985 3 votes were enough for a decision, after 1985 4 votes has
been required. (NCP rules 1983–2012.) The existence of a working committee has
been conceived as an indication of a centralized and hierarchical leadership culture
(Sundberg 1996, 1997). It provides an effective formal agenda-setting tool to the
leader. As the majority of the NCP’s NEC members cannot be MPs, the group that
the party leader confronts in the NEC are ordinary district representatives.
Although it is probable that the SDP’s and the Greens’ leaders also try to ‘prepare’
the NEC’s in advance, they lack formal backing for their initiatives.

A true leadership unit should be able to oversee what the lesser party units are
doing. Thirdly, as it was already hinted, there are great differences in how
extensively the NEC may participate in the other party organs’ doings. The SDP’s
NEC has enjoyed unlimited rights to participate in the PPG meetings since 1939.
In the NCP, the whole NEC has never been allowed in the PPG meetings,
participation rights have been reserved for the core leadership. In the Greens the
EPO’s participation rights in the PPG meetings are even smaller; no one from the
EPO has never enjoyed automatic rights to participate in its meetings. (SDP PPG
1982.) An executive that cannot monitor what its subordinates are doing is hardly
an executive.

The fourth and final formally bound piece of evidence to suggest that the NEC
is not the leading party organ in all parties is that in the NCP and the Greens it
does not have any role when the party is negotiating about formation of a coalition
government. In the SDP the party council may transfer all its powers to it. (SDP rules 1981–2014, NCP rules 1983–2012, Greens rules 1988–2012.) These differences suggest that the NEC’s role varies between party types. A reliable comparison requires more valid metrics for the control of the parties’ leading units. Two rather obvious and easily measurable units exist, which can extend the analysis to a more reliable level.

5.3.3 The party ‘presidium’: who controls the joint leadership organ?

When parties start to negotiate about the formation of a coalition government, a special negotiating group is appointed. According to the parties’ rules and practices, this group usually includes all the EPO and PPG chairs as well as additional members from the ‘inner circle’ such as the party council chair and the parties’ and PPGs’ general secretaries and so on. As will be demonstrated in the next chapter in more detail, at least since the early 1990’s these joint leadership organs have often lived over negotiation times and now take part in the parties’ operative leadership more generally – especially when the party is in opposition. In the SDP this ‘gathering’ has been called the presidium, the NCP have called theirs ‘the fist’. As these organs combine the leaders from all relevant party ‘faces’, they constitute what Van Biezen (2000, 412) was referring to as ‘a small centre of power located at the intersection of the extraparliamentary party and the party in public office’.
The picture changes dramatically from the NEC compositions: in all the parties over a half of the ‘presidium’ members have represented the public ‘face’ most of the time. Especially in the old parties ‘the intersection’ is highly PPG-dominated. In both parties the over time average is 73.4%. If the PPGs’ general secretaries that have always been professionals are not considered, the public office holders’ control increases up to 80%. This puts the NCP closer to expectations: it was supposed be a party of parliamentarians and it still clearly is. More surprising is that also in the SDP the number of MPs in the party presidium has always been very high. Clearly, as Borg’s (1982) observations suggested, the straightforward juxtaposing of ‘party men’ against parliamentarians that has been repeated in the literature is way too simplistic and in relation to the leftist parties, outright wrong. Most party leaders in most parties tend to represent the electorate as well.

Note: The ‘presidium’ includes the above-mentioned: the EPO and PPG chairs, the council chair and the EPOs and the PPGs general secretaries. The measurement in based on name-by-name comparison on annual basis.

Sources: Party chairs 1983–2012, Parties annual reports; MPs, Eduskunta’s MP database.
However, to counter the idea that the MPs have somehow ‘invaded’ the party apparatuses it must be remembered that *the majority of these leaders are EPO leaders that have been chosen in the party congresses by party activists*. If a party activist wants to maximise his/her impact in national politics, this makes perfect sense. The MPs’ loyalties, of course, are a lot harder to pin down.

Although MP dominance has clearly prevailed over time, minor trends that reflect the prediction of the main hypothesis exist. The SDP’s MP representation has slightly increased. The 1983–1992 average was 65.1 %, in 1993–2002 it increased up to 78 % and in the new millennium (2003–2012) remained there (77.1 %). Two specifications explain the increase. Whereas in the 1980’s and the early 1990’s the EPO chairmanship included non-MPs too, since the early 1990’s (1993–2011) all the EPO chairs and vice chairs have been MPs. Another source of the increase is that between 1983 and 1992 the party council chair was never an MP. After 1993 ¾ of the council chairs have sat in the parliament as well.151 Therefore: for 20 years the leaders of all the party ‘faces’ – including the ‘party in the ground’ that is represented by the party council – have simultaneously been parliamentary representatives. Although comparable data from the 1960’s and the 1970’s does not exist, the difference to the 1980’s is a clear indication of the ascendancy of the party in public office.

The NCP’s development has been more stable. The 5 % increase to over 75 % took place only in the 2000’s.152 The same explanation applies to the NCP: the MP representation in the EPO chairmanship has stabilized over time and become the norm. Prior to 2000, the non-MP EPO chairs were not rarities. In fact, between 1983 and 2000 the EPO chairmanships were completely dominated by MPs only three times. Especially under Sauli Niinistö’s rule, the MP representation in the EPO leadership was low; in the 1997–1998 period Niinistö was the only MP in there. Since 2001 all the EPO chairs have been representatives of the Eduskunta or the European parliament (EP). Before 2002, the party chair chaired the party council too and, therefore, an MP always led the ‘party in the ground’. In 2002, the party council chair was separated from the party chair. However, between 2002 and 2010 the council chair has not been an MP only three times. Again, if all leadership levels are considered, the NCP, too, has been dominated by the elected representatives – as one would expect.

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151 However, the party secretary’s role seems to have changed to the other direction. In the 1983–1992 period the party secretary was usually simultaneously an MP too; since the early 1990’s this has become less common.

The Greens differ more clearly. Although the amount of MPs in the joint leadership has usually risen above 50% level there, too, *the overall level is much lower than in the old parties*. It should be remembered that the mere combination of the PPG leadership (chair and deputy chairs) and the party leader who is also usually an MP almost makes the 50%. Three factors explain why the MP representation in the Greens’ joint leadership has not been higher. Firstly, the EPO chairmanship has never been solely dominated by the MPs. In fact, most of the time at least a half of them have been non-MPs. This is a major difference to the old parties where the MPs have usually controlled both leaderships. In 2007–2010, the MPs took over ¾ of the EPO chairs, but in 2011 the share declined quickly and during the 2013–2014 period only the party chairman was simultaneously an MP, too.153

The next chapter presents evidence on the recent generational struggle within the Greens. Its one reflection has been the battle for the NEC. The second and the third reasons for the minor MP representation in the Greens’ joint leadership is that the party community has not traditionally selected the MPs to act as council chairs or party secretaries. Only in the 1994–1995 term when the party was still forming, the council chair was simultaneously an MP too. A member of the parliament has never held the party secretary’s position.

5.3.4 The ministerial group: ‘party men’, MPs or ‘mayors’?

The ‘presidium’ is typically the opposition term’s tool. Another informal leadership organ relates to the parties’ time in the government: the ministerial or the government group.154 Since the early 1980’s, after the gradual diminution of presidential power and the stabilization of parliamentary majority democracy, the parties’ ministerial groups have increased their influence in state matters (Paloheimo 2003; 2005; Nousiainen 2006; Raunio & Wiberg 2014; Murto 2014). As the next chapter shows, today’s intra-party politics revolve heavily around the ministerial ‘entourages’. Measuring their internal composition provides another important angle to the intra-organizational power distributions. As ministers should only be ‘honest and skilfully known Finnish citizens’ (Constitution 2000, § 60), the candidates can emerge from all party cadres, and, in fact, from non-party cadres as well.

153 It should be noted, though, that 2 out 3 of the non-MP deputy chairs got elected in the 2015 parliamentary elections.

154 Here, informal refers to its status in the intra-party arena, not in the national political sphere.
During the early 1900’s, the president had significant leverage over the composition of cabinets. Nominations were also highly fragmentized in terms of the term lengths and stability. Some ministers worked only for a few weeks and perhaps changed between various positions, some controlled their position for a long time. The central contributing factor to the fragmentation was the large amount of so-called ‘professional ministers’. They did not have formal links to the parties, although they may have been ‘close’ to one. These independent specialists (bureaucrats, etc.) were called in to act as the ministers in ‘caretaker governments’ when a political government was hard to build. In the 1970’s, the parties begun to take more role in the nominations. (Törnudd 1975, 391–394).

Out of all the ministerial nominations in 1917–1968 57 % were persons, who at the time of their nomination were MPs as well. A third (31.3 %) out of all the nominees had no parliamentary experience at all. If ‘professionals’ that made out a fifth (19 %) of total nominations are counted out, the amount of nominated ministers who had never served in the parliament decreases down to 19.2 %. In both of the old parties the amount of these ‘non-MP-ever’ nominees was slightly larger than that of the total population and no significant difference existed between the parties: around a quarter of the nominations fell on individuals who had no parliamentary experience (in the SDP 27 %, in the NCP 23 %). This led Törnudd to conclude that ‘in Finnish political system the parliament has not been a pivotal element in ministerial path’. Although parliamentary experience had been welcomed (most nominees were MPs), it wasn’t a necessary requirement for the highest tasks in state administration. The dividing line between the leading political figures and the leading professional bureaucrats was not clear. (Törnudd 1975, 409, 431.)
Figure 18. MP-based ministerial nominations 1968–2014

Notes: The coding tried to follow Törnudd’s (1975, 393) specifications as far as possible. His unit of observation was a single nomination. Many types of nominations exist (short term, transfer, etc.) but Törnudd focused only on the ‘main tasks’, defined through 1) the position type (head ministers, no deputy ministers) or 2) the length of the term, signalling that he included also those deputy ministers that had served long enough. Törnudd did not specify the length of this term. Here, all the deputy ministers and replacements (head and deputy) have been included, regardless of the length of their term. The aim was to count all those persons who the party had considered to be fit for a minister’s position. One individual was only counted once so dual-roles and intra-governmental transfers have been omitted. In short: the objective was to measure how many separate individuals were nominated for a minister’s position during the governmental term and how many of them acted as an MP at the time of their nomination. ‘Caretaker governments’ (Aura’s I & II, Liinamaa) have been omitted. Liinamaa’s government is currently the last ‘caretaker government’. This is one sign of government stabilization.

Sources: MPs, Eduskunta’s MP database; Ministers, Council of State’s government database.

Figure 18 shows that a general trend towards an increased MP representation in the governments has taken place during the past 40 years. Between 1968 (Koivisto’s government, in office 22.3.1968-14.5.1970) and 1979 (Sorsa’s II government, in office 15.5.1977-26.5.1979), the average amount of MP-based ministers per government was 63.8 %. In the 1980’s when Finland begun its transition towards majority parliamentarianism, the MP representation increased. Between 1979 (Koivisto’s II, in office 26.5.1979-19.2.1982) and 1991 (Holkeri’s government, in
office 30.4.1987-26.4.1991), the average increased up to 77.2 %. The three
governments that were formed in the 1990’s (Aho 26.4.1991-13.4.1995, Lipponen
13.4.1995-15.4.1999 and Lipponen’s II 15.4.1999-17.4.2003) increased the average
up to 82.9 % and in the 2000’s (between Jäätteenmäki 17.4.2003-24.6.2003\textsuperscript{155} and
Stubb 24.6.2014-29.5.2015) the average has risen yet another 10 %, up to 92.7 %.
Although the unevenness of measuring intervals and the differing number of
governments in different periods affects comparability (these numbers are only
directional), figure 18 shows clearly that the MP status is now lot more important factor in
ministerial nominations than it used to be in the 1970’s – and especially before 1968. This
is one of the clearest indications of the ascendancy of the party in public office.
The change is apparent within the parties, too.\textsuperscript{156} The SDP participated in 6
governments between the late 1960’s and the late 1970’s. On average, around 60 %
of their nominees were incumbent MPs. Between the late 1970’s and the early
1990’s (same interval as above) the SDP participated in 4 governments and
increased their MP representation up to 78.9 %. In 1995 when Paavo Lipponen
formed his famous ‘rainbow coalition’ all the SDP’s ministers emerged from the
PPG – as well as in two governments that followed it between 1999 and 2007.
Since the beginning of the research period (after 1968) the NCP made its way to
the government for the first time in 1987. Since then, it has participated in all the
governments save two (Jäätteenmäki’s and Vanhanen’s governments that acted in
2003–2007) and the over time average of the MP-based nominations is 85.9 %. In
the wake of the 2010’s the number of MP-based ministers decreased a little. This is
mostly accounted by the changes in the party leaderships: nowadays the party
leaders are self-evidently ministers (if the party is in the government, of course) and
a few times the party congresses have selected non-MP individuals. However, at
least in the 2010’s all the party chairs who were not MPs upon their selection, ran
for a place in the Eduskunta in the next elections, and succeeded. Overall, then, in
the contemporary ministerial nominations the MP status is a very strong norm. Compared to
the pre-1970’s, the public ‘face’ has clearly strengthened in these terms.

\textsuperscript{155} Anneli Jäätteenmäki’s government was the first one where all the appointed ministers were
elected to the parliament in the 2003 elections. Jäätteenmäki resigned only after 69 days due to a
political scandal (see Ervasti 2004). However, the cabinet continued in a fairly similar composition
and the amount of MPs did not decrease significantly (95.5 % of those who participated in
Vanhanen’s government were MPs).

\textsuperscript{156} As the Greens participated only in a few governments during the research period, with one or
two nominations, their internal representation was not counted separately.
5.3.5 Conclusion: the ascendancy of the parliamentary representatives

Presentational power focuses on the party ‘faces’ representation in the leading party organs. The idea is that the more a specific ‘face’ is represented, the more power it has over the functioning of the party. In this specific analytic context, we are interested in the public office holders (MPs) presence in the parties’ leading organs. The theoretical expectation was that their representation varies according to the ideal typical power concentration: from the leader-centric electoral party’s heavy MP dominance to more dispersed practices. This holds only partially.

The review of the previous findings already revealed that the old parties’ leading organs and positions have been very much in the hands of the elected officials (Borg 1982). The primary analysis that examined the NECs’ and joint leadership organs’ compositions in 1983–2012 showed that this is still the case. While major differences exist within the NECs – these can be accounted with the NECs’ differing roles in different parties – the compositions of the joint leadership organs (or core leaderships) univocally shows that in the old parties a sheer majority of all leading party officials (EPO and PPG chairs, party council chairs, EPO and PPG secretaries) have had a parliamentary background throughout the research period. Exclusion of the professional PPG secretaries raises the average up to 80%. A minor increase in the share that results from the strengthening of the MP presence in the EPOs’ leaderships (deputy chairs, council chairs) was detected too. While the developments in the SDP clearly contradict the ideal mass party model where ‘party men’ should balance the MPs’ dominance,157 the Greens’ development contoured expectations by showing that a majority of the leading EPO positions (EPO chairs, council chairs, party secretaries) are still mainly in the hands of the activists. The Greens’ experience shows that while the externally induced thrust to the public ‘face’ dominance is strong, it does not automatically lead into any consequences. This is one of the most important points relating to this study’s overall conclusions (see chapter 7).

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157 This notion’s strongly theoretical nature should be heavily underlined. As Michels (1968[1911], 153–158) showed, already in the turn of the 1900’s when the political workers’ movements were thriving, their leadership organs often had an ‘essentially parliamentary character’. The stickiness of the idea that the EPO leaders could dominate the parties can only be speculated. It might relate to the mass party models’ normative pleasantness – as opposed to the notion of the Schumpeterian/Downsian leadership party model, which does not even pretend to look democratic. As Scarrow (2015) has shown, while the ‘golden age’ of the mass parties lasted only a few decades (at most), its desirability as a normative model has lasted much longer and it is still sometimes used as a yardstick.
The other side of the coin shows clearly the over time development of the other primary indicator, the MP-based ministerial nominations. Prior to the 1970’s, a surprisingly low amount of ministers had a parliamentary background: a little over a half of the nominees were incumbent MPs and a third had never served as an MP. Roughly a fourth of the old parties’ nominees were non-MPs. (Törnudd 1975). The primary analysis revealed one of the clearest indications of the ascendancy of the public ‘face’: the MPs’ presence in ministerial groups has clearly increased along with the ‘governmentalization’ of Finnish politics; in the new millennium over 90% of all nominated ministers were incumbent MPs. While the MP status used to be a nice bonus for a ministerial career, such a career was also possible for mere bureaucrats (Törnudd 1975). Nowadays, the ministers’ MP status is clearly the norm and only rare exceptions exist. Today, it seems rather unthinkable that the majority of ministers would emerge from any other ranks – especially among the ‘party men’. While the leading experts might make a transition to politics, it seems that also they have to be elected first in order to become eligible for a ministerial nomination.\textsuperscript{158} The ‘environment’ seems to work: the parties’ nominations have changed along with the general strengthening of the governments.

5.4 Conclusion: towards public ‘face’ dominance – in varying speeds

The overall assessment of these findings and their meaning is best to execute in two phases: first, by reviewing the results that support the main hypothesis and, secondly, by going through the observations that support the institutional dynamics.

This chapter found extensive amount of evidence to support Katz and Mair’s (2002) hypothesis. The analysis of positional power showed that the EPOs’ strengthening that begun in the mid-1900’s within the parties and the national legislation halted in the beginning of the research period. While the EPOs have not weakened much, the PPGs’ legal status has strengthened considerably along with the parliamentarization of the Finnish constitution. The distribution of asset-based power resources has become highly supportive of the public party ‘faces’. The change, where the public parties themselves have played a major role, shows in all

\textsuperscript{158} Well known examples include Lauri Ihalainen (SDP), the former long time chairman of the Central Organization of Finnish Trade Unions, and Anne Berner (Centre), a successful entrepreneur and the CEO of Vallila interior. The current Prime Minister Juha Sipilä (Centre) who was elected in 2011 and assumed the party leader’s task in 2012 is also well-known for his career as a CEO and entrepreneur in several IT-related businesses, which have amassed him a fortune of millions.
levels of the analysis. Due to the emergence of the public subsidies, the party assets have almost completely nationalized, reducing the activists’ financial leverage to minimum and introducing strongly vote-seeking incentives for the whole organizations (i.e. not just the leaders and the PPGs). The PPGs’ overall resources (money, staff, MPs’ personal assistance) have increased while the central party offices have weakened (in terms of staff). The party offices’ functional orientation has changed, too: mass party cultivation has given way to electoral-professionalism, which shows in the increased publicity-oriented staffing and spending. As was noted earlier, this change could also be interpreted to favour the party leaderships only, not the PPGs. However, as a ‘detached’ party leadership is considered to lean towards the public domain, this change, too, signifies the strengthening of the public ‘face’ – albeit in a different way than the PPG dominance. Finally, the analysis of the presential power revealed that the MPs’ presence in the EPOs’ core leaderships has increased and, more importantly, the ministers’ MP background has developed into a strong norm. This is important especially because, coincidentally, the government has evolved into the undisputedly strongest state institution.

In relation to the party change theories, the most important general feature of these changes is that they have mainly taken place in (and facilitated at) the very highest level of Finnish politics, far away from intra-party arenas that the struggle-oriented theories of intra-party dynamics tend to emphasise. In less technical words: when such institutional frames like the party laws and the constitutions that condition the parties’ internal organization are created or changed, there is not much that the party activists can do about them. When the institution begins to operate, it just lays its effect upon the parties. As such, the ‘environment’ (in which the parties may and do affect) emerges as a kind of an ‘ultimate’ causal agent that is nearly impossible to resist (Katz & Mair 1995; 2002). All the parties now negotiate about the coalitions in a similar framework (among the PPGs, according to the constitution), gain income (subsidy) and other assets (assistants) via similar channels and appoint the representatives to the state institutions according to similar criteria159, and so forth. In short: context matters.

However, its effects are certainly not ‘automatic’ and therefore party adaptation also differs from the functional-adaptive theories’ strongest formulations. Several observations, which for the most part contour the expectations of the party type

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159 The minister’s knowledge base has become essential for his/her success in the expert-driven policy processes (see Murto 2014). It is likely to be higher if he/she emerges from a group that has worked intensively with similar matters for years, that is, from the PPG. The increasing complexity and the professionalization of politics are the central factors that push intra-party power out from the amateurish party organizations to the public ‘face’.
specific institutional dynamics, exist too. Notwithstanding the EPOs’ formal strengthening in the 1960’s and the 1970’s (which could be at least partly attributed to the NEC’s different role (compared to the SDP)) the NCP has mainly contoured the hypothesised development. This does not run counter to the institutional hypothesis, it supports it. In terms of non-adaptation, the most telling case is the SDP, where the EPO has continued to exert strong formal power over the PPG and the central party continues to provide extensive resources, autonomy and attention (measured with mass party workforce in the central party office) to traditional mass party organizing. The changes towards electoral-professionalism have also been smaller than in other parties and markedly slower too. Echoes of wider power dispersion are clearly apparent. The Greens’ organizational development differs from the textbook model in many ways. Grassroots do not seek total formal control over the PPG and the party office is highly centralized and oriented towards electoral-professionalism. In the presential power dimension, however, their development fits well with the diffused power model as the most leading EPO positions continue to be controlled by the ordinary party activists and not the MPs.

What these observations suggest is that one should not be mislead by the ‘big picture’ either; while the operating context of the parties might experience even dramatic changes (as the case is in Finland), the parties might still react differently because their internal power structures are likely to differ from each other when they encounter external pressures. Also, a change in some specific power dimension does not automatically lead to changes in other power dimensions as well. A change from member-based to subsidy-based income logic, for example, does not mean that the party activists also give up on their formal prerogatives, and so on. The general problem with the environmental adaptation models and studies inspired by them is that they do not account for these complexities. Rather, they tend to deduce party changes straight from the ‘environmental’ changes, following overly rationalistic functional logics. This strategy runs the risk of missing fundamental structural differences that might prove important in the actual functioning of the parties. The next chapter delves deeper into this problem.
The previous chapter demonstrated that formal intra-party power balances have not changed significantly during the research period. However, as Panebianco (1988, 35) and many others have pointed out, how parties actually function may differ significantly from what the rulebook says. Formally institutionalized rules should be fairly rigid because changing them means explicit diminution of someone’s power – and this should cause resistance. At the same time parties continue to operate in wider contexts that can add unforeseen complexity to the actual decision-making situations. Most importantly, contexts tend to change over time and open space for ‘alternative interpretations’, which can then be used strategically to increase someone else’s power (Mahoney & Thelen 2010).

To provide a more robust picture of the intra-party decision-making power this chapter tries to penetrate beyond formalism and examine what party ‘faces’ actually do in real intra-party decision-making processes (see Von Beyme 1985, 316–319). The examined process leads into a central party decision: participation in a coalition government. During the past 30 years government program’s significance has increased. From a loosely defined ten-page to-do list it has developed into a detailed multi-dozen-page work plan that is monitored carefully. Thus, negotiation’s importance has increased too. (Raunio & Wiberg 2014, 28–29.) For these reasons this specific process can be understood as a representative example of a more general underlying power balance.

Chapter 3 developed a rudimentary framework for capturing these processes’ general characteristics. First, the process is conceived as a dialectic interaction between party leadership that holds the initiative and other party organs that may react. Second, in Finnish parties these organs are 1) the party council (a ‘party congress between congresses’), a representative of the subnational party (the party on the ground), 2) the national executive committee that is also a representative of party activists but on a national level (the party in central office) and 3) the parliamentary party group that represents the abstract mass of a party’s voters (the
party in public office). The examination focuses on the leadership/organ interaction in these organs’ meetings, as they can establish the organs’ relevance in the overall process. Depending on the level of leadership’s autonomy (from party activists and public officials) it may be considered as an individual ‘face’, too. The process’s third general features are the key steps/decisions that need to be made in order to determine party’s stance in relation to the prospective coalition government. A party needs to decide 1) if it should aim for government, 2) with whom should it coalesce, 3) what kinds of policies should it try to achieve and 4) who will act as the party’s ministers. Of course, the party also needs to decide 5) whether it accepts the overall bargain or not.\footnote{This list corresponds well with Karvonen’s (2014, 82) description of the main phases of the Finnish government formation process.} In the other theoretical end the party leadership can make these decisions/alignments completely freely, in the other end all party organs intervene in all stages of the process. Interventions may take different forms. In the strongest scenario organs can alter proposals; sometimes they just approve them. In the weakest case the meeting is just a run-through without even formal acclamations. The key issue is to try to determine the processes ‘veto points’ that are crucial for its continuation. Inter-party variation stems from the number and quality of these interventions.

A few caveats are in order. First, although the analysis aims to get beyond formalities it still has a strong formalistic bearing as it focuses on the formal party organs’ meetings. Secondly, however, the aim is not to provide exhaustive explanations on why party A ended up in government X. Rather, the idea is to try the relevance of certain party organs that are formally considered important. Instead of presenting a completely new viewpoint on intra-party power, analysis of actual decision-making processes is more like an extension to the positional analysis. Despite of its physical length this analysis makes a one fourth of the overall empirics (alongside with asset-based, presential and positional analyses) – merely providing another angle for this complex concept, which can be contrasted with other viewpoints in order to strengthen the reliability of the overall conclusion.

The chosen perspective is of course fairly limited. Interviews and memoirs show that party politics is to a great extent about individual interaction: influence is transmitted every time the members of political elites meet each other. For obvious methodological reasons these chapters do not attempt to portray these interactions. However, if actual intra-party decision-making reminds the theoretical models at all (i.e. competing ‘faces’ struggle for power) formal ‘institutional thresholds’ should
bear relevance. While this level of analysis cannot shed light on the informal coalition building that most likely precedes formal meetings, it should be able to show which (if any) organizational organs the leadership needs to ‘buy’ before proceeding. The extent and location of the ‘buys’ can reveal 1) how much, overall, the leadership is constrained, and 2) by whom, extra-parliamentary or parliamentary forces.

It is expected that a leader-centric electoral party’s (NCP’s) processes are characterized by wide leadership autonomy. If interventions happen, they should emerge in the parliamentary sphere. On the contrary, in a representative membership party (SDP) EPO organs – especially the national executive committee – should be strongly present and effective throughout the process. In a democratic process party (Greens) the decision-making should be markedly open and wide. To highlight the grassroots influence, important decisions should be taken down to the widest representative body (party council).

The core of the analysis consists of in-depth reconstruction of 1983, 1987, 1991, 1995 and 2011 intra-party government formation processes. As the Greens emerged in the late 1980’s and they only took part in 1991, 1995 and 2011 negotiations, the overall number of comparable processes is 13. Instead of just comparing the end points (1983 and 2011) the 1987–1995 interval has been analyzed equally thoroughly in order to avoid basing comparison on two potentially unique processes. The other reason for choosing 5 processes instead of two was to provide reliability for the direction of the general trend.

Process reconstructions draw from most typical process tracing data sources: minutes, elite interviews, press material, memoirs and blogs. As all data sources were not available in all timepoints adjustments had to be made. The most important defect concerns the party organs’ minutes. Parties typically apply a 15-year embargo and therefore at the time of the data collection (2012–2013) minutes were generally available until 1995. 2011 cases’ small amount (SDP and Greens made some available upon request) was supplemented with a larger amount of interviews and a completely new data source that emerged in 2011: party activists’ and MPs’ personal blogs, which helped in detecting meetings and their central undertakings. It should also be mentioned that minutes differ between parties: while SDP’s documentation is very thorough (all meetings are recorded and transcribed) NCP’s and Greens’ minutes are typically much shorter and vaguer (see below for details). This is why the analysis focuses on the temporal sequence of decisions rather than the rhetoric.
While data sets differ between years and parties (see table 1) it must be remembered that process tracing is not based on frequentist probability where validity of inferences build on the amount of observations; in process tracing even one well-placed piece of evidence can increase a hypotheses’ plausibility considerably (Bennett & Checkel 2014, 16, 24–28). If, for example a decision to strive for a certain coalition base was published before a meeting was held, it can be deduced that at least the specific organ could not affect that decision. Here, press material (general and party newspapers) proved useful as important party meetings are often aired. The other important data-related reminder is that process tracing, like any other social scientific method is not of course solid and seamless; some data is always missing and therefore no account is ever perfect. What a good process tracer can do is to be open about the misgivings that decrease the plausibility of findings. (Bennett & Checkel 2014, 30-31.)

Ideally, the results of a process tracing analysis would be presented as a series of formalized stepwise tests (Beach & Pedersen 2013, 5). However, as George and Bennett (2005, 210–213) have argued, different types of causal processes can lend to different types of presentation. As this analysis does not follow the strict theory-driven variant of process tracing the evidence is presented in narrative form. Yet, each reconstruction focuses on same steps/decisions and actors. Procedural descriptions are supplemented with additional observations and characterizations about the main ‘environmental’ changes.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>SDP</th>
<th>NCP</th>
<th>Greens</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1983 (SDP to government, NCP to opposition)</td>
<td>* Minutes (NEC):161 5, a total of 178 pages; * Minutes (council): 2, a total of 212 pages; * Minutes (PPG): 5, a total of 114 pages; * Press articles (party):162 71; * Press articles (gen.):163 54;</td>
<td>* Minutes (NEC):165 3, a total of 21 pages; * Minutes (council): 1, a total of 110 pages; * Minutes (PPG): 5, a total of 107 pages; * Press articles (party):166 23; * Press articles (gen.): 54; * Interviews: 1</td>
<td>N/A</td>
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161 SDP’s organs mainly keep full discussion transcripts from their meetings.
162 SDP’s main newspaper Suomen sosialidemokraatti (The Finnish social democrat, here SD) appeared 5 times per week.
163 Helsingin sanomat, the largest Finnish newspaper, was used as a general media source.
### 1987 (Both to government)
- **Interviews**: 2
- **Minutes (NEC)**: 8, a total of 281 pages;
- **Minutes (council)**: 2, a total of 175 pages;
- **Minutes (PPG)**: 9, a total of 285 pages;
- **Press articles (party)**: 128;
- **Press articles (gen.)**: 69

### 1991 (SDP and Greens to opposition, NCP to government)
- **Minutes (NEC)**: 1, a total of 63 pages;
- **Minutes (council)**: 1, a total of 124 pages;
- **Minutes (PPG)**: 1, a total of 29 pages;
- **Press articles (party)**: 42;
- **Press articles (gen.)**: 24

### 1995 (All to government)
- **Minutes (NEC)**: 4, a total of 103 pages;
- **Minutes (council)**: 2, a total of 124 pages;
- **Minutes (PPG)**: 7, a total of 286 pages;
- **Press articles (party)**: 68;
- **Press articles (gen.)**: 65;
- **Interviews**: none

### 2011 (All to government)
- **Minutes**: main points from NEC’s ‘decision minutes’;
- **Press articles (party)**: 92;
- **Press articles (gen.)**: 101;

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164 Same interviewees could provide information on several processes.

165 NCP’s NEC keeps ‘decision minutes’, which only include general proceedings, decisions and statements. PPG minutes usually included ‘condensed’ discussions (i.e. participants’ main points), council minutes usually included full discussion transcripts.

166 NCP’s main paper Nykypäivä (Modern day, here NP) appeared only weekly.

167 Greens did not have a NEC until 1993. Here, it refers to the council’s executive committee, which kept only ‘decision-minutes’. Greens’ council’s minutes are in condensed form (i.e. no verbatim discussion transcripts but summaries of main points).

168 Greens paper, Vihreä lanka (Green Thread) appeared on a weekly basis.

169 In 1995 the council minutes too contained only decisions.
Table 2. Interviewees’ professional posts (cumulative)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>n, % (N=18)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Member of party leadership (chair, deputy chair)</td>
<td>8 (44.5 %)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Member of the parliament</td>
<td>13 (72.2 %)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Member of PPG leadership (chair, deputy chair)</td>
<td>8 (44.5 %)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cabinet minister</td>
<td>10 (55.5 %)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Party secretary</td>
<td>4 (22.2 %)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Speaker of Eduskunta (incl. deputies)</td>
<td>3 (16.7 %)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Party’s administrative director</td>
<td>1 (5.5 %)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ministerial special assistant</td>
<td>1 (5.5 %)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note 1: Due to the sensitive nature of the topic it was agreed with all interviewees that they remain anonymous. This study’s supervisor, Professor Tapio Raunio, has validated their identities.

Note 2: First, individual interviewee’s all posts were defined. One post (for example cabinet minister) was counted only once. After all posts were known, they were simply collapsed together.

Note 3: The vast majority of party and PPG chairs were actual chairs; only 2 party chairs were deputies, all PPG chairs were first chairs.

Sources: Eduskunta’s MP database, parties’ annual reports.

6.1 The early 1980’s: presidential dominance and traditional inter-party cooperatives

Before turning into process reconstructions few important contextual variables need to be acknowledged.170 A major factor that affected inter- and intra-party politics (at least in terms of party leader autonomy) in the early 1980’s was the president who still retained his full constitutional powers and was ready to use them. Presidency’s gradual diminution can be regarded as the single most important change in the parties operating ‘environment’. The other, related, development is the increase in governments’ accommodation potential, stability

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170 This procedure will be repeated in the beginning of every section in order to provide relevant context for intra-party changes. In the concluding chapter these ‘environmental’ changes will be tied more thoroughly to observed party changes.
and strength, which too have been connected with party leaders strengthening. (Paloheimo 2005.) In the early 1980’s, however, party leaders were still constrained by the president and somewhat fixed coalitional possibilities.

Prior to 1960’s Finnish governments tended to be ‘short-lived and numerically vulnerable’. After the 1966 elections, which brought Rafael Paasio’s wide ‘popular front’ coalition into power the idea of majority governance begun to popularize and strengthen governments’ role. (Arter 1987, 55–56.) One characteristic development in the 1960’s and the 1970’s was the generalization of ‘surplus majorities’ (Nousiainen 2006, 248–249). The need for surplus majority stemmed from the old constitution’s qualified majority rules that demanded a 2/3 majority for most fiscal laws (Arter 1984, 262, Arter 1987, 42–43, Elder et al. 1988, 103).

Another legal reason was the 1/3 minority’s right to postpone any bill over the next parliamentary elections. The Centre party’s will to tie smaller bourgeois parties in to coalitions in order to reflect Eduskunta’s composition better also tended to enlarge them. (Nousiainen 2006, 248–249). In the late 1960’s a plan to replace the earlier period’s ‘polarized conflict situation’ with a planned state development emerged among leading politicians. In order to succeed, key players (state, parties and interest organizations) needed to be bound together. The binder was often president Urho Kekkonen (in office 1956–1982) who forced over-sized but poorly functioning coalitions together. (Nousiainen 1992, 35, 42–43, 64–65).

Whether measured with the extent or intensity of personal power Kekkonen was undoubtedly the strongest president to ever operate under the old constitution171 (Nousiainen 2006, 273). Aside from his strong constitutional prerogatives to dissolve the parliament, to appoint government and ratify laws (among many others, Paloheimo 2005, 247) he gained strength from 1) an independent constituency, 2) an ‘over-partisan’ role that provided unity to the fragmented multi-party system, 3) unlimited re-election possibilities and, most importantly, 4) foreign relations – especially towards the Soviet Union (Elder et al. 1988, 107). During Kekkonen’s reign, foreign relations mixed with domestic politics. Parties’ relations to the Soviet Union mandated who could join governments. (Arter 1987, 186–193.) Most notably, these ‘general reasons’ kept the NCP out of the government until 1987. In the government formation process the

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171 However, Kekkonen’s direct influence in domestic politics has often been exaggerated. He was well informed and his opinions bore weight but outside government formation his powers largely rested on informal practices. Kekkonen mainly exercised his influence through a vast trustee network. However, as the president signed the laws and no one wanted to stand against him, ministers often aligned their proposals accordingly. (Nousiainen 1985, 189, 196–197, 202; Jansson 1993, 213, 266–276; Nousiainen 2006, 273–281).
The president’s task was to appoint the formateur and to assign his/hers task (i.e. for which kind of a coalition he/she should seek after). Thus, he enjoyed formidable powers to set a coalition that suited his preferences. (Jansson 1993, 212–214, 266–276.) Kekkonen was active in finding coalitional bases (i.e. parties that join the coalition), prime ministers and sometimes even individual ministers. Parties took his preferences into account upfront when appointing ministers. (Rantala 1982, 212–213). Kekkonen ‘gave orders and arranged coalitions, left out some parties and pressured, sometimes very heavily, others to join’. (Nousiainen 1985, 196, see also Nousiainen 2006, 278–281). Compared to contemporary practices the president’s role severely constrained party leaders’ autonomy.

During the 1970’s governments begun to stabilize and strengthen. Still, however, 1970’s witnessed a total of 10 governments (Elder et al. 1988, 166).

Kalevi Sorsa’s (SDP) 1st government (1972–1975) was the first attempt to build a culture where coalition partners would be able to solve their clashes without disbanding. In the late 1970’s the idea of ‘consensus politics’ generalized as parties’ stances in three important fields converged: 1) all parties (including NCP) accepted Paasikivi-Kekkonen’s line (i.e. active neutrality towards the Soviet Union) as the guiding principle of foreign policy, 2) in domestic politics all parties wanted to aim for broad and generally accepted solutions and 3) in labor markets mutual benefit was recognized, resulting in broad cooperation between governments, trade unions and employers. (Jansson 1993, 147–154.) From party leaders’ perspective a government position begun to look desirable because it possessed the initiative and had resources to execute it too. This warranted demands for obedience from MPs and party activists. (Rantala 1982, 204–224).

When Kekkonen’s reign ended in 1981 Finland’s slow transition towards ‘normal parliamentarism’ strengthened as the succeeding president Mauno Koivisto (SDP) took deliberate action to decrease presidential power (Nousiainen 1998, 192). When Koivisto was leading his second government as a prime minister (1979–1982) he stood publicly against Kekkonen who wanted to dissolve the parliament. Koivisto argued that as long as Eduskunta does not withdraw its support from the government it should continue to govern. Through this bold move Koivisto gained wide popularity (that eventually helped him to ascend to the presidency) and a strong mandate to dismantle presidential prerogatives that in Kekkonen’s term had increased to an enormous scale. However, while Koivisto

\[172\] Still, however, 1970’s witnessed a total of 10 governments (Elder et al. 1988, 166).

\[173\] According to Nousiainen (2006, 286) Koivisto was genuinely frustrated to Kekkonen’s actions during his second term as a prime minister (1979–1982) and this experience motivated him to proceed with the parliamentarization of the Finnish constitution.
explicitly stated that he would not interfere with everyday politics, he continued to arrange governments in the 1980’s too. (Jansson 1993, 156–158, 213–215). The president’s power was the single most important factor that constrained party leaders’ powers in the 1980’s.

At the turn of the 1980’s ideological differences still mattered too. Non-socialist coalitions were avoided (the 1918 atrocities, the Finnish civil war, was still remembered) and ‘general reasons’ kept the NCP in the opposition. Since 1966 all governments had been based on SDP’s and Centre’s ‘red ochre’ cooperation.\(^\text{174}\) The NCP strengthened throughout the 1970’s, along with the changing societal class structure that shifted from agrarian-industrial to leaning towards services and professional occupancies. In the early 1980’s it was the second largest party and the largest bourgeois party. Against the general tendency of opposition parties to challenge the establishment ideologically and organizationally the NCP steered policies towards government-friendly lines in order to get in too. (Jansson 1993, 139–157, Rantala 1982, 205 – 206, 211 – 212, 223). While they possessed serious ‘blackmail potential’ as financial laws still required qualified majorities (Arter 1987, 68–69) they were very cautious to use it (Elder et al. 1988, 168–169). The NCP’s strong will to govern was apparent in the party’s internal discourses in the 1970’s and the 1980’s (Sillantaus 1988).

In general, Finland’s ‘second republic’ – a developmental era that begun after the World War II and lasted until the early 1990’s – was characterized by a strongly state-centric ethos. Economically and culturally Finland was an isolated country. The economy was based on state planning and protectionist schemes. ‘Domestic markets’ lived their own life while global trade was merely a way to generate income. When international markets fluctuated the state simply devalued its currency (Markka). Under national consensus ‘Finland ltd.’ was conceived as a major company that at the same time tried to manage in global market, make sure that everyone enjoyed a decent income (via a welfare state scheme that was on the making) and raise the next generation of its builders. The cultural sphere too worked heavily for building unity that the small, remote country needed. (Alasuutari 1996, 264–266.)

\(^{174}\) Traditionally SDP’s and Centre’s coalitions have been called ‘red-green’. Due to the emergence of the Greens (in 1988) this term might be now misleading. In Finnish this coalition type is called ‘punamulta’ (literally, ‘red ochre’). It can refer to traditional deep red house paint that is used extensively especially in rural areas (‘red ochre paint’) or just to a combination of ‘puna’ (meaning red, as a symbol of socialism) and multa (meaning dirt, as a symbol of agrarian lifestyle). Either way, ‘red ochre’ is a less ambiguous term.
6.1.1 The SDP’s 1983 government negotiation process: a strong leadership gets a mandate from the NEC and the president

The Social democrats (SDP) arrived at the 1983 elections from a strong background. They had stayed in the government almost continuously since 1966. Not only had they led three previous governments, Koivisto, an SDP candidate, had taken care of the president’s duties since late 1981. The SDP also managed to win the ‘protest election’, gaining 5 seats while its ‘red ochre’ partner the Centre Party increased their share by 2 seats. Despite of their historical best the NCP lost 3 seats. Media (the Social Democrats’ main newspaper Finnish Social Democrat (SD) and Helsingin Sanomat (HS)) considered that ‘red ochre’ had ‘received trust’ and is entitled to continue (HS & SD 23.3.). SDP 1 confirmed that a victory in ‘Koivisto’s Finland’ meant automatically that they would make it to the government. According to SDP 1 leadership autonomy is connected to the party’s electoral history: a win gives strong mandate, several consecutive wins increase the leadership’s status almost exponentially. The more the party leader has won, the harder it is to stand against him. The party that had won almost all elections since 1966 was led by Kalevi Sorsa, the prime minister of three earlier governments, including the incumbent one. Almost needless to say, his personal standing within the party was strong.

After the elections, before any party organ had met, Sorsa signaled a mild personal preference: ‘red ochre’ had been appointed a ‘possibility to continue’ (HS 23.3). According to SDP 1 ‘a leader is selected because he is supposed to lead’, but although ‘you [chairman] have a responsibility to prepare and suggests motions … we will then see if you are able to talk others behind them too’. Deliberation-based committing, which is later called proactive leadership, is a fundamental part of the SDP’s leadership culture – and one of the most marked differences to the NCP. SDP 1 underlined that despite of his strength, Sorsa was not a dictator, he ‘had a very collegial working style’. Especially the triad of chairman, the PPG chair and the party secretary (colloquially known as ‘Sorsa’s sons’) had major roles in all party affairs at the turn of the 1980’s. The group ‘addressed, turned and wringed things’

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175 This first process reconstruction differs from the rest to some extent because it introduces the main players along with the process.

176 The only exceptions were the three non-political ‘caretaker governments’ and Martti Miettunen’s 3rd government that operated from the fall of 1976 until the spring of 1977 (State council database).

177 This name stemmed from the Finnish Rural Party’s populist campaign (dubbed as the ‘crimelord hunt’), which went against established parties’ politicians who had recently been involved in suspicious ventures that involved state money.
and others were not there 'just to listen to his [Sorsa’s] visions and commands’, they were there to ‘affect his opinions’. According to Matti Ahde (the PPG chair in 1975-1982) ‘the chairman [Sorsa] did not want to make crucial decisions by himself, instead he tested and developed his ideas along with the group’, which, as Ahde underlines, derived its legitimacy from the party’s activists (Ahde & Hakkarainen 2013, 125–126). Although Sorsa was a strong leader and the situation was clear for the SDP, initial decisions were likely dealt with the ‘sons’. This ‘innermost inner circle’ is nowadays known as the ‘troika’ (SDP 7).

In the 1980’s the ‘troika’s internal balance of power appeared to lean towards the EPO. In the 1970’s the party secretary had a pronounced status in the SDP; along with the party chair he was considered as the 2nd commander of the ‘party machine (Mickelsson 1999, 155–156). In the 1983 government formation process party secretary Erkki Liikanen was strongly present: he for example opened all of the NEC’s and the PPG’s meetings (SDP NEC and PPG minutes 1983). The PPG chair mainly defended the leadership’s and the NEC’s proposals in the PPG and he did not initiate motions. For example in the first PPG meeting (6.4.1983) the re-elected incumbent chairman Olli Helminen – ‘Sorsa’s son’, who participated in the first NEC meeting on 23.3. – left government issues aside and instead demanded that the PPG and the NEC should create a tighter connection and that PPG should appoint party’s deputy chair Pirkko Työläjärvi to the Eduskunta’s speaker’s position. Both of these proposals surfaced in the first NEC meeting (23.3.1983); the latter was made by chairman Sorsa himself, stating: ‘we have to make decisions about it [the speaker issue] very soon. They are in the hands of the PPG, but perhaps one could touch them a little here too. Because now it feels right, if Pirkko Työläjärvi accepts the invitation, to propose her as the speaker’. The PPG accepted the proposal unanimously. (SDP NEC minutes 23.3.1983; SDP PPG minutes 6.4.1983). In the process the PPG chair did not pursue independent status for the PPG. According to SDP 1 the PPG’s ‘self-conception’ at that time was that it should operate under the EPO’s orders. Since these times however the NEC’s power has decreased (see below).

The next layer in the power structure is a temporary leadership unit, a negotiation group (from now on NG) that handles actual negotiations in all parties. Although its formation varies to some extent according to party type and times, generally it is built around the EPO and PPG leaderships. The NG’s prepare the parties’ answers to the informateur/formateur and clarify policies when negotiating with other parties. In the end of the process its proposition is submitted under the party organs’ approval. One defining inter-party difference is the NG’s
composition and especially the extent of its mandate (i.e. how often it needs to get approval from party organs). Formally, the SDP’s NG is composed of 9 individuals: 4 are proposed by the NEC and 4 by the PPG, the chairman is the leader of the group. (SDP EPO rules 1981). The traditional setup of the EPO chairs (1+3) was supplemented with the party secretary and minister Matti Ahde (SDP NEC minutes 23.3.1983). According to SDP 1 the council chair is always an ex officio member too and therefore the group includes leaders from all organizational ‘faces’. The PPG selected its NG representatives (the leadership (1+2) and MP Matti Luttinen) during its second meeting (SDP PPG minutes 7.4.1983). In purely denominational terms the EPO gained a 6-4 majority but it should be remembered too that the party chair, the party secretary and Matti Ahde were all MPs too. After negotiations the NG’s task was to craft a proposal, which the NEC and the PPG commented. The party council made the final decision and appointed the ministers, unless it decided to delegate its powers to the NEC. (SDP EPO rules 1981.) According to SDP 1 and 2 this always happened, making the NEC the central unit of operations.

Formally, the national executive committee is the leading party organ. As the party council that formally uses highest decision-making power between party congresses is too wide and slow, preparative, executive and often also decisive powers are appointed to national executive committees. They coordinate the formation of party’s policy, react to everyday politics, lead party activity (campaigning etc.) and set party council’s and congress’ agenda. In order to be effective they are able to convene weekly. The party office and a working group system that substantially reflects the parliamentary committee system assist the NEC’s. Reflecting the traditional setup in leftist parties, it was the de facto leading political organ in the SDP. (Sundberg 1996, 65–69, Nousiainen 1998, 66.) As chapter 5 showed, formal differences with other parties are significant. They reflect in more concrete terms too. In the 1980’s the SDP’s NEC was a genuine national leadership organ where the party congress selected the party’s true ‘heavyweights’ (SDP 1). Unlike in the NCP where the NEC includes a working committee that is headed by the party chair, the SDP’s NEC does not have one and therefore, it cannot be (formally) ‘prepared’ in advance. The SDP’s NEC also enjoyed unlimited participation rights in the PPG – in the NCP only the party chair and the party

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178 This can be interpreted in two ways: either 1) the party council gets a monitoring possibility and strengthens or 2) the chairman of the formally most powerful organ is committed to the process from the beginning, making it harder for him to raise opposition. As party leadership proposes his/hers induction to the NG, the latter explanation seems more plausible. It is a way to tie the council in.

The NEC’s strong formal status reflected in the actual negotiations too. As it is the first organ that convenes after elections it receives a natural advantage over other organs (SDP 2). In its first meeting that was held a day after the elections the NEC agreed on all significant ‘alignments’. It 1) decided to seek a position in the government and 2) it appointed its representatives to the NG. It also 3) agreed on the overall policy line, which was based on the party’s electoral program and other policy papers whose preparation it had directed. It also became evident (i.e. it was pointed out and not denied by anyone) that 4) the coalitional base will build around the ‘red-ochre’ and 5) Sorsa will be the next prime minister. (SDP NEC minutes 23.3.1983). Only the exact formulation of the party’s objectives and coalitions’ internal power balance were left for later NEC meetings. According to SDP 1 in the 1980’s ‘the NEC’s role was still very crucial in the SDP’. Although the leadership controlled the agenda, its approval was needed. The NEC – where the PPG and council leaders sat too – also served as an operative leadership unit: it ‘prepared’ other organs’ meetings in advance. The first council meeting is a good example.

Formally, the party council is the largest and most significant semi-permanent national power unit. It is composed of subnational representatives who in a way act as deputies of the party congress (hence, the characterization ‘party congress between party congresses’). Because it is geographically dispersed and numerically vast, it normally convenes only a few times per year. The council chair is not a major player in the public eye, but as he has the backing of the party congress he has a potential to provide serious counter weight to the party leader – at least when he is not the same person (as in the NCP). (Sundberg 1996, 64; Nousiainen 1998, 66.)

In reality the separation seems to be less concise. Through his involvement in the NG, the council chair becomes deeply involved in national leadership and the government formation process. Council chair Johannes Koikkalainen opened the first meeting by repeating Sorsa’s view: ‘we got a mandate to continue’ (SDP council minutes 24.3.1983). The order of speakers had been carefully crafted in the NEC that calls in the council meetings and arranges their schedules. Sorsa explicitly encouraged the NEC members to speak to ‘spice things up and give authority to the discussion’. (SDP NEC minutes 23.3.1983.) The next speaker was Sorsa, followed by the leader of the strongest district organization and a NEC member Kari Jouhki – both strongly in favour of negotiations. The council’s permission
was not asked but it got to ‘advise’ the NG. Regional representatives put forth a maelstrom of predominantly regional suggestions and ministerial names (council representatives do not have many opportunities to voice out their opinions) which the meetings official statement that was accepted unanimously did not include. Overall, however, the council representatives were on the NEC’s line: the SDP should govern with the Centre. The statement, which repeated the NEC’s alignments, was prepared in a committee whose composition was proposed by the NEC. It included both Sorsa and Liikanen, and Jouhki, who acted as its chair. (SDP council minutes 24.3.1983). This ‘orchestrated’ meeting brought what the leadership was searching for: a formal backing for its plans. According to SDP 6 the council is the heaviest ‘tool’ when something profound needs to be said: as it is the ‘party congress between party congresses’, its word is the law.

When the PPG finally convened, all major ‘alignments’ had already been made. In the 1980’s Eduskunta’s organizing took about 2 weeks, giving a major head start to the EPO. After the PPG selected its leadership in its first meeting, party secretary Liikanen explained that the party’s policy objectives will be dealt in the NEC next week and therefore the PPG should convene soon to ‘advise’ the NG. Whether to seek a place in government or not was not asked from the PPG. (SDP PPG minutes 6.3.1983.) Overall, the PPG’s role in the process was small. SDP 1 explained that one cannot of course ostracize the parliamentary group; it has to be ‘carried along’ and it needs to receive information, but ‘the NEC’s role was clearly stronger than the PPG’s […] palpably stronger’, and the PPG agreed to this too. The policy formation process in 1983 government negotiations provides a good example of the SDP’s internal marching order in the early 1980’s.

Typically the party chair and the NEC coordinate the parties’ policy formulation and the preparation takes place in parties’ sectoral committees (Sundberg 1994, 176; Sundberg 1996, 44). In the 1983 government negotiations the ‘big line’ was laid out in the first NEC meeting, which agreed to proceed with two papers that were ‘condensed’ from the electoral program and committee papers (SDP NEC minutes 23.3.1983). Already in this meeting Sorsa defined the NEC’s 13.4. meeting as the final phase in the intra-party policy formulation process. There, the NEC received a summary of ‘5 kilos and 200 grams of committees, election programs and other correspondents’ propositions’ to ‘weigh which things are important for us’. A detailed scrutiny followed: objectives were divided to policy-specific sections, introduced by corresponding committee chairs, examined on a word-to-

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179 In 2010’s organizing the PPG took only a few days.
word level and approved. As the meeting did not have time to go through all of them the NEC could not make final decision on the whole list. (SDP NEC minutes 23.3., 13.4.) However, as the majority of issues (including all financial policies) were dealt in detail and approved separately, the NEC’s participation in the process was important – at least compared to other party organs. The PPG gathered a day after the NEC’s decisive meeting to have, as Liikanen put it, a ‘relatively loose discussion about government program objectives’. Half of the meeting dealt with other issues and the policy part was short and unfocused; ‘advises’ mixed with other concerns and just like in the council’s meeting they were gathered together and transported to the party office without a promise to use them in any way. (SDP PPG minutes 14.4.1987). This was the PPG’s only chance to comment the party’s objectives. Like the council, the PPG too – with 57 regionally elected members – seems to be too large and also regionally heterogeneous for decent focused discussion.

After the NEC dealt the policies the NG begun to negotiate. Although the NEC mainly listened to the NG’s specific reports, it gave its approval for the final coalitional base and inter-party power distribution within the cabinet. The nature of these approvals is nicely summarized by the deputy chair Pirkko Työläjärvi’s comment on the coalition base: ‘perhaps it is good for the state of negotiation to state that no one has, yesterday or today, criticized this base issue and therefore it can be settled at this point’. Although the NEC did not vote, it seems that it was made sure that everyone was behind the NG’s proposal. The PPG received information too, but this type of ‘promulgation’ did not take place in its meetings. The NEC also convened much more often. (SDP NEC minutes 20.4., 21.4. and 28.4.1983, SDP PPG minutes 21.4.1983.)

The last step in the process is the approval of the NG’s formal proposal. Especially in the SDP – that endorses the proactive leadership style where all relevant parties are thoroughly committed behind the leadership’s motions – the leadership puts a lot of effort into the process although it seems highly unlikely that anyone would dare to reject the proposal. The organization’s concentric layers are clearly visible: the statement moves from the center of the ‘party onion’ towards larger organs, in order of importance. The NEC and the PPG’s working committee’s joint meeting signed the proposal first. As the PPG’s ‘inner circle’ was now committed, the group had to turn against their own (self-picked) leaders to

\[180\] Council’s input to the policy process was restricted to unstructured ‘advises’ which NEC collected without further promises (SDP council minutes 24.3.). As demands were mostly regional, it is unlikely that they made an impact to the program.
overcome the decision. The joint meeting gave recommendation to the PPG that is should accept the proposal too. In the PPG’s general meeting a MP Juhani Surakka reminded the group about the reality: ‘the group can only accept or reject the solution’. Alterations were not possible anymore at this stage. After the discussion the PPG chair Helminen drew the discussion together and without a vote declared that the PPG had accepted the result unanimously and recommends to the council that it will accept it too. (SDP PPG minutes 3.5.1983). Although the PPG could not formally do anything about the final decision, its induction to ‘the onion’ could be used to convince the council. This is an integral feature of the proactive leadership style.

While the party council is the ‘congress between congresses’ its final affirmation is quite clearly only a ritual – but an important one. As SDP 6 pointed out, even today the SDP leadership is not able to work ‘like the NCP leader’ and just inform about premade decisions. In the final NEC meeting the party secretary Liikanen considered that the council’s approval is a sure thing (SDP NEC minutes 28.4.1983). Still, the leadership put a lot of effort in explaining how the result was reached. It underlined that the NG followed the NEC’s instructions and that the proposal was already accepted in the NEC and the PPG. Although the meeting gave minor criticism about the procedure (the government program was handed out just before the meeting and the ministerial candidates’ names had appeared in the newspapers) the proposal was accepted unanimously and the meeting gave the NEC the right to appoint the ministers. (SDP council minutes 4.5.1983.) According to SDP 1 in council meetings ‘small whining always takes place’ but in normal circumstances the party leader should always feel confident to go there. During this study’s 30-year research period the SDP council has never put serious pressure on the leadership. The closest call was in 1995 when 3 representatives (out of some 60 eligible participants) voted against the final proposal. According to SDP 2 the delegation of government matters has gradually diminished the councils’ powers in lesser matters too.

While the idea of a widely representative ‘party parliament’ is pleasant, there are two wide factors that hinder the council’s potential for being a genuine veto player in intra-party processes. Firstly, the finality and wholesomeness of the decisions it faces puts unbearable pressures on its members – especially when more important organs have accepted the proposal before it. According to SDP 2 it is important to determine the 'point of no return' in intra-party processes. Again, we can refer to path dependent logics where high cost of deviating from the path reinforces chosen decisions (Pierson 2000). Because the council usually convenes only for the final ‘verdict’ (only in 1983 and 1991 it convened in the beginning of the process), it
may only reject the whole proposal, returning the process back to square one. As this might lead to the forming of other coalitions, the stakes are very high. It seems rather unlikely that an assembly of rarely convening regional amateurs would want to engage in seriously contradicting acts.

Even if some council members had such motivations, there is a reason why they cannot actualize. Put simply: the council is a regional, not a national assembly, it is too large and geographically diverse to reach unified stances. In the first council meeting representative Eero Heinäluoma cried that ‘there are various ways for addressing these regional problems, the party council should be able to say something about the current political situation too so that field organizations voice could be heard’ (SDP council minutes 24.3.1983). While Heinäluoma was obviously right in that the council would need to act in concert in order to exert meaningful influence, its basic composition prevents this effectively. Districts gather before the council meeting to advice their representatives to push forward regional leaders (SDP 3). The end result is a mosaic of some dozen regional worries, not a unified counterforce. According to SDP 1 the council is ‘such a wide organ and only convenes a few times a year’ that ‘it is not really a working instrument’. Its working logic reminds one of the game of divide and conquer without a deliberate need to divide; the dividing dynamic follows naturally from its composition.

The SDP’s leadership arrived to the 1983 government negotiations in a very strong position. Yet, the intra-party process was rather strenuous as the leadership circulated its vision through multiple organs. The national executive committee was clearly the most important one: it explicitly or informally approved all major steps in the process. Although the decision to negotiate about the ‘red ochre’ cooperation was more or less an obvious choice, its involvement in the policy preparation showed that it had real power to influence the party’s objectives. It could not have been avoided. While the PPG leadership was of course centrally involved, the PPG as a whole mainly followed the process. It convened only after major alignments had been made. In the policy process the MPs got to voice their opinions but not in a concentrated manner. In many ways its independent power was constrained by similar logics that constrain the council: it is too large and diverse to reach unified opinions which are a prerequisite for meaningful intra-party action. Although the PPG convened fairly often during the process, it was usually a few steps behind the NEC. On 21.4. both organs held a meeting. While the PPG still discussed about coalitional base (SDP PPG minutes 21.4.1983) the NEC was already dealing ministerial posts (SDP NEC minutes 21.4.1983). Considering council’s affirmative powers in the beginning of the process, it can be
summarized that Intra-party power leaned clearly towards the EPO. As the former PPG chair and NEC member Matti Ahde summarized: ‘for us, the party decisions were the most important political guideline’; ‘the parliamentary group cannot disagree with the SDP’s deciding organs...’ (Ahde & Hakkarainen 2013, 148, 152–153).

6.1.2 The NCP’s 1983 government negotiation process: a reprise of past 17 years

In 1983 the NCP had been kept in the opposition for 17 years. The party had significantly improved its support, most notably by winning 12 seats in the previous parliamentary elections (1979) making it the largest bourgeois party in Finland. While still at the late 1970’s the NCP was internally somewhat incoherent (due to organizational, ideological and personal reasons) the drive for government was strong and it demanded unity from the party (Borg 1982, 519–525). However, although the NCP was a poll favourite right before the Election Day (according to party paper Nykypäivä, from now on NP 17.3.) the ’crimelord hunt’ campaign hit it too and despite of its historical best vote share the party lost 3 seats. Even more important than the NCP’s loss was the fact that the main parties of the incumbent ‘red ochre’ coalition won seats. 1983 was a reprise of past 17 years. Although the NCP was the largest bourgeois party (and the 2nd largest overall) its loss to the governing coalition made sure, as NCP 1 pointed out, that the ‘red ochre’ would continue and the NCP will remain in the opposition.

However, for a while the party engaged in the formal negotiation procedure and although the process was characterized by vagueness that likely resulted from the party’s situation, it provides a few preliminary insights to the NCP’s internal life which are supported by later observations.

In formal terms the government formation in the NCP was a loose process in the early 1980’s. After the 2003 rule changes, which removed the composition of the NG altogether, it became even looser. Despite of the EPO’s strengthening in the latter half of the 20th century rules continued to highlight the PPG’s

181 In the 1970’s demands for unity and discipline were prominent topics in the party’s internal discussions (Mickelsson 1999, 152–154, 162–165). These are not very typical demands for a cadre party.

182 Another popular explanation for the NCP’s loss was the party chair Ilkka Suominen’s poor performance in TV-debates. This was the first major public showing of an individual leader’s enhanced importance in media politics (Mickelsson 1999, 290).
historically strong position: the PPG leadership (1+2) negotiates with the EPO representatives (not specified), the PPG makes a statement and decisions have to be made in joint meetings with the party council (no formal decision-making rules were provided). The NEC was not assigned a formal role in the process. The NCP’s leadership was concentrated: 1) the party chairman (i.e. the chairman of the NEC) chaired the party council too, which 2) elected members of the NEC. 3) The NEC also included a working committee of the party chair, two deputy chairs, two NEC members and the party’s financier. (NCP EPO and PPG rules 1976.) The existence of a working committee has been interpreted as an indication of a hierarchic leadership structure (Sundberg 1997). As it generates the NEC’s agenda the leadership has formally grounded tools to ‘prepare’ it. Also, as a majority of the NEC members could not be MPs (after 1967, Borg 1980, 47–50) the bulk of members that the leadership confronted were ordinary district representatives.

The NEC convened first. As the table 1 shows it has never kept discussion transcripts from its meetings and therefore analysis of its role is mainly based on its decisions in relation to the overall sequence of events. Instead of explicit decisions and demands (that were made later in the PPG, see below) the NEC issued a statement voicing that everyone should be heard in the negotiations. The meeting also selected the EPO’s NG members, chair Suominen and party secretary Jussi Isotalo. (NCP NEC minutes 24.3.1983.) As the PPG leadership (1+2) made the other half, the EPO representatives formed a minority. The minute leaves unclear how much the NEC participated in the crafting of the statement. According to a newspaper article Suominen’s opening speech contained all of its relevant aspects (NP 31.3.1983). The next meeting issued a similar statement but it only lasted for 20 minutes, suggesting that the statement was prepared elsewhere (NCP NEC minutes 12.4.1983). When the NCP’s process ended, Suominen criticized the SDP in the media (HS 20.4.) and a day after the NEC issued a statement that repeated Suominen’s message (NCP NEC minutes 20.4.1983). While these observations are far from conclusive, they suggest that the NEC’s independent role was rather modest. These three statements were its only input in the process. Interviewees gave somewhat mixed views on the NEC’s role in the 1980’s. While NCP 2 claimed that in Suominen’s term the NEC was still compact enough to act as a ‘political place’ that discussed, struggled and sometimes even aligned policies, NCP 1 stated that ‘the NCP’s field organization, starting from field to party council and party executive has always been very loyal to the leadership, I mean for this sharp tip’. While the 1983 process cannot establish the NEC’s role exhaustively, the 1987 process that finally landed the NCP into the government shows univocally that the
PPG made all the crucial decisions. The PPG’s role in 1983 supports the idea of its primacy too.

Already before its first meeting a few MPs voiced their willingness to negotiate (NP 31.3.). Although this is not surprising after 17 years in the opposition, public appearance showed that 1) the MPs did not need official group decisions and more importantly that 2) the MPs could state publicly opinions that went further than the NEC’s statements. The SDP’s MPs did not cross NEC’s line in the 1980’s. The first PPG meeting gave an explicit and clear support for negotiations and it also stated the party’s political objectives (which NEC did not touch – at least publicly). It also clarified party’s statement and chose its leadership to represent it in the NG. However, it is also noteworthy that while the PPG gave more pronounced opinions than any other party organ, it did not really challenge the leadership: decision to negotiate and the policy preferences were mainly just voiced out by the leaders, they were not discussed thoroughly as in the SDP. In the second meeting the PPG chair just assured the meeting that the working committee was well informed. (NCP PPG minutes 5.4.1983 & NCP PPG minutes 7.4.1983.) While the lack of the PPG’s attention might have resulted from NCP’s weak position in negotiations, the forthcoming observations also suggest that the NCP’s intra-party processes are generally less intensive. According to NCP 2 the NG works independently and it does not bother party organs with details because they are already represented in it through their leaderships. Leadership-centeredness is the first constitutive part of the NCP’s retroactive leadership culture, which focuses more on results than processes. A Similar ethos is detectable in the highest decision-making event, the council’s and the PPG’s joint meeting.

The first speaker in the meetings was party chair Suominen who also chaired the council. He was followed by the PPG chair Matti Jaatinen and the Eduskunta’s speaker MP Erkki Pystynen who had been assigned to the informateurs’ role. Just like in the SDP these ‘high calibre’ speakers gave explicit backing to the leadership’s ideas. The difference was that they were not ‘party men’ – all were senior PPG officials. Again, instead of asking the meetings permission to join the negotiation Suominen listed the party’s objectives. The PPG chair Jaatinen underlined that it is impossible to tell anything more at this point – and, interestingly, no one asked: from 17 comments 8 were made by the MPs and only three (out of 17) dealt with government negotiations. (NCP council minutes 12.4.1983). NCP 1’s characterization of the council’s role is telling: it is ‘too heavy an organ’ and therefore not really a decision-making body at all. It is more like a ‘lighting rod’ where the leadership listened what the activists had to say, but ‘you
never had to go there fearing a revolution because they don’t conceive their role as political decision-makers’. Unlike in the SDP it could not formally delegate its powers to the NEC. As such, EPO’s possibilities for monitoring the leadership were essentially smaller.

As the forthcoming processes show in a more detailed fashion the main difference between the SDP and the NCP seems to be that the SDP’s activists take more actively part in the decision-making processes (proactively) whereas in the NCP leadership’s autonomy is generally wider. This does not mean, however, that the NCP’s field is out of the picture; it concentrates on higher-level issues, like leadership selection. In the joint meeting MP Pertti Salolainen openly challenged Suominen by criticizing the leadership’s ‘line’. The argument was that 1) the party leader is responsible for the party’s line and 2) if the line does not work the leader should be changed. Salolainen’s motion was widely deemed legitimate. For example MP Heikki Järvenpää stated that this idea was ‘clearly a part of the NCP’s nature’ and that ‘to openly deliberate about the chairman is definitely right. Therefore Salolainen’s announcement is a fair thing to do in this place, because there is plenty of time for the field to discuss about it’ (the NCP’s party congress was held in the next summer). Council member Matti Hyyppä reminded that ‘if the NCP’s field wants to change the leader, it is really going to change the leader'. (NCP council minutes 12.4.1983). This principle, which is repeated many times during the processes and interviews, illuminates the NCP’s idea of intra-party democracy.\textsuperscript{183} NCP 1 confirmed that the procedure is totally legitimate: after ‘preliminaries’ that take place within the leadership, ‘the congress has total authority over the issue’. Highly personalized responsibility is the second constitutive part of the retroactive leadership culture. Suominen beat Salolainen with clear numbers in the summer’s congress and continued to hold the lead until 1991.

The NCP’s process ended rather quickly; president Koivisto played a main role in ending it. After the Eduskunta chose the NCP’s Erkki Pystynen to the speakers position Koivisto assigned him informateur’s duties. While Pystynen openly advocated the NCP’s equal rights to negotiate and a need to have the NCP in the government, neither president Koivisto nor the ‘red ochre’ partners (especially the SDP) were convinced. Koivisto assigned the formateurs task to Sorsa, who build

\textsuperscript{183} In contrast, even when the SDP lost 100 000 votes for the second time in a row in 1991, the party leadership was not made clearly responsible. Instead, it was often repeated that the party’s weak performance was everyone’s fault because decision to join the historical ‘blue-red’ government in 1987 – which was widely considered as the main reason why the SDP lost – was approved in all party organs. Of course, it is possible that much of this difference relates to different communication styles. After all, the SDP leader Pertti Paasio had to resign later in 1991.
another ‘red ochre’. (HS 9.4.-19.4.1983.) This, however, was the last time for a long time. The next ‘red-ochre’ was built in 2003.

6.2 The late 1980’s: the decline of traditional party activism and the emergence of mediatized politics

In the mid-1980’s two mutually reinforcing tendencies that in the long term have significantly facilitated the transformation of intra-party power balances became emergent. The decreasing significance of traditional party activism and the emergence of media politics were the defining features of the time period that Mickelsson (1999, 168) has named as the ‘era of arena parties’ (1979–1988). Although parties reached their record memberships in the 1970’s their internal functioning had already begun to divert from the textbook version of the mass party model. As the membership ‘estrangement’ strengthened, parties started to lose their character as membership organizations. Their representativeness was questioned and alternative associational activities (trade unions, youth leagues and an environmental movement) took more prominence while parties continued to succumb deeper into the state administration where party work now more often took place. (Borg 1986, 24–26.) The more attention and resources were directed to governing, the more field organizations got left behind (Rantala 1982, 108–111, 220–221). Both old parties lost around 20 000 members during the 1980’s (Mickelsson 2007, 265–270).

Alongside the withering of politics’ collectivist nature it begun to mediatize and personalize (Pekonen 1986, 48–49). Behind this trend was the gradual commercialization of the Finnish media. Although politicians had sought expert assistance in performance training already in the 1970’s the media at large was still ‘partified’: party newspapers were widely read and even most daily papers showed explicit partisan leaning. The National Broadcasting Company (YLE) owned the only TV network and due to Soviet relations and Finland’s ongoing welfare state project publicity leaned towards consensus. The media approached Kekkonen only when he allowed them to and even his severe illness was hidden until he had to resign. After Kekkonen’s departure old regulations begun to wane and the media commercialized. Demand for consumer friendly political journalism increased. The liberation affected media’s mentality: consensus changed to critical review, which quickly tensed relationships between politicians and journalists. As demand for more personalized viewpoints increased, the television became more important.
The emergence of the first private TV channel, Advertisement Television (later, MTV3) introduced to the viewers a more entertainment-oriented experience, which increased the importance of the politicians’ performance abilities. (Herkman 2011, 23–26, 125–126, 163–165).

The parties’ reactions to these phenomena differed quite significantly. In the SDP membership decline caused severe worries already in the early 1980’s while in the NCP commotion started only at the turn of the 1990’s. For the SDP the mass party identity was clearly more significant than for the NCP. (Mickelsson 2007, 265–270.) Perhaps because of the immaturity of the political culture, the mediatization seemed to cause relatively negative feelings in the Finnish politicians (Wiio 1989, 12). According to Aula (1989, 17–22) political journalists’ development into a distinct professional class annoyed politicians who had previously held exclusive rights to interpret politics.\footnote{A quote from the SDP deputy chair Työläjärvi in 1983 summarizes the main problem perfectly: ‘You receive the most imaginable questions, like are you going to raise taxes or not. Then us couple of hundred kindly answer to them. When you remind them [about the quality of the question], they get annoyed and inform you that the editor has set the questions. And when you ask if the editor could learn more about this society and its functions, you are a tedious crone…’ (SDP NEC minutes 23.3.1983).} A deeper look, however, reveals important differences. The SDP took openly critical stance. A great example was chairman Sorsa’s famous ‘infocracy’ speech (1984) where he accused the media for building power to itself in order to challenge representative democracy. The NCP’s reaction reflected more worry than anger. In general, for it (a party that was deeply rooted in the cadre party tradition) ideas of a party that ‘believes in the media’ and ‘works for the elections’ were easier to digest than for the SDP which had leaned onto its mass organization for decades. While the SDP considered media as an enemy and despised media politics, the NCP saw it as a part of reality that had to be accepted and adjusted to. (Mickelsson 1999, 160–168, 208–209, 220).

6.2.1 The NCP’s 1987 government negotiation process: the PPG takes back its power

The 1987 government negotiations were historical in many ways. Although the president’s constitutional powers were annulled only 13 years later 1987 was the last time that president really used them. And what a farewell it was. The NCP’s, the Centre’s and the SPP’s (Swedish People’s Party) leaders had secretly agreed to form a bourgeois coalition if they were able to secure a majority. This agreement is
commonly known as the ‘kassakaappisopimus’ (‘strongbox deal’). However, president Mauno Koivisto boldly dismissed the deal (earning his method a nickname ‘manual steering’ after his nickname Manu) and formed the SDP’s and the NCP’s historical ‘blue-red’ coalition. Against his declarations and general reluctance to interfere with domestic politics Koivisto ‘took full advantage’ of the head of state’s constitutional powers (Jansson 1993, 162). The cumbersome process revealed that in a tough situation the intra-party power in the NCP resided deeply in the PPG that dismissed the party leader’s deal. According to NCP 3 this was a decisive moment for intra-party power in the NCP; after that the PPG continued to strengthen itself. After Suominen’s term the NEC gradually lost all political significance (NCP 2 & 3).

In 1987 the NCP had spent 21 years in opposition, which at least in a contemporary scale is a very long time for a major party. Their claim to a government position was strong. They had increased their vote share in the two previous elections and ‘general reasons’ had started to lose meaning after Kekkonen’s departure, amidst ongoing reforms that were taking place across the border. The ‘red-ochre’ had also faced serious internal problems during the 1983–1987 electoral term and Sorsa’s and the Centre’s chair Paavo Väyrynen’s personal relationship had deteriorated. This time the electoral system favoured the NCP too: it gained 9 seats with only 7000 new votes. The NCP finished second, only three seats behind the SDP that lost 100 000 votes but only one seat. The Centre gained two seats but lost almost 20 000 votes (Official Statistics of Finland). Compared to 1983 the situation was a lot more complex (HS 17.3.). This can be seen in the processes, which are characterized by numerous steps and slow progress.

First of all it should be pointed out that the ‘blue-red’ cooperation was not a new idea in any way. Aside from the deterioration of the ‘red ochre’ the ‘blue-red’ enjoyed a ‘social demand’ that had built over decades in various municipal council’s where SDP’s and NCP’s cooperation was rather usual (Nousiainen 2006, 295). As a national scale solution it had been harbouried for almost ten years under the auspices of Arkadia club, the PPG chair’s ‘strategic planning cabinet’, which built counter-force to the party apparatus that Suominen led. It was originally formed by the PPG chair Pentti Sillantaus in 1979. The NCP’s former chair Harri Holkeri (in office 1971–1979) was a long time member and Kalevi Sorsa attended their meetings too. (Yli-Huttula 2006, 263–264.) At 21.5.1985 Sorsa met Sillantaus and the acting NCP PPG chair Ulla Puolanne to discuss about the ‘blue-red’ cooperation. They agreed to ‘raise discussion about it on both sides’ and during 1985 the idea got well established. (Sillantaus 1988, 110, 121–126.) In the 1980’s
fundamental political differences between old parties waned: the SDP let go of socialism (in their 1987 manifesto) and the NCP applied a more pragmatic approach. Both parties reached for more consensual tones in their outlooks. (Mickelsson 1999, 225.) As Nousiainen (2006, 296) eloquently noted: ‘The NCP and the SPD met each other under an atmosphere that had moved to the right, as proponents of rationally based market functions and limiters of state power, as defenders of a stable and strong currency and upholders of neo-corporatist labour market policies’.

The party’s internal rift reflected clearly into the NCP’s process. It personalized on Suominen and on Holkeri who was the party’s presidential candidate. Apparently their relationship had worsened during the nomination campaign: while Suominen wanted to arrange a primary Holkeri was trying to speed up the process to secure his nomination (HS 20.3., 11.4.). After the elections both begun to make public suggestions before any party organ had convened. Echoing the ‘strongbox deal’ Suominen noted that the NCP could be in a bourgeois government but – as the formal ritual back then demanded – he ended by proclaiming that the NCP is aiming for a ‘three large’ (a coalition of the SDP, the NCP and the Centre) (HS 18.3., NP 19.3.). On 17.3. Holkeri had already defended the ‘blue-red’ cooperation and a similar-minded coalition was forming behind him (HS 20.3.). The rift reflected into the upcoming PPG leadership selection: it was speculated that incumbent Ulla Puolanne, a well-known sympathizer of the ‘blue-red’ cooperation and a long-time member of the Arkadia club would have to leave her position (HS 18.3.).

The 1987 process shows that the NEC was not a relevant institutional veto player. It approved premade statements that did not reflect its internal sentiments nor had any binding power. Both the party leader and the MPs could throw opinions freely. The first NEC meeting ‘deliberated widely’ about the main partner: ‘Some NEC members incited the leadership to court the Social Democrats, some advised leaders to go with the Centre party’ (HS 19.3.). The official statement only included Suominen’s earlier position (NCP NEC minutes 18.3.1987). A week later – before the NEC or any organ convened – Suominen issued a personal statement that voiced his preference on bourgeois alliance. The party leadership had also formed a preliminary list of ministerial candidates. (HS 25.3.) Few MPs quickly countered, stating that ‘we should not burn bridges with the Social Democrats and jump into the Centre’s lap’ (NP 26.3.). According to Nousiainen (2006, 299) the PPG was not informed about the ‘strongbox deal’. The second NEC meeting appointed the formation of the party’s political objectives for the joint meeting (NCP NEC
minutes 31.3.1987) and again the ‘long and avid’ discussion about base options (HS 1.4.) was not reflected in the statement at all (NCP NEC minutes 31.3.1987). According to NCP 1 the NEC did not make any decisions to join the negotiation.

In the next, very important phase of the process the PPG gathered three times in short succession (1.4., 3.4. and 7.4.). The first major decision concerned the PPG chairs (1+2) who formed half of the NG. Traditionally the incumbent leadership continued until the negotiations ended. Following this tradition Suominen proposed Puolanne to chair the PPG but pointed out that the PPG may of course choose whomever it wants. Puolanne was selected unanimously – like all deputy chairs that she proposed. (NCP PPG minutes 1.4.1987). Later this choice proved very significant as Puolanne actively promoted the ‘blue-red’ to which the PPG turned too. Even more important decision in the first PPG meeting concerned the base issue. Suominen argued that in case the ‘three large’ did not work (it most certainly would not have worked as the SDP was strictly against it) the PPG should appoint ‘primacy’ to bourgeois cooperation. However,Puolanne strictly abandoned all ‘priorities’ and explicitly underlined this into the PPG’s decision (NCP PPG minutes 1.4.1987) – which was later handed over to the president (NCP PPG minutes 7.4.1987).

Hoping to attain an informateurs task like Erkki Pystynen did in 1983 Suominen applied for Eduskunta’s speakers position (HS 3.4., 7.4.). Unexpectedly, however, Koivisto assigned the informateurs task to minister Esko Rekola (HS 8.4.). All interviewees confirm that Koivisto was well aware of the ‘strongbox deal’ – and very unhappy about it. As the president still retained his powers – de jure and also de facto – bourgeois leaders’ plan was suddenly in a decline.

Again it is crucial to underline that as long as the PPG accepts the ‘big line’ the NCP’s leadership is very autonomous. On 8.4. the NEC convened to ‘prepare’ a proposal about the negotiation guidelines for the joint meetings approval. In the proposal the NG asked mandate to 1) negotiate about policies within certain

185 Suominen was probably hoping that Puolanne would turn to his side as her name was on the top of the list of ministerial candidates (HS 25.3.).

186 One sign of the NCP PPG’s power in the 1980’s was the PPG chair’s independence, which shows, for example, that until 1987 both PPG chairs (Sillantaus and Puolanne) were well–known opponents of Suominen’s idea of the NCP. Since the mid 1990’s the party and the PPG chairs have predominantly worked in close tandem, the latter clearly below the former. The party/PPG compound has weakened the PPG.

187 The meeting lasted for 45 minutes during which the the NEC also dealt two NG reports and a review of the last meetings minute. It seems highly improbable that the meeting crafted negotiation guidelines on site. Again, the NEC did not make any decisions during the process and the next time it convened – over two weeks later – all relevant issues had been decided.
guidelines, 2) to seek a base that secures 2/3 majority (basically the ‘three large’, 3) to seek every other possible alternative in case the ‘three large’ falls and 4) to improvise if ‘the situation requires’ (NCP NEC minutes 8.4.1987). As point 4 pretty much nullified the first three points, the NG asked for an ‘open cheque’. In the PPG’s and the council’s joint meeting party secretary Jussi Isotalo underlined that guidelines are not ‘the government program, they are guidelines and a backing’. He clarified that ‘I am talking about a mandate, not restrictions’. Isotalo’s demand was met with wide approval. For example MP Holvitie stated that ‘...I would very much like to see this meeting giving wide support to our negotiators. Council member Hiltunen also stated that: ‘You should make a decision, which gives to the party and the PPG’s leaderships the highest possible support to negotiate, no restrictions, but the highest possible support to negotiate...’. With a few new wordings the meeting accepted the NEC’s proposal unanimously. (NCP council minute 8.4.1983.)

This ethos which again echoes the idea of the retroactive leadership culture was perfectly summarized by the chief of the party office’s political department Aarno Kaila in next day’s party paper: ‘It is important that negotiators receive the widest possible mandate so that they have leeway as much as possible in the changing circumstances. The deciding organ will look at the end result afterwards’ (NP 9.4.). It should be pointed out however that while the idea of a ‘final verdict’ sounds nice, the probability for a negative verdict was and generally is close to zero. The final meeting faces a finished government program that it can only accept or reject. As it is a joint meeting with the PPG (53 individuals) that is deeply involved in the process and usually more eager to govern, the councils’ 60 regionally dispersed members would have to find unanimity to reject it. As long as the PPG is happy the EPO organs have no tools with which to overcome the leadership’s initiatives.

The informateur ranked the bourgeois alliance first but Koivisto dismissed him and called Harri Holkeri to find out if the ‘blue-red’ was possible. Only a few days before the deciding PPG meeting the party leadership was openly for the bourgeois alliance while the PPG was divided (HS 10-11.4.). Suominen defended the bourgeois alliance in his opening speech while PPG chair Puolanne cheered for the ‘blue-red’. In the end Suominen was alone with his opinion and the PPG decided unanimously to seek ‘blue-red’ cooperation. The meeting continued the NG’s mandate but it made sure that it will convene again if major obstacles with any policies surface. (NCP PPG minutes 14.4.1987). To underli ne the old parties’ differences in the 1980’s the SDP’s NEC convened on the same time to decide about the same issue (HS 14.4.). As policy obstacles did not emerge the NG
executed its strong mandate – to the extent that even the ministerial names were decided in there (HS 25-26.4.).

The final verdict was set in the PPG’s and the council’s joint meeting. The PPG convened before that to give a recommendation. The meeting also approved the list of ministerial names that Holkeri and Suominen had prepared. (NCP PPG minutes 29.4.1987). Again it is worth underlining that although the PPG was responsible for all crucial decisions – especially the decision to form a coalition with the SDP – its general meetings did not get thoroughly involved in 1) policies, 2) the coalitional base (aside from the SDP cooperation), 3) portfolios or 4) the ministerial names (except for the final decision). Compared to the SDP the NG enjoyed significantly larger autonomy, which reflects well with the NCP’s retroactive leadership culture. The joint meeting reinforced this feeling too. Instead of regional worries and arguments the leadership was welcomed with an ecstatic and cheerful atmosphere, which no doubt reflected the end of the party’s long opposition term. Even the ministerial list that usually arouses regional disputes received praise: ‘it is obvious that our districts cannot be very widely represented in the government. But the point is that we pick the best possible forces what we got for the national government’. ‘...when we enter the government in this historical situation, the NCP must toss in the ‘first line’, these portfolios must go to individuals who are considered the best in the whole party community’. (NCP council minutes 29.4.1987, also HS 30.4.). This emphasis where the whole party community organizes behind its leadership is very much in place still today – at least when the party is doing fine.

6.2.2 The SDP’s 1987 government negotiation process: increased PPG presence

Sorsa’s IV government was quarrelsome: even minor things escalated to partisan struggles (Nousianen 1992, 61). Already in 1982 Sorsa whose relationship with the Centre’s Paavo Väyrynen was not great during Sorsa’s 3rd government had insinuated that perhaps the SDP should join forces with the NCP instead (Jansson 1993, 159). As was already pointed out, at least since 1985 Sorsa attended often in the Arkadia club’s meetings and he was generally favourable to the idea of a ‘blue-red’ government (Sillantaus 1988). However, according to SDP 2 before elections the ‘red-ochre’ was still widely conceived as the safe choice. Discussion in the council’s spring/pre-election meeting clearly shows that in the wider circles the NCP was still seen as the SDP’s main opponent (SDP council minutes 3.3.1987).
The SDP managed to maintain the number one position although it lost 100,000 votes (Official statistics of Finland). Nonetheless the loss was taken very seriously. In his post-election statements Sorsa stated that the opposition was closer than ever before (SD 17-18.3.). According to SDP 1 the whole leadership was for the opposition. Reflecting on the ongoing party crisis (membership decline, etc.) the NEC members feared that if the party ‘even looks towards negotiations’ the ‘field’ will punish it. While Sorsa pointed out that as long as the SDP categorically denies cooperation with the NCP it is tied to the Centre Party, the meeting advised the party secretary Liikanen to inform the media that the SDP is not hankering for government. (SDP NEC minutes 19.3.1987). Liikanen repeated the NEC’s advises verbatim (HS 20.3., SD 20.3. and 24.3.). In the second meeting Liikanen (who obviously worked in close tandem with Sorsa) proposed a more pro-negotiation statement but again in fear of the ‘field’s’ reactions his propositions were shot down and altered to reflect NEC’s pessimistic mood. (SDP NEC minutes 26.3.1987). Again, Liikanen delivered the message to the media verbatim (HS 27.3.).

If the leadership had really wanted to take the party into the opposition it would have succeeded in these initial meeting. As they presumably knew this too it is likely that they did not want to. The media suspected that ‘a certain interest and even readiness towards a governing position can be read between the lines’ from the SDP leadership’s comments (HS 26.3.). Although the party had received a serious blow from the voters both SDP 1 and 2 admit that ‘it would have been very strange to end up in the opposition from the largest party’s position’. According to SDP 1 SDP’s pole-position was the only thing that kept the idea of government participation on the table. Polls showed that a vast majority (76.3 %) of the SDP’s members opted for the opposition (SD 25.3.). However, as SDP 2 underlined, will formation in the polls is a completely different thing than will formation in a party organization. The ‘troika’ met regularly to discuss about the situation during these first phases (Ahde & Hakkarainen 2013, 289).

What the party needed was an external push. According to interviewees Koivisto’s reaction to the ‘strongbox deal’ changed the SDP’s future. While the ‘blue-red’ had some support in the leadership, it would have been very hard to push it through the party without Koivisto’s intervention (SDP 1 & 2). Koivisto approached the leadership and asked, ‘is the party operative?’ ‘[W]hen we said yes the big wheel started to roll in a new way’ (SDP 1). The strenuous convincing process that ensued is a good example of the SDP’s proactive leadership culture. Compared to 1983 the PPG had a larger presence in the process. While it still
mainly received information after the NEC’s meetings the decision to negotiate with the NCP was circulated through it, too. Perhaps more than anything else the process is a strong reminder that *a determined and unified leadership is very hard to resist from below* – even in parties that hail from democratic roots, as Michels (1968[1911]) already noted.

Sorsa made a significant personal contribution in a harmless looking speech, which he gave in Helsinki’s district organizations meeting on 30.3. He stated that ‘the three large’ is out of the question, ‘the red-ochre’ is ‘contaminated’ and the opposition role is futile. (HS 31.3., SD 31.3.). The party paper interpreted that Sorsa was now favouring the ‘blue-red’ (SD 1.4). In the next NEC meeting Sorsa went further and openly declared that the NCP is now the only option. This changed the situation within the NEC as now anyone who wished to enter the opposition had to stand directly against Sorsa, a four time prime minister, chairman of 12 years and the party’s prospective presidential candidate. Moreover, as Sorsa pointed out, the president too was now very interested in SDP’s doings. (SDP NEC minutes 2.4.1987.)

According to SDP 2 ‘few NEC’s were tough enough to act against Sorsa’ who in a conflict situation ‘would have just said ‘alright, I’m going home, deal with the issue’. As Michels (1968[1911]) pointed out, threatening to leave is one of the leader’s most powerful tools, as most people would never want to stand in their shoes. Although the NEC was still very cautious (internal opposition personified in PPG chair Pertti Paasio) it decided to negotiate. The meeting gave ‘internal’ (i.e. not public) advise to the NG that the party is ready to negotiate with its program and the ‘three large’ will not do. No other choices were made at this juncture. (SDP NEC minutes 2.4.1987). The SDP’s willingness to negotiate was however revealed in next day’s paper (SD 3.4.1987). The PPG met a few times to hear the leadership’s warnings about the opposition (of which none of the MPs had any experience), to toss unfocused policy ‘advises’ and to select the NG members but it was not asked whether the party should negotiate or not. (SDP PPG minutes 1.4., 3.4. and 7.4.1987). The NEC had already made the decision.

In the next phase the coalitional base started to clarify – again with some external help. Although the level of Koivisto’s and Sorsa’s cooperation is somewhat unclear (SDP 1 & 2), the timing of events suggests that they coordinated things mutually. Only a day after the NEC meeting where it abandoned the ‘three

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188 According to Tuomioja (2014) the Finnish Social Democrat was tightly in the leadership’s hands in the 1980’s. It might not be too far-fetched to suggest that perhaps Sorsa himself helped the reporter to form these ‘interpretations’. 
large’ the president stated that it nor the ‘red-ochre’ seemed like feasible options (HS 4.4., 7.4.). This left the opposition and the ‘blue-red’ as only viable options for the SDP. SDP 2 underlined that Koivisto’s intervention was crucial: ‘I don’t believe that, within the rules, it would have been easy in the SDP to come up with a message that said ‘we will build a government with the NCP’’. Koivisto’s statement sent a strong message to the party community.

Next the NEC carefully prepared and approved the party’s policy papers. First it polished (point by point) and officially approved the party’s answers to the informateur. Paasio wanted to show them to the PPG, but deputy chair Matti Ahde denied this, stating ‘[I]f you present it in the PPG at three o’clock, it will be in the news by four o’clock!’ Paasio received a permission to refer them verbally. The meeting also carefully examined the party’s policy objectives and made sure that the NG is not allowed to proceed before the NEC formally accepts them. These too were denied from the PPG. (SDP NEC minutes 9.4.1987, SDP PPG minutes 10.4.1987). However, although the NEC was cognizant of the dangers of slipping into a certain path, eventually it could not do much to prevent it. The media and the president played the role of intermediates. The news interpreted the SDP’s answers as a rejection of the ‘three large’ – and the ‘red-ochre’ too (HS 10.4.). On the next day the president dismissed Rekola’s work and lifted the ‘blue-red’ to the top of his ranking (HS 11.4.). This left two options for the NEC, the opposition or the ‘blue-red’. It also put significant pressure on it (HS 11.4.).

Relating to the paragraph that opened this chapter, these ‘moves’ are a great examples of how contextual pressures can complicate the ‘normal’ intra-party decision-making process. Although the decision was taken to the NEC (as rules mandated), Sorsa’s, the president’s and the media’s interventions and interpretations narrowed the NEC’s actual scope of play significantly.

On 14.4., on the same day when the NCP’s PPG decided to proceed with the ‘blue-red’ the SDP’s NEC convened to decide about the same issue. In his speech that leaned heavily on the president’s will and the fear of being posited in the opposition Sorsa stated that the SDP should negotiate seriously and in case the result was satisfactory to form a coalition with the NCP. In a supportive speech PPG chair Paasio pointed out that the PPG and the ‘field’ had begun to support the government initiative. Sufficiently released from the fear of the ‘field’ the NEC approved the proposition but it mandated that policy objectives needed to receive the NEC’s official approval before the NG could proceed. (SDP NEC minutes 14.4.1987). Decision to negotiate is, however, a strong ‘point of no return’; only the
Greens have dropped out in the middle of negotiations (in 1991) during this research period.

*The PPG’s role was more pronounced in 1987.* After the NEC had given its approval to start negotiations with the NCP the NEC’s decision was taken to the PPG meeting to get its approval too. After a short discussion the PPG accepted the NEC’s statement. The only problem concerned the party’s policy objectives, which the NEC had not yet approved and released. While the PPG could not see or amend the list before the NEC sealed it, in order to keep the PPG along it was agreed that its working committee attends the decisive NEC meeting, which on the next day, after a very thorough examination, approved the paper. (SDP NEC minutes 14.4-15.4.1987; SDP PPG minutes 14.4.1987). Although the list was sealed, eventually the PPG managed to add a few minor objectives to it too (SDP PPG minutes 21.4.1987).

Why was the PPG more involved? Their constitutional status was strengthened during the same year with an amendment to hear the PPG’s when the government’s formation was significantly altered (for example Nousiainen 2006). While this did not directly concern the question at hand it made them more important for the overall picture. Another, more pedestrian explanation is that the SDP was entering a coalition with its historical nemesis and the situation in relation to the members and voters was very sensitive. The PPG included a well-known leftist faction (‘the red dozen’) for whom the decision was especially unpleasant (see below). To provide maximal backing for the leadership – in prospective sense – it was now perhaps more important to keep everyone on board and to commit them accordingly. As the 1991 case shows, in the turn of the 1990’s the SDP’s internal balance of power had not yet changed too dramatically as the EPO could take the party to the opposition without hearing the PPG at all. Nonetheless, the PPG was clearly strengthening (see the 1995 case).

The decision phase reflected these tensions. While the NEC had no problem in reaching a unanimous decision it was worried about the ‘red dozen’ that had threatened to bring the question to a vote. Because of this, the ‘municipal men’ were encouraged to praise the program. (SDP NEC minutes 28.4.1987). In the PPG Liikanen laid out all approvals that had been secured in advance (following the ‘onion principle’): trade unions, districts, the NEC – and the PPG’s working committee. The proposal was greeted with positive reviews until MP Jukka Gustafsson of the ‘red dozen’ filed his disapproval and appealed that the party does not approve it. Strong calls for unity surfaced, voicing out the need to maintain cohesion against the bourgeois who would take advantage of the troops’
incoherence. The vote was avoided only by signing to the minute that three persons had opposed the motion. Formally, however, the decision was unanimous. (SDP PPG minutes 28.4.1987). As the rules mandate the party council gave the final verdict. After a series of ‘fighting party’ stories, calls for unity, convivial acceptations and regional demands the proposal was approved unanimously. (SDP council minutes 29.4.1987). According to SDP 2 the council and the districts did not criticize the proposal harshly. Major work life improvements that could not be dealt in the ‘red-ochre’ helped to turn around the field, especially the trade union faction (SDP 3). In the fashion of proactive leadership all layers were gathered behind the initiative in advance.

The 1987 government negotiation was a far more complex process than the 1983. It was also characterized by Sorsa’s and Koivisto’s strong personal leadership. Without their effort the SDP might have ended up in the opposition. The president’s role was still crucial. The NEC maintained its historically strong position: it approved all important decisions (to join negotiations, to negotiate with the NCP and the party’s policies) and strongly defended its right to monitor every step in the process. However, it is also clear that the PPG heightened its presence. It convened more often, seconded the NEC’s approval to negotiate with the NCP and its working committee took part in the policy process. Unlike in 1983 it also required serious effort from the leadership in the decision phase.

Was there a power change? According to SDP 2 the PPG’s role depends on which time of the process it gives its statements: in the beginning as instructions or in the end as comments. This relates to the ‘point of no return’. It is clear that the NEC had already approved negotiations before the PPG got to say anything and in this sense the point of no return had already passed. The main question is: could it have stopped the process on 14.4. after the NEC had already accepted the plan to negotiate with the NCP? Formally, the NEC held the upper hand as the council had delegated its powers to it but the functioning of the government would have become impossible if the PPG had not supported the motion. In essence, as Katz and Mair (1993) pointed out, the central party’s power is based on the extent to which the PPG is ready to follow it. Mere submission of the proposal to its approval signals a power change, albeit a minor one as the NEC still made all important alignments. However, future proceedings show that the PPG gained more prominent position over time and undermined the NEC’s status as the party’s solitary ‘powerhouse’.

To highlight the small fracture in the EPO’s strength, it should be noted too that the council did not convene in the beginning of the process (like in 1983). In
relation to the two factors that in the long run have transferred intra-party power bottom up the membership crisis actually decreased the leadership’s/NEC’s power in the SDP at the turn of the 1990’s because the members’ sentiments were taken very seriously (see also 1991). Mediatization on the other hand worked exactly how it was expected to: it provided the leadership a powerful tool to bypass intra-party processes and the media’s interest also gave a reason to confine information from party organs.

6.2.3 Party organs’ actual decision-making powers in the 1980’s: a summary

The party organs’ weights in the 1980’s decision-making processes reflected parties’ historical leanings: in the SDP the power balance emphasised extra-parliamentary forces, in the NCP parliamentary officials were more important. The SDP’s traditional powerhouse, the national executive committee (NEC), took actively part in every step of the process: it made decision to negotiate, it participated in forming and approving the party’s policies and it decided with which parties the SDP should cooperate with. It also accepted final proposals first and it made the party’s ministerial nominations. The party secretary’s strong presence in the ‘troika’ emphasised the EPO’s weight. The PPG took a more prominent role in 1987 by approving the party’s negotiation with the NCP and taking part in the policy process via its working committee. Although this can be partly explained by contextual factors, the process predicted the direction of later developments. In the mid-1990’s the PPG got stronger and in relative terms undermined the NEC’s status. In the 1980’s, however, the EPO organs still weighted considerably more in the SDP’s internal power scale.

In the NCP the PPG was clearly the key ‘institutional threshold’, though less pronouncedly: it activated only when the leadership’s vision was clearly against its interests. But when it did, it showed its power in all of its wideness by explicitly walking over the party chairman on 14.4.1987. The party councils were generally less important: the council is too wide and diverse an organ to act as a truly operative, independent power unit. Although this problem concerns PPGs too, they encase separate leadership organs (working committees and leaderships) that may – if the party culture allows – form powerful resistance. As future proceedings also show in the NCP the PPG leadership has always been the locus of potential counterweight. In the SDP – at least in the 1980’s – it seemed to be clearly subservient to the EPO leaders.

But even though still in the 1980’s the parties inhibited significant resistance potential it is absolutely mandatory to underline the party leaderships’ strong role in intra-
party politics, which manifests through agenda setting (proposals) and more general directive powers. When the party leadership – here roughly defined as the collective of the central party organs’ leaders – is unified and determined, it is very hard to oppose ‘from below’ – even in democratic organizations.\textsuperscript{189} In normal circumstances (i.e. when hidden ‘strongbox deals’ and major disagreements within the ‘dominant coalition’ do not exist) intra-party resistance potential and democracy are best understood through the extent of the committing action that the leadership has to engage in when it tries to take through its motions. In these terms the SDP was more democratic than the NCP.

Two leadership models were crafted to reflect the main differences in the parties’ operating ethos’. Generally speaking, the SDP’s leadership is more constrained because it is expected to actively commit party organs behind its ideas. According to SDP 6 the heavy committing process is based on the idea that the party is easier to lead when activists are behind the leaders’ views. Another source for what this study has termed as the proactive leadership style stems from the party’s history. Born as an alternative movement, the party has always highlighted the need to keep the ranks tight. Several serious fractionalizations that the party has experienced during its history have strengthened the call for coherence and unanimity. (SDP 6.) In general the EPO comes first. According to SDP 2 party the apparatuses primacy (‘the party is always stronger than the PPG’) rests on the idea that voting does not only mean that one gets to decide the decider (as in the so-called trustee model, see Pitkin 1967), the members should also have connection to the political content. To make the same point SDP 5 asked: ‘Does membership and the organization matter anymore if the elected officials make all crucial decisions and the organization is only responsible for campaigning and preparations?’ Following the stakeholder model of party membership (Scarrow 2015) in the SDP members are expected to be more than voters. They participate in party decisions via representative organs that the leadership needs to keep along. In a proactive leadership culture the leader builds the ‘winning coalition’ in advance.

The NCP has generally subscribed to a different philosophy. In the 1980’s processes their leadership was more autonomous because it was not expected to circulate most issues through the party organs. NCP 2 explained this via the leadership’s representativeness: as all relevant organs are already represented through their leaderships and thorough program work provides the ‘big picture’ to lean on, ‘we don’t struggle about details that much’. If major problems emerged, the struggle

\textsuperscript{189} In fact, SDP is the only party in this study where none of the party organs ever (i.e. during the research period) stood against the leadership in major question.
took place in the parliament. According to NCP 1 the PPG has the primacy because in a parliamentary system the government lives by the parliament’s approval. The interviews highlighted the leader-centric party culture: when the leader is appointed, he/she enjoys vast autonomy to work for his/hers ‘line’ (interpretation of the party’s goals) and when the ‘line’ stops pleasing the crowd (i.e. the party activists) the leader is changed. Activist survey from early 1990’s confirms that the idea of centralized leadership was widely shared within the active membership too (Nurmela 1992, 93). A retroactive leadership culture emphasizes autonomy, manoeuvrability and individualism. The leader’s actions are mostly judged ex post.

6.3 The early 1990’s: the collapse of the Soviet Union, withdrawal of the presidency and the emergence of the parties’ ‘leadership deficit’

The 20th century’s last decade marked a turning point in Finnish parties’ internal dynamics. Traditional juxtapositions between party ‘faces’ begun to diminish and the party leaderships’ independent powers increased. Although clear causal chains are hard to pinpoint, collision of several forces in the early-mid-1990’s at least created fertile grounds for a general party power change. The most notable institutional change was the decline of presidency, which resulted from the collapse of the Soviet Union that diminished the need for strong personalized leadership in foreign affairs, the ongoing constitutional reform, and the waning of the presidents’ de facto presence in domestic politics. Executive powers begun to shift to the ministerial cabinet, enhancing party leader’s role. (Paloheimo 2005). Demand for a more personalized leadership style increased within parties too (Mickelsson 1999). Later (see section 6.5.), history’s worst economic depression (Kiander & Vartia 1998) legitimized a ‘managerial’ leadership style (Kantola 2002) and rapid European integration created a new governing layer that provided party leaders distance from their cadres (Raunio 2002). As observations from the 2000’s show (see section 6.7.), the changes in the 1990’s sustained well beyond these times and therefore the developments in the mid-1990’s can be understood as an emergence of a critical juncture that set up a new ‘punctuated equilibrium’ into the intra-party power dynamics (see Pierson & Skocpol 2002).

Probably the single most notable change in the Finnish parties’ ‘environment’ at the turn of 1990’s was the sudden collapse of its neighboring superpower the
Soviet Union with which Finland had had a firm economic and political symbiosis since the 2nd World War.\textsuperscript{190} By carefully administering Finland’s relations with the Kremlin, President Kekkonen developed himself a very powerful position, which he could use to interfere with the domestic politics too. Due to the Kremlin leverage and his formidable constitutional powers to arrange governments he was able to keep the main anti-Soviet (and anti-Kekkonen) coalition (‘blue-red’) apart until the late 1980’s and secure decades of government time for his own party, the Centre. (Summarized by Karvonen 2014, 33–34, citing Arter 1987 and Nousiainen 2006.) Kekkonen left president’s office in late 1981 and was replaced by Koivisto who begun to execute his pro-parliament program.

Coincidentally, developments that were taking place across the border created a movement into the same direction. In the beginning of Mikhail Gorbachev’s term (1985) the Soviet Union enjoyed stable international and domestic recognition but its economic prowess had started to crumble already in the 1970’s, making stories of communisms greatness look more and more unrealistic. As a major reformation to the communist party’s traditional policies Gorbachev introduced his glasnost (openness) and perestroika (restructuring) programs, which were greeted with criticism in orthodox party circles. As the media had gained more autonomy, the Soviet folks who had never seen open criticism against the system now got to witness the absence of a pristine vision. As a part of glasnost the Kremlin released its hold of the satellite countries, creating separatist sentiments. The Moscow leader Boris Yeltsin emerged as a prominent counterforce to the old power and when his nationalist rhetoric took root several states begun to seek sovereignty. On the 25th December of 1991 the Soviet Union ceased to exist and it was replaced by Yeltsin’s Commonwealth of Independent States (CIV), which assumed a completely opposite social model: liberal federal democracy in vein of USA and Germany. (Luukkanen 2009, 416–437.) Almost immediately Finland begun to seek an EC membership (Raunio & Wiberg 2000, 12–13).

The sudden and unexpected evaporation of the tense linkage that had flavored Finnish politics for decades removed a major source of presidential power: the personalized relationship of trust with the Soviet leadership. Coincidentally, the president’s constitutional prerogatives were decreased. In 1987 the presidential veto was weakened and in 1988 the presidential terms were limited down to two. In 1991 it was mandated that a parliamentary vote had to precede the

\textsuperscript{190} Of course, as Karvonen (2014, 31–32) has summarized, Finland’s political history with Russia extends back to the early 1800’s and it has significantly affected Finnish party politics well before the post-war period too.
government’s formation and dismissal. Soon the president lost rights to dissolve the parliament and the right to call in new elections was given to the prime minister. (Paloheimo 2005, 246–249.) At the same time the Eduskunta strengthened its position in government formation. In 1987 it was mandated that whenever the composition of the cabinet was changed the president had to hear Eduskunta’s speaker and the PPGs. The constitutional committee elaborated the rule in its 1989 report and claimed that the primacy in negotiations belongs to the newly elected speaker who should act as the first informateur/formateur. In 1991 and 1995 the chairs of the largest parties – that were considered as prospective prime ministers – were chosen to act as temporary speakers in order to guide the negotiations. The practice has now consolidated. Another reform set the ministerial nominations under the PPGs’ confirmation – strengthening the PPGs. Finally, a rule that was used for the first time in 1995 mandated that before taking office the prime minister candidate needed to submit his government’s program under Eduskunta’s vote. (Nousiainen 2006, 301–303).

The upfront submission of the government program under Eduskunta’s vote increased the program’s role and decreased incentives to form minority governments. Majoritarianism continued to strengthen during 1992 when qualified majority rules which had worked as an inspiration for oversized surplus governments were removed altogether.191 The government was made responsible for the parliament but it also gained strong powers to see its programs through. The president assumed a bystander’s role. The change was most notable in the field where he used to be strongest: after the 1991 elections Mauno Koivisto did not engage in ‘manual steering’ at all although the SDP was again heading for opposition and the Centre and the NCP were forming a bourgeois coalition.192 (Jansson 1993, 164, 221–242). In 1994 Koivisto was succeeded by the SDP’s Martti Ahtisaari, a diplomat from the outskirts of the party community, who almost

191 However, even after the abolition of the qualified majority rules and minority’s rights to postpone legislation governments have formed on clear surplus majorities. Lipponen’s 1st rainbow coalition that was formed in 1995 controlled over 70 % of Eduskunta’s seats. (Nousiainen 2006.)

192 Another noteworthy change in the 1990’s was the gradual waning of ‘no go’ coalitions. After the 1987’s ‘blue-red’ and the 1991’s bourgeois coalition, not to mention the 1995 and 1999’s ‘rainbow coalitions’ which included the whole spectrum from the far left (Left Alliance) via the environmentalists (Greens) to the Conservatives (NCP) all imaginable ‘party cocktails’ seem to have been possible (see Nousiainen 2006, 284; Karvonen 2014, 103). Since the late 1990’s the historically negatively conceived idea of ‘promiscuous coalitional practices’ has not probably even crossed the minds of political observers. As parties may coalesce with everyone, one factor that in previous eras could have caused significant friction between party leaders and activists, namely, the idea of a political nemesis, has effectively vanished.
completely avoided interfering to domestic politics (Nousiainen 2006, 288). *The power void that resulted from the president’s removal started to call party leaders.*

Interestingly, parties’ internal developments too supported a tendency for strong party leadership that the party leader’s new position entailed. In the turn of the 1990’s both old parties were struggling with the erosion of their mass organizations (Mickelsson 1999, 279). Membership problems were often contrasted against media politics — usually as its effect. Membership decline and the mediatization of politics were bound together with a concept of a ‘media party’; an organization where activist work becomes futile because the leadership is directly connected to voters via the national media. However, despite of its somewhat negative connotation the fact that a party leader’s personal performance had begun to bear great significance to a party’s electoral fortunes in televised political publicity resonated within parties too. (Mickelsson 2007, 258, 265–266).

In the wake of the 1987 government negotiations chairman Sorsa announced his resignation and the SDP selected Pertti Paasio, a devoted ‘party man’ to lead the party. In the 1991 elections the SDP lost another 100 000 votes and voluntarily left out from the government negotiations (see below). A serious internal debate about the party leader’s media capabilities ignited. Paasio, a devout champion of intra-party democracy was also criticized for being indecisive. The ideal leader figure that critics were after was fluent in the public eye and capable of drawing the party line. In the summer of 1991 Ilkka Suominen stepped down and was replaced by Pertti Salolainen. Soon Salolainen too began to receive heavy criticism because the NCP continued to lose elections. Although he was generally considered a strong media personality, he too was ‘too democratic’ and not firm enough to lead. Both chairs were dismissed in additional party congresses — Paasio in 1991 and Salolainen in 1994. Paasio was succeeded by Ulf Sundqvist who resigned in 1993 when a bank he was leading went bankrupt. Both parties were seeking charismatic leaders, capable of ‘virtuoso politics’. While in the 1970’s the term ‘leader’ had a negative connotation in the 1990’s it was only used in a positive sense. Sundqvist was succeeded by Paavo Lipponen who defined proper leadership as follows: ‘a party is, inevitably, chairman-driven’; ‘the chairman must lead’, ‘unless he does not, we are drifting’. Sauli Niinistö who succeeded Salolainen in 1994 faced similar expectations. Later, both were often described in authoritarian terms. (Mickelsson 1999, 239, 252–253, 271, 293, Mickelsson 2007, 266–270.)
The SDP’s leadership went through a painful generational change during the 1987-1991 electoral term as deputy chairs Matti Ahde and Pirkko Ala-Kapee followed Sorsa. Although Sorsa did not hold any formal position within the party after his resignation, he enjoyed an enormous prestige that landed him on the SDP’s highest minister position while the new party chair Paasio stayed out of the cabinet. Only after a year Paasio’s status became an issue (Sorsa himself raised it) and it took almost another year before Paasio was inducted to the government – in Sorsa’s place who assumed Eduskunta’s speaker’s position. According to Ahde the process ate Paasio’s and the party’s prestige. (Ahde & Hakkarainen 2013, 298–310).

The SDP lost again in 1991 parliamentary elections – this time around 90 000 votes and, more importantly, its position as the largest party (Official statistics of Finland). The loss was widely conceived as the members’ reaction to the ‘blue-red’ cooperation. As the NCP lost even more (140 000 votes, 13 seats) continuing with the ‘blue-red’ (that both the SDP and the NCP suggested before elections) was automatically out of the question (Jansson 1993, 163). Chairman Paasio who was the leadership’s and the ‘blue-red’s most vocal opponent in the 1987 negotiations underlined often during the process that organizational survival was now the number one priority. (SDP NEC, council and PPG minutes 1991.) He was certain that if the SDP had chosen the opposition in 1987 it would now be the largest party (SD 19.3.). Although the NCP lost even more and the resentful ‘red-ochre’ leaders Sorsa and Väyrynen had been replaced (making ‘red ochre’ a possibility again), the loss of the number one status to the Centre ‘almost automatically’ led the party into opposition (SDP 1, SDP 2).

The whole party community (chairman, party secretary, party office, party paper, council chair and members) was publicly more or less clearly for the opposition. Paasio refrained from making clear public statements and travelled to Lapland to deliberate with the party secretary Ulpu Iivari, Sorsa and the leader of the Central Organization of Finnish Trade Unions Lauri Ihalainen. President Koivisto was in Lapland too at the time but apparently on his own. However, Paasio’s idea to steer the party automatically to the opposition (i.e. without even negotiating) crystallized on this trip and the president did not oppose (i.e. signaling that they contacted each other somehow). According to SDP 2 the whole leadership was behind Paasio’s proposal.193 The Centre chairman Esko Aho who

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193 According to Tuomioja (2014, 26–32) this was the leadership’s attempt to save itself.
had gained a chance to seek coalition first by winning the election\textsuperscript{194} proposed an informal meeting, but the SDP leadership refused and referred to the need to hear the party council first. (HS 18.-21.3.; SD 18.-21.3., 28.3.1991). Paasio openly supported democratic procedures over a strong individual leadership (SD 28.3.).

The SDP’s 1991 process was very short (only two official meetings) but it includes two significant observations. Firstly, signaling the ongoing EPO dominance the PPG was bypassed completely: it did not even get a chance to convene before the party was already in the opposition. Secondly, and more importantly, the NEC lost its central role to the council that Paasio ‘employed’ for building ‘as-democratic-as-possible’ backing for his proposal. As it was pointed out earlier, despite of its ‘clumsiness’ the party council is the ‘party congress between party congresses’ and therefore if the leader wants to say something profound, it takes his/hers initiatives there (SDP 6). If the mood in the council is right (according to a poll party membership was clearly opting for the direct opposition (SD 20.3.)), its formally strong standing can be used to bypass the more concentrated NEC.\textsuperscript{195} The NEC’s role that in the 1987 was challenged to some extent by the PPG continued to decrease in 1991 because the most important decision was taken to the council without NEC’s clear suggestion.

Paasio’s opening speech in the NEC build thrust on the fear of deepening organizational crisis: for ‘self-preservatory’ reasons’ the party needs to go to the opposition.\textsuperscript{196} At first Paasio wanted to refrain from making a public statement but after he received support from the central party figures (the party secretary, council chair and a few ministers) he brought the idea back in order to let the ‘council members to get ready for such an atmosphere, which most likely would be the end result’. A few MPs (including the forthcoming PPG leadership) refused the idea of opposition without negotiation – and also the ‘preparation’ of the council with the NEC statement. The meeting ended in somewhat confusing terms. Instead of

\textsuperscript{194} Since 1991, after the president was left outside of the process, the chair of the largest party has acted as the informateur, the formateur and, later, the prime minister. Thus, it soon became customary to talk about the ‘prime minister elections’ (Anttila 2006). This has increased the party leaders’ prestige and power considerably.

\textsuperscript{195} Perhaps for this reason the leadership passed the council’s meeting in the beginning of the 1987 process: the ‘blue-red’ was so unpopular amongst activists that the council could have overturned the leadership’s plan.

\textsuperscript{196} In the meetings the responsibility for the loss did not fall on the party leader, it fell on the whole party that took part in the 1987 decisions. As a party veteran Matti Puhakka stated (council 24.3.): ‘We are all partly responsible for the result and the policy that has been exercised. We decided to join Holkeri’s coalition almost unanimously, albeit after a long deliberation, and therefore responsibility is for us to share’. 
presenting an explicit, well-thought statement Paasio concluded that the party did not receive enough support to push its objectives in the government. According to the minute this was then ‘confirmed’. (SDP NEC minutes 21.3.1991). The transcript shows clearly that Paasio’s view was not unanimously supported. However, according to the newspapers the NEC unanimously supported the opposition (HS 22.3.; SD 22.3.). According to SDP 2 the NEC was not unanimous and that ‘backing’ had to be built in the council.

Paasio repeated his proposal in the council and it was generally greeted with agreement. The overall line of thought contoured the idea of the field organization’s primacy: 1) in 1987 the field was neglected and hence 2) the 1991 election was lost. 3) It must now be pleased 4) in order to win the next election. The leadership’s proposal to enter the opposition voluntarily was accepted unanimously. (SDP council minutes 24.3.1991). This was not a surprise considering the strong opposition atmosphere before the meeting (Tuomioja 2014, 26–32). According to SDP 2 Paasio had a strong ‘gut feeling’ about the council’s mood, which he ‘employed’: ‘I’m not sure at all that the NEC would have made such a decision’.

Reflecting on the party’s traditional ethos the PPG was completely bypassed. After the council meeting a few MPs (Erkki Tuomioja and future chair Paavo Lipponen) strongly criticized the leadership for this (HS 25.3.) but its meeting at large did not deny the legitimacy of the procedure. The PPG chairs (old and new) took the EPO’s primacy as self-evident. Paasio himself admitted that bypassing the PPG was a minor ‘blemish’ but he defended his actions by pointing out that the conclusion was reached following party’s rules. Even the PPG’s most vocal critic MP Liisa Jaakonsaari confirmed the EPO’s primacy in the party’s ‘marching order’. (SDP PPG minutes 3.4.1991). The PPG went to meet president Koivisto (as the protocol demanded) but it could not do anything about party’s decision (Tuomioja 2014, 26–32).

While the EPO was clearly stronger in the 1991 process it seems possible that the developments during the process contributed to its weakening in the long term. The PPG’s strengthening in the 1987 process and the submission of the opposition call to council in 1991 might have operated as the catalysts for a larger transformation in the SDP’s intra-party power balance. Namely, to the diminution of the NEC that has continued until these days (see below). While the NEC’s power has rested on a formal basis, much of it (especially in relation to the PPG) has been based on a mutually recognized, perceived importance. When such a position gets violated (like in the 1987 and 1991 processes) its somewhat ‘artificial’
character becomes visible, making future deviations easier as well. The SDP’s party council is a good example. According to SDP 2 its power has diminished over time partly because the delegation of its powers in government question (a question of highest priority) to the NEC became eventually ‘an automat’ and this begun to undermine its status is lesser matter too. During Paavo Lipponen’s term (1993–2005) the NEC stopped voting and the method where the chairman ‘draws the discussion together’ (i.e. makes conclusions) was consolidated (SDP 7). In the 2000’s the NEC ceased to be a place for party’s ‘heavyweights’ (SDP 1).

6.3.2 The NCP’s 1991 government negotiation process: the first signs of a ‘super dominant’ leadership

The NCP lost 140 000 votes and 14 seats (Official statistics of Finland) – and this was not reflected in their internal process at all. While the SDP’s process and decisions strongly reflected their identity as a vast membership organization, the NCP’s internal discussions reflected the idea that the NCP is, first and foremost, a leader-centric electoral party. Ilkka Suominen had promised to resign if the NCP ends up in the opposition (HS 19.3.). Right after the elections the leadership set up an informal meeting with the Centre’s Aho to accept his claim to the speaker’s position (HS 19.-20.3.1991). The EPO and the PPG leaderships had also decided to seek a place in the government, ‘as if they were authorized by the NEC and the PPG’ (NCP council minutes 10.4.1991). The joint leadership organ’s mandate leaned onto its wide representation (NCP 2). As the PPG continued with its old leadership it too was able to participate from the beginning. As it was already pointed out, when the leadership is wide and unified it is very hard to oppose – even from the PPG. The NCP’s 1991 process is another good example of this.

The NEC’s role was again somewhat hard to assess but it appears that at least it had not strengthened from the 1980’s. The party’s massive loss did not show in the meeting at all (HS 21.3.) but instead it put out a statement that declared the NCP’s readiness to negotiate (NCP NEC minutes 20.3.1991). As was just pointed out, the joint leadership had already made this clear to Aho (NCP council minutes 10.4.1991). All outtakes from the media concern Suominen’s vision (NP 22.3.; HS 22.3.), signaling too that the NEC mainly signed his proposals. While both NCP 2

197 It will be showed below that in SDP too EPO and PPG leaderships begun to get closer in early 1990’s under the auspices of informal joint leadership organ that has come to be known as the ‘presidium’.
and NCP 3 claim that Suominen was the last NCP leader who understood the importance of the party apparatus and in his time the NEC was still a place for political discussions, neither claim that it was a similar operative decision-maker as the SDP’s executive committee. During the process it convened after decisions had been made. Aside from the decision to negotiate that the joint leadership had done already the the NEC ‘accepted’ Suominen’s base proposal when the SDP had already chose opposition (NCP NEC minutes 8.4.). Similarly, when the NEC gave its ‘blessing’ to the NG’s actions they had already been blessed in the highest decision-making organ, the PPG’s and the council’s joint meeting (NCP NEC minutes 18.4.; NCP council minutes 10.4.1991), and although it met first to discuss ministerial names it only discussed them (NCP NEC minutes 25.4.) while the PPG and the joint meeting made the decisions. Usually the NEC meetings lasted for about an hour (for comparison, the SDP’s only NEC meeting in 1991 lasted for over 4 hours, HS 22.3.; SD 22.3.). While neither of these observations exhaustively excludes the possibility that the NEC’s involvement was important, it seems unlikely.

The PPG’s role was stronger but in the big picture rather thin too. Its permission to enter the negotiation was not asked but it forcefully demanded that policies need to be planned within its premises (compare to SDP) and a party may enter the government only with a concrete and strict program (NCP PPG minutes 3.-4.4.1991). According to NCP 2 a well-prepared 160 page base paper existed before the elections and this time party also enjoyed the benefits of governing position, which provides insight to the ‘inside’. On 9.4. the PPG engaged in a long policy discussion (over three hours and 100 comments; for comparison, the next day’s joint meeting had 40 comments) (NCP PPG minutes 9.4.1991; NCP council minutes 10.4.1991). In the meeting held on 11.4. when it had become certain that the NCP will negotiate with the Centre Party, MPs Kimmo Sasi and Ben Zyskowicz successfully claimed the PPG’s committee groups a possibility to scrutinize party’s objectives\(^1\) (NCP PPG minutes 11.4.1991). It should be noted though that while much time was spent with the objectives the PPG mainly advised the NG; it did not make binding decisions – like the SDP’s NEC in the 1980’s – nor seriously interfered with the NG’s work. As it is often repeated in the interviews, the NCP’s leadership’s ‘leash’ is very long.

This could be seen in the in council too, whose role was confined to the joint meetings. Its permission to negotiate was not asked, but the NG took advices on

\(^1\) Later it became customary more generally to involve parliamentary committee groups more firmly to the process, increasing PPG’s presence significantly.
the party’s political ‘spearheads’ that were used in writing answers to Aho. The meeting also approved a loose list of the party’s objectives. (NCP council minutes 10.4.1991). The party’s answers were not publicized so it remains unknown how much the NG included the joint meeting’s views in them. According to the newspapers (HS 11.4.) the list of objectives was a ‘consolation prize’ as the meeting was not allowed to touch the actual answers. It seems, thus, that again the NG received a more or less open mandate to define the party’s policies.

In the end of the process when the question turned to ministerial nominations the PPG activated. Proceedings reflect the tensions between the party and the PPG, which continued to exist until the mid-1990’s (see below). On 17.4. the PPG demanded that all ministers should hail from its ranks (NCP PPG minutes 17.4.1991) (as they eventually did). In its final meeting the NEC approved the NG’s proposal concerning the procedure to select ministers: 1) the NG proposes a list, 2) the NEC and the PPG process it, 3) the joint meeting (council and PPG) decides, but if it cannot find an agreement 4) the issue is settled in the PPG’s and the NEC’s joint meeting. (NCP NEC minutes 25.4.1991). The procedure caused serious resistance in the PPG. MPs strongly objected the NEC’s role in the final phase (which Suominen strongly supported) and the meeting submitted the procedure to a vote. Suominen’s/ the NG’s proposal that the NEC had approved won (21-9). Unlike in the NEC the list of candidates was also put under vote: alternatives were proposed in the meeting but again the NG’s proposal won and it was put forth on the joint meeting’s agenda. (NCP PPG minutes 25.4.1991). The main lesson here is not that the PPG lost to chairman Suominen. The main point is that the PPG could have changed the procedure and more importantly the list of candidates if it had wanted to. It still had the final say although the say supported the chairman this time. This and the PPG’s deep involvement in the policy process suggest that the parliamentary sphere was still stronger.

Somewhat surprisingly the leadership encountered some criticism in the final joint meeting and was forced to approve a monitoring mechanism for the party’s policies in the government. The list of ministerial candidates went under vote too, but the leadership’s proposition won. (NCP council minutes 25.4.1991). Although according to NCP 2 the council’s power was purely formal, it could nonetheless raise the issue (although the discussion again mainly circulated around regional worries). However, in case the joint meeting had managed to overturn the proposal (as the PPG (40 members) had already accepted it this would have required a

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199 According to Suominen’s successor Pertti Salolainen Suominen ran the negotiations and selected the ministerial group (Yli-Huttula 2006, 75).
significant majority in the 60 member council) the procedure that the NEC and the PPG approved would have transferred the final decision to their joint meeting – where the PPG of course had a clear majority.

The NCP’s 1991 process begun to reflect the power system that consolidated in the mid-1990’s: a strong and unified joint leadership (PPG and EPO) dominates, the PPG takes part actively but without making many crucial decisions and the EPO organs are mainly spectators. The PPG’s role in 1991 was smaller than in 1987 – albeit the process did not include equally significant decisions either. When decisions were needed the PPG took its role (as in the case of the ministerial candidates). Its demand to include the committee groups to policy preparation proved significant in the long run: nowadays it is a standard procedure to commit the MPs to the policy process. As a consequence, however, the PPG’s independent power seems to have decreased and in this sense development in the SDP and the NCP is very similar: old powerhouses have lost power to the leaderships that are wider, more coherent and operative. The idea of serious intra-party struggles has lost some of its meaning. ‘Presidentialized’ dynamic has emerged.

6.3.3 The Greens’ 1991 government negotiation process: a total diffusion of power

The Greens won 6 seats in the 1991 parliamentary elections, finishing with a total of 10 seats (Official statistics of Finland). For the first time in the party’s history they had a real opportunity to participate in governmental work. In 1991 the Greens formal organization included three decision-making bodies that all participated in the process. Aside with the PPG, the EPO participated with a ‘15 to 30-member’ party council – which was formally the executive – and its ‘executive’, the working committee, which was originally conceived as the council’s stooge but which had recently begun to make independent decisions as well (Greens annual reports 1989–1991). However, as GREEN 2 reminded, it was still only a working committee, which always had to get approval from the council. Formally, decisions were to be made in the council’s and the PPG’s joint meeting where all participants had one vote. To this date the council has always had a significant majority and thus it has been able to walk over the PPG. However, the Greens have also strongly defended the MPs autonomy, which is still stated in their statutes too (Greens PPG rules 2013). As GREEN 1 pointed out, ‘the official stand is decided in the party congress [and the party council]’, ‘the PPG either supports it or not’, the MPs cannot be suspended. GREEN 4 confirmed that the Green community
has never accepted the idea that the EPO could direct the PPG’s work. Thus, ‘on paper’ the Greens power system was markedly diffused. The same applied to the practices too.

The party leader’s individual role in the Greens in the early 1990’s was clearly less pronounced. Chair Heidi Hautala did not stand out from the group and if she voiced out opinions they usually lost. Before the elections she declared that the Greens should not negotiate with ‘less than 10 MPs’ (HS 14.3.) and when the party won 10 seats she maintained that it is too few for a governing party (HS 18.3.). On the next day the council decided to negotiate (Green council minutes 19.3.1991). The party secretary Pekka Sauri was more visible. This likely related to the ‘last remnant from the fundamentalist times’, the principle that the party chair could not be an MP. Hautala got elected in 1991 and Sauri took over the leader’s post in May 1991 (Annual report 1991). While it remains uncertain if Sauri was leading the negotiation as an ‘upfront chair’ (this strikes odd against the Green’s party culture) neither was he nearly as dominant as the old parties’ leaders. As GREEN 1 stated in relation to the Greens deliberative style of politics, the difference compared to the old parties is that ‘the party chair cannot command’.

In the 1991 process the party council was responsible for all crucial decisions and alignments. Already before the elections it lined most major issues and set the initial NG (the party chair, the party secretary and the PPG chair) (Greens council minutes 13.1.). During the election week the Greens revealed their sine qua non which were derived from Hautala’s ‘shadow cabinet’s’ program (HS 14.3.). It was written by the party council’s working group (Greens annual report 1990) and later used as a base the for party’s policy objectives (VL 21.3.). The PPG’s and the council’s joint meeting convened right after elections. It added few objectives to the program and confirmed that it will work as the NG’s initial list of objectives. The meeting also changed the NG’s composition. The PPG wanted an extra representative to even out the distribution. After it was granted the council realized that chair Hautala was now an MP too and the council went on to increase its representation. It was also decided that the working committee and a few EPO workers should assist the NG. (Greens council minutes 19.3.1991, VL 21.3., NG’s 2nd report for the council 13.4.1991). With clear majority the meeting decided to negotiate (GREEN 2). In comparative terms this EPO-dominated meeting contributed a lot: it 1) convened first, 2) decided to negotiate (against the party leaders will) and it also 3) set the party’s policy objectives. Highlighting the EPO’s power, the council secured a vast majority in the ‘enlarged’ NG as the whole ‘NEC’ (working committee) participated in it too.
After the NG and its political guidelines were set, it received a wide autonomy to crystallize the party’s policies and to negotiate with others. However, compared to other NG’s the Greens’ ‘enlarged NG’ was a wide organ. The minutes indicate that the working committee (i.e. the Greens’ NEC) was ‘the venue’ and many MPs attended these meetings too. Therefore, the NG consisted of its designated members, the ‘NEC’ (i.e. working committee) and the PPG – all significant players were inside. According to GREEN 2 no friction between the PPG and the EPO surfaced. This meeting handled all actual negotiations and used considerable power to frame policies and other variables. It formed smaller groups to clarify the party’s objectives (Greens working committee minutes 27.3.), to craft answers to the president (Greens working committee minutes 5.4.1991) and Aho (HS 10.4.), and the group also clarified the party’s sine qua non (Greens working committee minutes 12.4.1991; NG’s 2nd report for council 13.4.1991). However, while the NG’s operative capacity was rather wide (i.e. it did not have to get separate approvals for all its decisions) the council kept a close eye on its doings and reviewed its results against the objectives it had set. In its first meeting the working committee ordered Sauri to write daily reports for the council (Greens working committee minutes 27.3.1991, GREEN 2). On his first report Sauri underlined that the NG operates only as long as the council continues its mandate (NG’s 1st report for the council 2.4.1991). Thus, the leadership’s autonomy operated under strict transparency and an effective ‘killswitch’ provided incentives to act accordingly.

Soon the joint meeting gathered to review reformulated sine qua non and decide how to proceed. Commencing in the middle of the process clearly separated the Greens ‘highest decisive organ’ from old parties’ highest organs. The council had a 29-10 majority so it could override the NG’s proposal and the PPG’s opinions easily. Sauri underlined that the continuation of the Greens process boils down to energy policies, which the council now had to review (NG’s 2nd report for council 13.4.1991). A four hour long meeting decided to continue the NG’s mandate but it could not reach a binding conclusion on the sine qua non, leaving the NG a more or less ‘blank cheque’ (Greens council minutes 13.4.1991; HS 14.4.; VL 18.4.). According to GREEN 2 the council was supposed to be the executive but with 35 members it was often impossible – especially when it tried to reach

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200 As the PPG minutes were not available its independent role is impossible to establish.

201 As this kind of intervention severely undermines the NG’s autonomy, old parties have not held similar meetings. For example in the 1987 SDP leadership did not arrange a council meeting in the beginning of the process – like in 1983 – because the opposition mood in the party was much stronger. In general, the party leaders – who create party meeting’s agendas – refrain from taking anything there that could be overturned. The Greens are different.
unanimous decisions. The NG used council’s advices to craft the final proposal to Aho (NG’s/NEC’s 3rd report for council 20.4.1991). The Greens first government negotiations ended on the next day – to the party’s sine qua non on energy policy (HS 16.4.). Although the NG could have struck a deal with Aho with the mandate it got from the joint meeting, the new bargain too would still had to have passed the joint meeting which agreed on the policy ‘very unanimously’ in the previous meeting (VL 18.4.). ‘If we had abandoned it [the party’s line in energy policy], the council would not have accepted us entering the government … I’m certain that our negotiators would not have been able to overturn the council…’ (GREEN 2).

Although the Greens’ ‘leap from a confusing people’s movement into a potential government partner was extremely fast’ (GREEN 2) in 1991 their organizational roles, boundaries and procedures were clearly ‘under construction’. Still, they already reflected the Greens trademark characteristics: a *wide diffusion of power mixed with an unorthodox openness and transparency, and spontaneity*. Everyone had some power. The working committee was not a similar type of an executive as in the SDP; it was appointed to its task and heavily monitored by the council. Still, its position in the middle of the ‘enlarged NG’ empowered it to act as a leadership forum, which facilitated policy work. Although the PPG did not seem to have an independent role, the MPs (especially Pekka Haavisto and Erkki Pulliainen) played important roles in crafting the party’s answers and policy lines as a part of the the NG and MPs more generally participated widely in the working committee’s meetings. These organs provided the input to the party’s policy process, *but the decision-making role was clearly reserved for the joint meeting, which the party council dominated*. Three factors made its role special: 1) instead of just blessing the final result way after the ‘point of no return’ had passed it convened in critical junctures that could have altered the trajectory of the process; 2) instead of serving as a forum for regional worries it was confronted with concrete proposals to which 3) it was expected to give unambiguous answers instead of mere ‘advice’.

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202 This conclusion is of course to some extent conditioned by the fact that the PPG minutes were not available. However, neither the interviewees nor the press material mentioned the PPG’s independent involvement.
6.4 The mid-1990’s: an economic crisis and a rapid reach towards the West

Two events that were at least partly caused by the collapse of the Soviet Union enhanced the ongoing development towards more leader-centric party practices in the mid-1990’s: the major economic crisis and the deepening European integration. Although almost all countries experienced economical recess in the early 1990’s, Finland’s great depression was exceptionally strong (Kiander 2002, 47). In the late 1980’s the Finnish public economy was in an excellent shape: major surpluses coincided with only 10 % gross debt/GDP ratio and banks enjoyed the trust of foreign debtors. Exceptionally good growth built on structural reforms that were made in the late 1980’s in order to get closer to the West after the Soviet Union had begun to show weakness. Finland moved rapidly from Kekkonen’s stable, protectionist and corporatist model to the free market economy. Internationalized business, tightened competition and cheap credits soon begun to overheat the system. When the Soviet Union suddenly collapsed, Finland’s export-oriented gross product that was highly dependent on Eastern trade decreased rapidly and coincidentally unemployment costs exploded. As the banks begun to lose their credibility interests went up. The government was heavily committed to Markka’s fixed rate and fought against devaluing it. When they finally had to devalue in November 1991 no lasting effect followed: interests begun to rise again in the spring of 1992. Aho’s government executed a heavy cut program, which was made possible by the removal of the qualified majority rules in 1992. Markka was left floating in August 1992 and in 1993 it begun to strengthen. Saving packages continued until 1994 and only in 1995 Finland begun to get back up.203 (Kiander & Vartia 1998, 121–129, 146–149, 276–278, 313–317.)

In general the internationalizing economy narrowed the capacity of politics in the 1980’s and the 1990’s and pushed the parties away from a sectorally-oriented interest aggregation towards a more rationalized, general-level policy planning that transformed the government program into a genuine societal ‘work plan’ (Nousiainen 2006, 304–305). It has also been suggested that the 1990’s economic hardship increased the political leaders’ leverage by emphasizing inevitability and lack of options. According to Kiander and Vartia (1998, 146–149) ‘[G]eneral

203 The great depression has been explained with a coincidence of bad luck, bad banking and bad policy (Honkapohja & Koskela 1999). According to Kiander (2002, 55–57) external factors – collapse of the Soviet trade and a sudden raise in international interests – have been overestimated and that the crisis was mostly caused by bad economic policies, more specifically, overvaluing Markka and the fixed rate.
pessimism created crisis awareness, which made it possible to push through cuts and tax raises that were previously considered impossible. The media forwarded the message efficiently’. Blomberg et al. (2002, 9–13) pointed out that the 1990’s depression ‘received its meaning’ in the intersection of emerging globalization, the end of the Cold War, the deepening European integration and the ‘death of a welfare state’-discourse, giving politicians strong grounds to argue that old practices did not work anymore. As Kettunen (2002, 35) has stated too, the depression ‘created extra qualifications for a rhetoric of national unity’: a ‘combination of external necessity and unconditional internal will to satisfy it’ was a very prominent theme in public discourse. Mickelsson (2007, 270) has suggested that the great depression might have been one of the reasons that increased the demand for authoritarian leadership in parties in the mid-1990’s.

Moreover, it has been suggested that the 1990’s economic turmoil transformed the style of political leadership altogether: an ideologically laden, sectorally oriented ‘party man’ was replaced with an impartial ‘manager’ who controlled the process from a non-partisan expert position, with a ‘voice of pure reason’. The partisan differences became almost undetectable. (Kantola 2002, 259–267.) Iiro Viinanen, the NCP’s notorious minister of finance in Aho’s government (1991–1995) who was responsible for the savings program described the overall situation in illuminating terms: ‘I felt and saw the situation in several discussions with bankers, creditors and raters. They followed the Finnish economy extremely carefully and that too whether the country will hold on to its promises or not. [...] The point [of harsh economic policies] was simply to keep trust in the eyes of our creditors and it was not the time for playing around and politicking...’ (Viinanen & Heiskanen 2014, 272). Besides that the process of choosing policies turned to expert evaluation, the agenda begun to more often emerge outside of the parties – and outside of the national borders too. The difference to the ‘second republic’s’ nationally oriented, closed and relatively stable order of things (Alasuutari 1996) begun to change quite dramatically. The change at least provided extra fuel for the ‘presidentializing’ tendencies within parties.

It has been argued that as the free markets have taken a more prominent role in the economy due to globalization, politics – especially in traditional national settings – has become less significant (Kantola 2002, 14, citing Kantola & Härkönen 1999 and Strange 1996). According to Kiander (2002, 67) the depression was largely considered as an externally induced phenomenon and politicians strongly emphasized the need to adapt to a global economy that, they considered, encased force-of-nature-like qualities. Kantola (2002, 259–267) has argued that at
the turn of the 1990’s the national, small and manageable economic and political system transformed into an international, complex and chaotic system that begun to require, instead of the struggle of political ideologies, ‘reason and economic skills’. Echoing these sentiments, the NCP leader Sauli Niinistö who took part in reforming the Finnish economy as a finance minister in Paavo Lipponen’s ‘rainbow coalitions’ during 1995–2003 stated that the fear of markets was directly connected to the country’s interest rate which determined its credibility; therefore, ‘all economic problems needed to find quick and determined solutions’. (Niinistö 2005, 44–45). Sustained, argued Kantola (2002, 316), this ethos leads to politics of continuing crisis where economic signals (interest, inflation and unemployment rates) keep the system constantly ‘on its toes’ – and legitimate authoritarian political measures.

The second major factor that pushed Finland deeper into a more complex, flux-like political reality in the 1990’s was its rapid induction to the European Union in the aftermath of the Soviet Union’s collapse. In the 1980’s close ties to it prevented Finland from seeking a membership in the European Community (EC). No party was promoting the membership openly. In the spring of 1990, Holkeri’s government stated that the EC membership should be an openly discussed topic and only a few months later Finland sought after EEA (European Economic Area) membership. During 1991 the SDP, the NCP and the SPP (Swedish People’s Party) begun to support the EC membership openly. When the Soviet Union collapsed and Sweden made a motion to join the EC, Finland activated too. Negotiations begun in early 1993 and ended in March of 1994; the proposal to join the European Union was submitted to the advisory referendum in October 1994. ‘Yes’ side was a lot stronger: a clear majority of the political elite (government, the main opposition party (SDP), the previous and incumbent president, etc.), the mainstream media and major interest groups openly supported the membership. With 57 % majority the government received a mandate to proceed. (Raunio & Wiberg 2000, 12–13). On November 1994 Eduskunta approved Finland’s membership with a clear majority (152-45) (Raunio & Wiberg 2001, 11).

The EU membership has been said to bear consequences for Finnish politics on three levels. It affected 1) Finland’s sovereignty, 2) the Finnish political system’s internal power balance and 3) intra-party power balances. Like the internationalizing economy, political internationalization too set boundaries for the Finnish politicians’ leverage. Judicially, the national legislation – including constitutional issues – is inferior to the EU legislation and therefore the member’s decisions are heavily connected to the Union’s alignments, decreasing sovereignty.
An increasing amount of issues that used to be the national parliaments prerogatives are now decided on the EU level (Raunio 2008, 185–186).

The European integration also affected the functioning of the Finnish political system. Most importantly, it transferred a majority of president’s prerogatives in foreign affairs to the parliament and the government, providing an important nod towards the larger parliamentarization scheme (Raunio & Wiberg 1997, 52). Although some tensions that result from the constitutional division of foreign affairs between the president and the prime minister still exist, today the president’s role is ‘increasingly marginalized’ (Raunio 2011, 319). National parliaments are the main avenues for influence in the EU politics. (Raunio 2000, 43 citing Hix & Lord 1997). The integration strengthened parliamentarism also by increasing Eduskunta’s scrutinizing powers (Raunio & Wiberg 2000). In comparative terms Eduskunta is a powerful parliament and well incorporated into the EU process via vast information channels and monitoring possibilities (Jääskinen 2000, 129–132). Unlike in most parliaments Eduskunta’s standing committees – not the plenary session – prepare proposals that are taken to the EU institutions. Therefore, instead of leaving input to the PPG leaderships every MP is involved in the process. Eduskunta ‘has adopted an active role in the preparation of matters and it scrutinizes closely the implementation of its instructions’. Compared to many other countries it has taken its role very seriously – and it is also empowered to do so. (Raunio & Wiberg 1997, 48–49, 54–60, 65–67). Eduskunta’s strong role relates to the political elite’s will to bind all parties behind the project (Raunio & Wiberg 2001).

The European integration has also been said to affect parties’ internal workings. Unsurprisingly, prior to the 1990’s the European worries were not high on parties’ agenda – after the membership their importance grew significantly. (Raunio 2000, 43, 50–51.) In time the amount of resources that were directed to EU matters increased (Raunio 2008, 185–186). However, this has mainly favored the PPGs and especially the party leaders, not the EPOs. While Eduskunta’s monitoring work kept the PPGs on track, the EPO organs’ distance to the process remained wide (Raunio 2000, 51, 54–55). As party leaders gained seats at tables where ordinary party activists had no place their autonomy increased (Raunio 2002, 414). Since the 1990’s party leaders have dominated all central ministerial positions and therefore they have also dominated Finland’s EU policies (Raunio 2000, 43; Raunio & Wiberg 2001, 13, 17). In this position the party leaders receive information that does not circulate through party organs and they have to make quick decisions that
are not dealt with in party organs. Thus, the governmental party leaders’ power position is very strong. (Raunio 2008, 195–196). The 1990’s introduced to Finnish party politics several ‘environmental’ factors that heavily complicated the 1980’s nationalized, ‘slow’ and in relative terms easily manageable political reality. This sea change shows quite clearly in the mid-1990’s government formation processes that introduced the personalized, heavily leader-centric and straightforward negotiation style.

6.4.1 The Greens’ 1995 government negotiation process: the consolidation of organizational roles and the strengthening of the party leadership

Organizational development and consolidation continued in the Greens throughout the 1990’s. Party organs received new tasks and the division of labor clarified. The most notable changes were the creation of the NEC and the disbanding of the ‘no MP as a chair’ principle which were executed in 1993 – under chairman Sauri’s guidance. Strongly echoing the reasons for building up the party organization in the first place GREEN 3 pointed out that at first ‘[W]e didn’t want to create ... power cliques ... but then we realized that we had decided to run a steeplechase in a track where others were running without obstacles’. The NEC’s creation was essentially motivated by the councils’ incapability to govern efficiently (GREEN 2 and 3). A similar idea related to the abolition of the ‘no MP as a chair’ principle, which soon proved impossible: the ‘so-called leading of the party from outside of the parliament is completely impossible’ said GREEN 2. Besides that status-related issues emerged, being outside of the most important information loop left the ‘leader’ to the outskirts of decision-making. The ambition to make real effect in politics was increasing in the party community (GREEN 2).

The creation of the NEC altered the council’s and the leadership’s roles too. While the working committee received its mandate directly from the council and it was thoroughly monitored by it, already in 1994 the NEC established an independent role as ‘an organ that decides and executes the party’s everyday politics’ (Annual report 1994). The council, which still in 1993 acted as the party executive and convened almost monthly (Annual report 1993) adjusted to its new role as a ‘lining organ’ and met only four times in 1994 (Annual report 1994). The separation of these organs widened the leadership: council selected its leaders among its ranks and party leader who headed the NEC was selected directly in the party congress (Greens rules 1993). The party secretary begun to concentrate on organizational-associational matters while the chair took responsibility of the party’s ‘public profiling’ (Annual report 1993). This shows in the 1995 process:
chair Pekka Haavisto’s presence and importance greatly surpassed Heidi Hautala’s effort in 1991.


In actual practices, however, they continued to differ. The 1995 process is marked by interplay between three established party organs and an active leadership. Because of the Greens’ liberal ‘organizational habits’ their relative importance is hard to determine. The case is a good example of the Greens’ ‘naturally aspirated’ party culture where speech is free, organizational procedures transparent and all organs’ powers are recognized, and heavily intertwined. In terms of intra-organizational resistance this can be good or bad for the leadership. The party organs are definitely harder to ‘prepare’ and unexpected things that can jeopardize the leader’s plans might surface. On the other hand the lack of clear procedures and uncertainty about the organizational boundaries can enhance leadership autonomy, as recognized institutional veto points are harder to pinpoint. Still, however, the PPG’s and the council’s joint meeting was certainly one.

The beginning of the process was marked by the party leader’s strong initiative that was backed by the NEC’s mandate. This time around the council convened only after things were already in motion. Fueled by the victory in the 1992 municipal elections and adjacent penetration to the peripheral Finland (Annual report 1993) the Greens were the biggest frontrunner in the 1995 elections and the party was clearly aiming for government (VL 9.2.1995). According to GREEN 2 the general feeling was that ‘besserwissering’ now had to evolve into real political responsibility. The historical possibility for the first Green minister was widely recognized in the party community (GREEN 4). Weeks before the elections party chair Haavisto declared that the party wants to take part in a wide coalition (HS 6.3.). Preliminary policy objectives were crafted already in January (Green NEC minutes 25.1.1995). On 15.3.1995 the party released their ‘government program’ (VL 16.3., HS 16.3.), which was crafted by a ‘preparatory committee’ that was set by the EPO leadership (Green NEC minutes 6.3.1995). Although the council still retained full powers to decide how to proceed, it lost the initiative to the NEC. As agenda setting is one of the most crucial sources of intra-party power this change should be considered to be significant.
Instead of receiving the expected landslide victory the Greens lost a seat – chairman Haavisto dropped out from the Eduskunta. Showing strong personal leadership he still decided to take the party into negotiations (HS 20.3.) and the leadership (the party chair and the secretary) met the informateur, the SDP’s Paavo Lipponen, on 21.3. before any EPO organ convened (VL 23.3.). While this is not certain, it seems likely that the PPG gathered at this juncture (and the NEC participated in their meeting) (HS 22.3., Green NEC minutes 23.3.). According to GREEN 4 Lipponen’s active role and ‘Pekka’s lead’ led the PPG to quickly reach a consensus that the party should negotiate. Although Haavisto was an MP anymore, the decision to ‘normalize’ the Green chair’s role clearly showed in the initial stages of the process. Moreover, this stage reflected even more important general development. Along with the diminution of the presidents’ role in the government formation process a practice where the largest party’s chairman automatically assumed the formateur’s task consolidated in 1991. In Kekkonen’s era the president’s power over formateurs person and assignment was so strong that it was not even accurate to talk about formateurs in traditional a sense; rather, their choices reflected Kekkonen’s preferences (Karvonen 2014, 88). After the president was dropped out from the process and the largest party’s chair received an automatic right to try government formation first, the party leaders could independently start to seek coalitions right after the elections – and effectively bypass a significant part of the intra-party process. However, unlike in the NCP and the SDP where the ‘super-dominant’ leaders settled things more or less personally (see below) the Green leader still had to walk his ambition through various stages of intra-party decision-making. While the PPG’s and the NEC’s strong interplay made the process easier for him, the council was still waiting.

Continuing the practice that was already detected in 1991 the NEC, the PPG and this time also the actual chairman worked in tight tandem. Throughout the process the PPG and the NEC held joint meetings and motions circulated freely from one place to another. The NEC was present in the first PPG meeting and a majority of old and new MPs attended the first NEC meeting, which set the negotiation strategy after Haavisto had reported about his pow-wow with Lipponen. The meeting set the EPO’s NG members (the party leader, the party secretary and the council chair Satu Hassi) and declared that the NEC members may freely send policy proposals to the PPG’s general secretary who held the paper. (Green NEC minutes 23.3.1995). On 28.3. the PPG appointed its NG members and the NG continued to specify the party’s views on main policies. (VL 30.3.). After the NG received questions from Lipponen the PPG held a long
discussion to advise Haavisto who prepared draft answers for the NEC, which carefully scrutinized them and made significant alterations. The writing of the final version for the council’s approval was appointed to Haavisto. (Green NEC minutes 31.3.1995). As no signs of traditional ‘turf wars’ exist it is hard to determine who ‘dominated’ the process – if anyone. Participation seemed very liberal and all organs (including the party leader) clearly contributed to the end result. It seems likely that the process required all these players as they represented wider selectorates – bit like in the NCP. When a wide preparatory organ like the Greens ‘enlarged’ NG is unified it is very strong.

But strong was its counterweight too. Before the joint meeting Haavisto declared that the council decides whether the Greens negotiate or not and if they do the council should also provide clear political guidelines (i.e. an explicit reaction to the NG’s proposal) and a strong mandate to pursue them. (VL 30.3.). After reporting about the meeting with Lipponen and clarifying the Greens status in the negotiations Haavisto introduced two papers: 1) a wide policy paper for Lipponen and 2) a detailed policy paper for the NG’s guideline in the negotiations. The meeting engaged in a 6,5-hour long detailed point-by-point discussion and made ‘many corrections’ – including two sine qua nons. It accepted the NG’s request to negotiate. (Green council minutes 1.4.1995). According to GREEN 2 due to an ongoing realist/fundamentalist-division204 the council included very tough demands on the objective paper, including a demand for two ministers. The meeting continued on the next day. After 4 hours of discussion Haavisto delivered the Greens answers to Lipponen and after Lipponen assigned clarifying questions the meeting continued the discussion. The NG gathered council’s advises and encouraged the council members to send written ones as long as the proposal was drafted. (Greens council minutes 2.4.1995). For comparison: not a single party organ in the old parties convened at this juncture. The Greens council set a clear and concrete baseline where to compare the end result.

The decision phase too revealed features that have been typical in the Greens but not in the old parties. Open opposition, spontaneous voting and tolerance for polyphony give the meetings a genuinely ‘democratic feel’ and lower leadership autonomy, as its control over the proceedings becomes weaker. However, this time

204 Greens formative phase (roughly from mid-1980’s to mid-1990’s) was marked by a struggle between ‘realist’ and ‘fundamentalist’ factions. The former considered traditional political participation in parliament and government – which includes making compromises – as the only way to make meaningful environmentally friendly changes. ‘Fundamentalists’, on the other hand, leaned onto radicalism and non-conformity. By mid-1990’s ‘realists’ had taken the hold of PPG but some fundamental forces were still working inside the EPO (GREEN 4).
the decision to publicize the smaller organs’ positive approvals before the joint meeting reminisced of the SDP’s ‘onion method’ and lowered the ‘anarchy’ a bit. Reflecting on its strengthened status the PPG gave an independent verdict about the proposal before the joint meeting: 2 MPs opposed, 7 were for and the verdict was made public (HS 12.4.). This ignited a debate in the NEC: the leadership argued for a public announcement, some considered that it would limit the council’s autonomy. The meeting took a spontaneous vote (8 for, 1 against) and decided to make its stance public. However, the meeting underlined that it is not meant as a suggestion for the council. (Greens NEC minutes 12.4.1995).

The joint meeting, which again was numerically dominated by the party council members was critical on the proposal and took a vote too. The leadership was able to remain unified (several of its members took part in convincing the council) and the resistance melted away. The proposal to join Lipponen’s ‘rainbow coalition’ won by a clear margin (31-6). Unlike in the SDP no one demanded unanimity. The meeting also voted on the party’s ministerial candidate. The difference to the old parties was that council members could freely appoint candidates and interview them before the vote. Party chair Haavisto won (22 votes) MP Osmo Soininvaara (7 votes) and council chair Satu Hassi (6 votes). (Greens council minutes 12.4.1995). Both GREEN 3 and 4 underlined that the minister’s status in the Greens differs significantly from the old parties. Due to the MPs inherent autonomy the Green minister cannot order unanimity, but instead he/she has to share information with the PPG and convince it. The PPG might also affect the minister’s proposals. As the PPG or the party cannot force the MPs to conform the cohesion needs to be deliberated.

The combination of openness and transparency, overlapping responsibilities and peculiar spontaneity makes it very hard to determine which party organ – if any – was relatively stronger than the others. Compared to 1991 the NEC, the PPG and the party leader clearly strengthened and if intra-party power is considered as a zero-sum game then the council got weaker. Compared to 1991 the most significant change in its power was that it lost the initiative in the process. This opened the way for a unified leadership, which exercised considerable autonomy in crafting the party’s answers. ‘Presidentializing’ tendencies emerged in Greens, too. The leadership’s power rested firmly on the crossed hands of the PPG and the NEC. Due to the

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205 Osmo Soininvaara had accepted to join the race 75 minutes before the meeting.

206 The council also accepted a motion to monitor the party’s performance in the government and call out a meeting if it is not satisfied (Greens council minutes 12.4.1995). After 1995 the Greens have left the government twice.
former’s autonomous role and a lack of organizational ties it should be considered more important. Expect for the very beginning of the process the council convened again in all crucial junctures to approve and amend the NG’s proposals, signaling its heavy weight within the party penumbra. Although in formal terms the party organization had begun to look a lot like the old parties, the transparent and intertwined involvement of all organs, spontaneous votes and nominations made the Greens’ organizational culture at least look like the ‘hyper-democratic’ ideal it set out to pursue in the 1980’s.

6.4.2 The NCP’s 1995 government negotiation process: the consolidation of ‘super dominant’ leadership

For the first half of the 1990’s the NCP’s existence as a newfound government party was plagued by internal turmoil. More specifically, the PPG and the party office ‘did not have a unified line’, they ‘fought over who runs the party’ (NCP 2). According to NCP 3 the party office fought against the PPG that was consolidating its power. Pertti Salolainen finally managed to succeed Ilkka Suominen in the summer of 1991. Suominen had left out of Aho’s government and the party’s strong man PPG chair Iiro Viinanen had taken over the heaviest post, the ministry of finance. Salolainen who assumed the position of the minister of foreign trade was not able to unify the party. He was not a ‘party man’ like Suominen and his hold over the central party remained weak and he was not strong enough to tame the PPG either. According to NCP 3 his weakness helped the PPG to increase its power. But the PPG was not predominant either: it fought against Viinanen’s harsh cutbacks but Viinanen always persevered because he was strongly supported by Prime Minister Aho. Viinanen for example was able to dismiss the NCP’s PPG chair Kimmo Sasi who he did not trust. Viinanen received support from the party and he was constantly enticed to challenge Salolainen. The party office was led by party secretary Pekka Kivelä, an avid supporter of the EPO power and a strong personality who often joined forces with Viinanen. (NCP 2,3 & 5, Viinanen & Heiskanen 2014, Yli-Huttula 2006, 62–67, 84, Niinistö 2005, 12–15).

According to NCP 2 the NCP’s inherent paradox is that while the party swears on the name of individualism it gets lost without a strong ‘CEO’. Apparently this is what happened during Salolainen’s term and later under Ville Itälä’s leadership (see

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207 According to Sauli Niinistö (2005, 12) who succeeded Salolainen in 1994 ‘in NCP things were done exactly as Viinanen said’.
below). According to Yli-Huttula (2006, 84) ‘The NCP does not encase a strong party culture or associational democracy, which easily enables the command of a super-dominant leader’ (Yli-Huttula 2006, 84). This is what happened next when the ‘power void’ begun to fill up. After a tumultuous path in Aho’s government, two electoral losses (the municipal elections in 1992 and the presidential elections 1994) and failed attempts to suppress the NCP’s internal conflicts Pertti Salolainen resigned. The 1994’s additional party congress chose Sauli Niinistö to replace him. (HS 5.4.1995).

The party office supported Niinistö because it did not want to ‘surrender policy formulation strictly to the PPG and evolve into a mere electoral organization’. (HS 5.4.1995). However, Niinistö was not particularly interested in the EPO and he quietly supported the PPG. Most importantly, Niinistö struck a deal with PPG chair Ben Zyskowicz and their mutually reinforcing alliance gave Niinistö a strong hold over the PPG too. (NCP 2, NCP 5.) After Niinistö’s ascendancy the PPG’s several factions ‘waned stupefyingly quickly’ and he also took hold over the ministerial group in a sovereign manner (Yli-Huttula 2006, 13, 78, 85–86, 106). Niinistö was a strong personal leader who put enough counterweight to the PPG but also appreciated it and kept it along. The party office and the EPO weakened when Pekka Kivelä was replaced by Maija Perho in 1995. The resources and mechanisms that Sasi and Zyskowicz ‘hoarded’ in the early 1990’s were formalized in Niinistö’s term. (NCP 3.) Until Ville Itälä succeeded Niinistö in 2001 the NCP’s internal life was characterized by a lack of visible internal opposition (Yli-Huttula 2006). When Niinistö decided to step down he considered that he had become too strong and the party had begun to suffer (Niinistö 2005, 214). Interestingly no one wished to replace him; he personally had to come up with a successor (Yli-Huttula 2006). Niinistö, the current president of Finland, was arguably one of the most powerful party leaders during the research period – if not the most powerful.

Well before elections Niinistö declared that he will take the party to the government if it receives enough support. On the same occasion he also explained quite specifically what the party wants. (NP 3.3.) When the elections got closer Niinistö’s plan clarified: the NCP wanted to build another ‘blue-red’ government and the negotiations should be fast because the global markets react very easily (HS 14.3.).

The process shows that internationalization and the country’s poor economic situation build legitimacy to ‘super-dominant’ party leadership, which in both old parties undermined the relevance of their traditional power units. Besides

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208 Niinistö and Zyskowicz met Lipponen long before the elections to make plans for a ‘rainbow coalition’. The election result consolidated the plan. (Niinistö 2005, 24–25).
that the NEC’s and the councils’ roles continued to be minor in the NCP, this time the PPG too clearly had a spectator’s role.

The SDP won back the votes it had lost in the two previous elections and gained 63 seats against the Centre’s 44 (-9 seats) and the NCP’s 39 (-1 seat) (Official statistics of Finland). After a very tough government term the NCP’s minor loss was considered a ‘defence victory’ 209 Niinistö announced right away that the NCP is still seeking a place in the government. He defined the party’s main objectives and Niinistö and Zyskowicz quickly accepted the SDP’s Paavo Lipponen’s ascension to the formateurs position. The NCP’s representatives (including Zyskowicz) met Lipponen before any party organs convened. (HS 20.3-23.3., SD 23.3.). The NCP’s time in Aho’s government had worsened the NCP’s and the Centre’s relationship for many years. After he was selected as NCP’s chair Niinistö did not even seek minister’s position in the government. In many ways the SDP was a natural partner for the NCP – in the PPG’s opinion too. (NCP 3.)

The NEC’s role had weakened already on Salolainen’s term because he ‘did not know what to do with it’ but it got even weaker when Niinistö took the lead (NCP 2). The first NEC meeting was amended with a massive group of people: the NEC members were accompanied by district chairs and districts’ executive directors, the PPG leadership and the ministerial group, the party office officials and the women’s union’s district secretaries, totaling in 78 people. According to NCP 2 the emergence of this ‘trail’ ate the NEC’s independent relevance. It was now far from a sufficiently compact unit, capable of operative leadership. The meeting accepted a statement that repeated Niinistö’s publicly voiced opinions. (NCP NEC minutes 23.3.1995.) According to NCP 2 Niinistö did not want to hear other opinions so he begun to tell his own to the NEC, turning it into a listening forum. Yli-Huttula (2006, 85–86, 106) confirms that in Niinistö’s term ‘the NEC was completely powerless’. Niinistö joked about leading meetings without a voice – with facial gestures, looks and by pointing fingers – and often he went for a cigarette during a discussion that took place after his speech. He personally admitted having a dictator-like style and he despised the idea that he should be representing the party members. Already in next day’s paper Niinistö clarified his demands with a lot more specific information and he also declared that in light of them the SDP seems to be the better partner (HS 24.3.). When the NEC convened for the next time, Lipponen’s questions were already answered. The ‘point of no return’ was far away.

209 This ambiguous idiom means that the party’s result was better than it was generally expected. It is generally used to convince own people or potential coalition partners.
In the 1995 process the PPG was not much stronger. When it convened to select its chairs – which had become a valuable place as the party’s ministers were often derived from there (HS 24.3.) – the PPG did not interfere with Niinistö’s plan significantly. In all but one placement (PPG’s 2nd deputy chair) Niinistö’s and Zyskowicz’s proposals were accepted unanimously. (NCP PPG minutes 27.3.1995). The ministerial nominations that have slowly become chairs’ prerogatives (see also Paloheimo 2005) provide the leader a very powerful tool for controlling the ‘inner circle’ and the PPG. No one dares to fight back because no one wants to jeopardize his/hers career. (Yli-Huttula 2006, 85.) Whether to negotiate or not was not an issue at all (NCP PPG minutes 27.3.1995) – the majority of the group was clearly in favor of negotiations (Viinanen & Heiskanen 2014, 258). Overall, this ceased to be a relevant question after the 1980’s when the political system ‘governmentalized’. In 1992, when the qualified majority rules and the minority’s rights to postpone legislation were disbanded, the opposition lost all of its blackmail potential (Nousiainen 2006, 293). As all of the parties begun to aim for government every time, one intervening step from the process waned away and decreased the party organs’ relevance.

The PPG called the committee groups to discuss about the party’s objectives (NPC PPG minutes 30.3.1995). On this date the leadership was already discussing ministerial posts and candidates (Viinanen & Heiskanen 2014, 259–260). When the PPG dealt Lipponen’s questions Niinistö received 10 random comments and answered by presenting his own ideas. They were not commented at all and the meeting did not make any decisions on the answers. (NCP PPG minutes 31.3.1995). The leadership crafted the party’s answers and sine qua non during the weekend (HS 1.4–3.4.) While no signs of the PPG’s historical power were visible here it would be wrong to conclude that the PPG had lost its power. When Ville Itälä tried to replace Ben Zyskowicz from the PPG chairs position the PPG walked over him, partly contributing to Itälä’s resignation later (Yli-Huttula 2006, 212–217). Thus, the PPG’s apparent weakness was mainly caused by Niinistö’s strength, which he partly derived from his ‘unholy alliance’ with Zyskowicz.

This time the PPG did not have a say before the NCP was already inducted in the negotiations. Lipponen publicized his plan earlier than he had planned (HS 4.4.) and the PPG’s 4.4. meeting that was planned to be held in the morning (NCP PPG minutes 31.3.1995) was postponed to late afternoon. In the meeting the leadership strongly defended its decisions and Niinistö – without asking anyone’s permission – inducted Iiro Viinanen to the NG. Viinanen’s involvement was considered important because ‘the markets’ responded positively to his presence.
The PPG agreed to support a negotiation that set strict terms for the NCP’s involvement. (NCP PPG minutes 4.4.1995). Although Zyskowicz tried to convince the PPG that it was playing an important role, the meeting gave an unlimited mandate to the NG and it did not comment on the governmental base or party’s sine qua non. During the rest of the process the PPG was the leadership’s main locus for committing (not the EPO organs) but it did not make any demands or decisions.

The decision round was also a mere formality. Before the decisive meetings the party paper made the expectations clear: ‘Sauli Niinistö who ran the NCP’s negotiations through with a sovereign touch would take his vision through [the party organs] without damage. Niinistö’s prestige within the party community is very strong because of the sufficient elections result and – at least to this point – a successful negotiating strategy’ (NP 7.4.). The NEC meeting, which this time included only 41 participants approved Niinistö’s list (as it was called in the NP 14.4.) unanimously and Niinistö promised to circulate the ministerial posts. (NCP NEC minutes 12.4.). Later Niinistö rewarded his active supporters MPs Kari Häkämies, Kimmo Sasi and Matti Aura with minister’s posts. After 5 comments the proposal was accepted in the PPG too (NCP PPG minutes 12.4.1995) and the council’s and the PPG’s joint meeting was even quieter: only after 8 comments (from 93 participants) the proposal received a unanimous approval (NCP council minutes 12.4.1995). Tellingly the party paper did not mention the meeting at all (NP 14.4.).

From the mid-1990’s until the early 2000’s the NCP was dominated by the inner circle that built around chairman Niinistö and PPG chair Zyskowicz. Although such openly autocratic structure might at first seem strange in a party that since the 1980’s had sworn on the name of liberal individualism (Mickelsson 1999), it makes sense if two factors are considered. First, the emergence of a super dominant leadership was quite probably an answer to the early 1990’s internal turmoil, which hurt the movement that after a very long opposition term had got back the taste of governing. Secondly, this seems to be what the party community actually needs. NCP 2 (and NCP 4 and 5) confirmed that when the NCP leader is strong and has a solid vision, he enjoys ‘a vast mandate to gather papers, backgrounds, people, political lines…’. ‘Sauli was always an iron fist […] he knew where to go and the gang followed’. Pertti Salolainen did not have these qualities, the party did poorly, and he was overthrown quickly. However, almost equally important was the lack of competing power centers and Zyskowicz’s role as only through him was Niinistö able to control the PPG too. According to NCP 3 this ‘two-headed leadership’
strengthened the PPG – and Niinistö’s reluctance towards the EPO weakened it. Although in 1995 the PPG did not make decisions, it was still clearly the main location for committing and via committee participation, the party’s policy work.

6.4.3 The SDP’s 1995 government negotiation process: another dominant leader

The SDP’s situation in the mid-1990’s reminded the NCP’s recent developments. After the interim leader Ulf Sundqvist who assumed the chairman’s duties in the wake of the 1991’s turmoil resigned only two years later, Paavo Lipponen took the SDP into his bear hug for the next 12 years. The SDP’s 1995 process is also best characterized by the party leader’s very strong role. As SDP 2 states: the deciding party organ in 1995 ‘was called Lipponen’. The process description shows that he made all decisions while the party organs mainly followed. Several contextual factors can explain Lipponen’s preponderance. Firstly, Lipponen’s long presence in the party community²¹⁰ helped him to understand how to commit it properly. Although Lipponen has sometimes been considered as a somewhat authoritarian figure, he cleverly considered all internal factions, for example in the ministerial nominations. Secondly, the economic crisis provided a good background by turning the party’s attention away from its internal problems. (SDP 3.) The third reason was his political leaning: as Finland’s export oriented economy bent due to collapse of the Soviet Union, Lipponen’s strong Euro leaning that opened new markets for Finland enhanced his position; he was ‘in the right place, at the right time’ (SDP 1). The leader-centrism was also strengthened by Lipponen’s and Niinistö’s strong interplay, which begun well before the elections (Niinistö 2005). As Viinanen and Heiskanen (2014, 265) wrote, ‘well in advance had Lipponen crafted a blueprint, which he executed in his stern style’. Overall, many interviewees considered the 1995 process as the starting point towards more leader-centric party politics in Finland.

The recovering party had entered a good winning streak – also strengthening Lipponen. It won in the 1992 municipal elections, the 1994 presidential elections and its view was supported in the EU referendum as well. The SDP was a clear front-runner in the 1995 polls and Lipponen declared well in advance that the SDP would only join a coalition that it leads (HS 3.3.). A strong sense of victory was shared in the wider party community as well (SDP council minutes 8.3.1995). The

²¹⁰ During his long party career Lipponen had worked in various party office tasks and as a secretary for various ministers. He had also held various trustee positions, for example in the party council and the NEC and he had lead Helsinki’s district organization as well.
SDP’s best result after the World Wars (63 seats) and a huge winning margin (the next party, the Centre, received 44 seats) (Official statistics of Finland) gave Lipponen a very strong mandate and following the tradition that was established in 1991 he received immediate hold of the informateurs/formateurs and the prime minister’s posts. According to NCP 4 the chairman of the winning party receives ‘an extra-mandate’ because (in lack of external force that the president used to be) the formateur is now responsible for the whole process. When prior to the 1990’s the president could freely set parties to the negotiation table in the 1990’s this prerogative was transferred to the chairman of the largest party. As will be shown, this decreased the importance of parties’ internal deliberations.

Before any organ convened Lipponen declared that the SDP will form the governments ‘backbone’ and he is ready to become the prime minister. He also aligned the central negotiating themes and started to meet other party leaders. The final contextual/external factor that strengthened Lipponen and the party leaderships more generally in 1995 was that due to the sensitivity towards the international economic situation negotiations were expected to proceed hastily. This was often underlined by Lipponen (he ‘does not want long and tiresome negotiations’) and amplified in the media’s responses: ‘No reason for procrastination exists … the goal of the negotiation should be a quick solution so no uncertainty as whether Finland’s large problems can be dealt according to electoral results will emerge’. (HS & SD 20.-23.3.). Haste is the enemy of democracy. If decisions need to emerge quickly, there is no time to deliberate in meetings.

The effective, straightforward leader-centric model was a clear departure from the 1980’s ‘slow style’ where motions were circulated through various meetings. According to SDP 3 this method emerged in 1995 to provide cohesion: ‘through them [party leaders] we wanted to hold ‘the package’ together’. According to memoirs the base for Lipponen’s 2nd government (1999) was settled on the phone: Lipponen called Niinistö who said yes; ‘like two old men mumbling something while meeting on a village road’ (Niinistö 2005, 148–149; Yli-Huttula 2006, 275). In 2003 the party leaders’ coordinating powers consolidated (SDP 3) and as 2011 cases show, nowadays more or less everything seems to be settled around small, specialized circles that are centered around the party leaders.

Compared to the 1980’s the largest intra-organizational power transition in the SDP touched the NEC, which continued the weakening trend that was already detected in 1987. It met only four times during the fast paced process and all major decisions were done past it. Lipponen’s straightforward leading style stood in clear contrast against
the previous leader’s more deliberative approaches. In a nutshell it consisted of: 1) a seemingly open personal deliberation about options that ended with a fairly unequivocal preference and 2) ‘drawing the discussion together’ by expressing a personal ‘interpretation’ of the (usually rather polyphonic) meeting. Often Lipponen decided not to conclude anything at all and instead left the decisions to the NG. According to SDP 7 this procedure – the NEC does not vote/decide/approve, the leader concludes – consolidated in Lipponen’s term and significantly decreased the NEC’s independent power.

The first meeting debated widely on the base issue but it ended in Lipponen’s bleak statement: ‘I will not conclude anything, I mean in the sense that some view is bindingly settled’. ‘The only analytical conclusion’ was that the ‘three large’ will not work.211 (SDP NEC minutes 23.3.1995). The second meeting continued with the base issue but again left it completely open. The meeting also touched the party’s policy objectives but no more they were dealt in a detailed manner or approved separately. Lipponen’s end statement clarified the new method: ‘the negotiators have been chosen, they weigh on these issues’ and when more information surfaces ‘it will be shared with the NEC and the PPG’. (SDP NEC minutes 30.3.). Like the PPG before, the NEC was now conceived as a receiver of information rather than the generator of it. In the media Lipponen underlined that the SDP will not decide which parties proceed to the negotiations, it’s formateur’s (i.e. his) task (HS 4.4.). On the next day the base of the coalition and the main policy objectives were settled (HS & SD 5.4.). In its third meeting (6.4.) the NEC discussed the ministerial portfolios, clearly realizing that the SDP’s posts might slip past it (portfolios were widely in the media, SD 6.4.). Again the meeting did not reach a conclusion, but Lipponen did: ‘I don’t want to conclude’ anything else that we need heavy portfolios, we have to make compromises and ‘today, we shouldn’t go into names’. (SDP NEC minutes 6.4.1995.) The NEC did not make decisions on the base, the policies, the portfolios or the ministerial candidates.

Another marked difference compared to the 1980’s was the PPG’s stronger presence: it convened more often and it received a lot of attention. Also, the PPG chair Antti Kalliomäki was a lot more visible than the party secretary Markku Hyvärinen, signaling a change in the ‘troika’s’ leaning. Several factors explain the PPG’s newfound role. First, the 1991 constitutional reform that submitted the government program under Eduskunta’s affirmative vote was now used for the

211 A careful reconstruction shows that already in his opening speech Lipponen mentioned the final base – and rest of the leadership agreed with him during the discussion. (SDP NEC minutes 23.3.1995).
first time. According to Murto (2014, 129) the program was not a mere ‘intragovernmental contract’ anymore; it also became ‘an issue between the government and the Eduskunta’. The general conception was that it bound the MPs hands in advance and increased the ministers’ powers (HS 24.3.). Second, the new PPG was very large, mainly composed of newcomers and it included a significant trade union faction (SD 21.3.). For the first time since the spring of 1966 the SDP had spent a term in the opposition, where the PPG generally has a more autonomous role. It was also generally known that the upcoming government had to make substantial cuts. In short: the large and fragile group that might have gained ‘self-confidence’ in the opposition was facing record-breaking public savings. The situation was acknowledged in the leadership. ‘The Ministerial group cannot just inform PPG anymore’, summarized the PPG chair Antti Kalliomäki in the first NEC meeting and was seconded by MP Jouni Backman who clarified that in order to make the link between the ministerial group and the PPG work the PPG needs to feel that it is ‘involved as a plenipotentiary actor’ (SDP NEC minutes 23.3.1995).

In the early 1990’s the ministerial network (that comprised of the ministerial group, the party office and the PPG) the PPG was considered as the least significant participant (Nousiainen 1992, 66). This does not mean, however, that the PPG developed into an ‘institutional threshold’. First of all, the PPG and the EPO leaderships were heavily amalgamated in the mid-1990’s. In the first PPG meeting the group chose incumbent chairs and the MP Backman to serve as the PPG’s members in the NG (SDP PPG minutes 27.3.1995). Backman and Kalliomäki were both NEC members as well and the other two (Tuomioja and Törnqvist) attended the NEC’s meetings regularly (SDP annual report 1995), following the April 1991 decision to allow the PPG’s deputy chairs into its meetings (Tuomioja 2014). The general narrative in the PPG’s meetings was that the leadership postponed all meaningful discussions to the point where they were no longer meaningful.  

212 Three important conjunctures relate to this development: 1) programs weight has increased considerably and thus 2) negotiations importance has increased too (Raunio & Wiberg 2014, 29). 3) On the other hand it appears that the group that prepares it has narrowed – at least in intra-party terms. Ministries (Murto 2014) and lobbies (SDP 1) role has apparently increased.

213 This issue was raised many times in the PPG’s and the NEC’s deciding joint meeting. For example MP Marjaana Koskinen complained: ‘I’ve been wondering about the group’s poor role. We have these general discussions but when negotiators negotiate, they do what they want to. We see the results, programs, bases and ministerial names from the media. The group’s power is minimal’. MP Lahtela also pointed out that the PPG has only discussed on a general level, it has never talked about cut programs. Tarja Halonen raised the same issue in the context of the policy papers: ‘Then we didn’t have the time or the resources to go through them. Now there’s no reason to go through
asked for concrete discussion, but only received the opportunity to voice out general concerns. (SDP PPG minutes 27.3.1995, 28.3.1995, 30.3.1995). Unlike the NEC the PPG did receive a chance to advise the NG before it crafted the party’s answers to the formateur (Lipponen). This was, however, just advice: when the MPs tried to insert sine qua nons, Kalliomäki quickly shot them down.214 (SDP PPG minutes 31.3.1995). As the NG did not make its answers public the PPG could not assess what the NG picked from its ‘advices’. When the next meeting took place Lipponen had already settled the coalitional base and the preliminary program issues. The leadership was able to dissuade a statement from the PPG that ‘shows support to the speaker’s’ (Lipponen’s) initiative (SDP PPG minutes 5.4.1995). Portfolios and program were decided before the PPG’s next meeting.

The PPG’s presence increased in the decision phase too: it gathered first into a joint meeting with the NEC to write and accept a statement about the government proposal that the council dealt later. It also gained a chance to comment on Lipponen’s ministerial choices (according to new rules, SDP EPO rules 1993). In the joint meeting the PPG’s small role in the process caused commotion. But although a few MPs did not sign the deal, the official statement that was given to the council claimed that the proposal had been unanimously approved. (SDP PPG minutes 11.4.1995). Before the council meeting the NEC gave a separate unanimous approval without any complaints (SDP NEC minutes 12.4.1995). In the decisive council meeting Lipponen explained the negotiation’s quick pace: ‘For the first time in history the government had to be formed under such an external pressure that delays were unacceptable. All delays that could have been interpreted as falling from the line had to be avoided’. For the first and only time during this study’s research period the council voted. The NG’s proposal won by a clear margin (49-3) and only the party’s pristine unity suffered a small crack. (SDP council minutes 12.4.1995).

After the council meeting the NEC unanimously accepted Lipponen’s ministerial nominations (SD 13.4.) and following the 1993 rule reform that allowed the PPG to voice its opinion on the nominations (SDP EPO rules 1993) Lipponen entered the PPG to explain his choices. After pointing out that the NEC had been

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214 Some MP’s took their chance very seriously but some doubted its meaningfulness. The former NEC member Riitta Prusti asked: ‘...what's the point of this discussion? Is it to repeat issues that are dear to us, or are we just speaking to historians?’. During the discussion Kalliomäki accidentally slipped that 'of course Lipponen knows our answers'.
unanimous the PPG chair Kalliomäki reasoned that ‘especially in ‘crisis governments’ like this formateur’s vision, his deeply deliberated thought concerning the team that is easiest to cooperate with should matter more’. The PPG supported the idea that the forthcoming prime minister should be able to choose his ‘team’ personally and nominations were accepted unanimously. All ministers, like Lipponen lined in the beginning of the process (HS 31.3.), were MPs. (SDP PPG minutes 12.4.1995). This, of course, strengthened the PPG too.

The SDP’s 1995 case was characterized by the leadership’s dominance. If judged from the viewpoint of those decisions that have been deemed important in these process tracings the party organs’ weight was close to zero. Decisions to negotiate, set a specific coalitional base, the party’s policies, the ministerial portfolios and the ministerial candidates were all decided outside of the party organs. The most important change in the overall power balance over time was the irrelevance of the party’s historic powerhouse, the NEC. Its traditional monitoring role was seriously jeopardized – for example the government’s massive cut program emerged almost verbatim from the ministry of finance (Murto 2014, 109). Although it could not do anything to this or other major decisions either, the parliamentary group clearly strengthened: the PPG advised the NG, gave an explicit mandate to the leadership after the base was settled, decided on the proposal first (in a joint meeting with the NEC) and it gave its ‘blessing’ to Lipponen’s minister nominations – that all emerged from the PPG (HS 31.3.). The PPG chair also overshadowed the party secretary in the process. Although strong contextual variables can explain the PPG’s strengthening, the 2011 case suggests that this was not just a periodic occurrence; also in the SDP’s actual decision-making procedures the parliamentary sphere has strengthened over the research period.

Although the PPG’s strengthening took place mostly in ceremonial/symbolical terms (i.e. it gained more presence in the process) only the fact that it now needed to appear as more important changed the SDP’s internal power balance because the NEC’s relative presence continued to decrease. As was suggested before, it can be argued that the small fracture in its dominance that happened first in 1987 and was repeated during the 1991 process opened its undisputed power position to re-interpretations, which gradually begun to eat its preponderance. Developments in the ‘party environment’ (decline of the membership parties, the PPGs constitutional strengthening, the mediatization – just to name a few) conditioned the development.

A diminution of an unambiguous ‘institutional threshold’ bears significant ramifications for the leadership autonomy. When several party organs are empowered the
leadership’s scope of options for backing increases and, coincidentally, the overall resistance potential decreases. To use an analogy: when only one bridge reaches over the river the toll man who administers that bridge has more leverage over the traveler compared to a situation where another bridge exists too. While the traveler still needs to get over the river, he may now play the toll men against each other in order to lower the price. Intra-party democracy seems to have a somewhat paradoxical nature: the more institutional veto players exist, the smaller is the party community’s influence over the leadership’s autonomy. This logic reminds Katz’s and Mair’s (2002) critique of direct intra-party democracy: when wider audiences are ‘empowered’, intra-party organs lose and the leadership strengthens. Another analogy could be the game of divide and conquer. In an internally representative party model the only way to ensure a working IPD is the existence of an operationally separated, small, empowered and concentrated representative unit.

6.4.4 The party organs’ actual decision-making powers in the 1990’s: a summary

The most important development of the 1990’s was that all parties’ traditional power units lost power to the party leaderships. Parties ‘presidentialized’, but in a slightly different sense of the term than what Poguntke and Webb’s (2005) thesis suggests: leadership dominance rested on party leaderships and PPG leaders’ tight collaboration. The mid-1990’s, which politically personifies in the building of Lipponen’s 1st ‘rainbow coalition’ was considered, by many interviewees, as a threshold to more leader-centric party politics. Merely the birth of so unorthodox a coalition in so short a time in such extreme circumstances was a powerful showing of the new ethos. As the ‘presidentialized’ practices that emerged in 1995 continued to exist in 2011 (see below), the mid-1990’s developments appear to have had a lasting effect and thus it may be regarded as a critical juncture in the Finnish intra-party politics.

The SDP’s arrival to the 1990’s was characterized by internal problems. The leadership’s departure shortly after the devastating loss in the 1987 elections, the erosion of the membership organization and another dramatic loss in 1991 that led the party to the opposition created strong demand for stability and leadership, which Paavo Lipponen delivered in 1993 – along with electoral success. The challenging of the NEC’s preponderance that begun already in 1987 when the PPG

215 The building of Sorsa’s IV in 1983 took longer although it was based on the traditional ‘red-ochre’ cooperation, which had ruled Finland for decades.
got more deeply involved with the process continued in 1991 when the core leadership avoided the NEC’s potentially challenging interference by taking its opposition wishes straight away to the party council. In the 1995 process the NEC was a shadow of its 1980’s incarnation, convening only a few times to have general discussions, without making demands or decisions. Compared to the 1980’s the PPG’s status was clearly more pronounced, albeit not especially significant either. However, eventually this ‘leveling’ of the party faces’ powers provided the party leader with another source of backing and thus decreased the overall resistance potential within the SDP (see below).

The NCP experienced a very similar development in the first part of the 1990’s. It rose from a deep internal turmoil that was characterized by a rift between the party office and the PPG (and a weak leadership that could not disentangle it) into undisputed ascendancy of a ‘super dominant’ leadership that built on the compound of the EPO and the PPG leaderships. Besides that the NEC’s power fell into oblivion during this period, the amalgamated joint leadership could also undermine the PPG’s independent role. According to the interviewees since the early 1990’s the central party (excluding the party chair) has not sought after an independent political role. Instead, the 2000’s developments (that reflect party office changes that were detected in chapter 5) suggest that it has regressed to its ‘historical’ role – that of an electoral machine (see below).

The Greens took part in the government negotiations for the first time in 1991. Their trademark features (vague organizational boundaries, transparency, spontaneity and the party council’s very strong role in decision-making) characterized the process. Another marked characteristic was a weak leader that was still plagued by the unwritten principle to prohibit the MPs from the leader’s stall. The principle was abolished in 1993, along with the formation of the NEC. In the 1995 process the party council weakened to some extent as other party units – the NEC, the PPG and the party leadership – consolidated their positions. Compared to the 1991 process the party leader’s input (that was supported by the NEC and the PPG) was much greater, signaling a similarity to the old parties’ developmental trajectories. Nevertheless, the Green leadership continued to be more limited than the old parties’ leaders. The process contained all the Greens’

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216 While in the 1980’s the PPG chairs like Sillantaus and Puolanne could more or less openly work against the party chairman, in the late 1990’s – and even more pronouncedly in the 2000’s (see below) – the PPG chair operated in tight tandem with the party leader, decreasing the distance between these power units.
'signature characteristics’ that hinder leader dominance, from power diffusion and transparency to spontaneous decision-making practices in crucial process junctures.

What caused these changes? While direct causal linkages are of course very hard to make at this level of analysis, a few major alterations in the parties’ operating ‘environments’ in the first half of the 1990’s at least strongly facilitated the transition towards more leader-centric practices. The most important institutional change was the gradual waning of presidential powers (de jure and de facto), which ascended party leaders to the top of domestic political processes already in the 1990’s, well before the total reformation of the constitution. While for example in relation to the cabinet formation the president continued to hold significant formal powers until 2000 since the 1980’s the president predominantly allowed parties to handle the formation processes (Karvonen 2014, 89). The party leader’s new role as de facto leaders of the upper state echelons showed clearly in the 1995 negotiations, where they used this newfound prestige to bypass intra-party processes by negotiating directly with one another.

The second major ‘environmental’ set of changes that facilitated the emergence of more leader-centric intra-party practices in the 1990’s concern the scope and nature of political context. A major catalyst – one that also weakened the presidency – was the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991, which contributed to two major alterations in the parties’ operating environment. The 1990’s economic crisis has been said to have legitimized a more authoritarian political style, and the state bureaucrats’ stronger role in political planning processes. Both of these developments have undermined the party amateurs’ claim for intra-party decisions and transferred power to party leaders. Moreover, the pressing situation created a demand for faster processes that suit poorly with intra-party deliberations. The 1995 government negotiation process was a good example of a decision-making dynamic where the velocity of the situation and the exigent nature of the content matter legitimized practices that effectively helped the leadership to bypass all intra-party resistance. Another, consequence that followed the collapse of the Soviet Union was Finland’s fast installation to the European Union, which draws party decision-making yet further from the party office and complicates it from the party amateur’s viewpoint. The EU integration also strengthened the PPGs’ relative power over the EPO organs as they are mainly responsible for monitoring and preparing EU legislation.
6.5 The 2000’s: the consolidation of leader-centric ‘fast politics’

At the turn of the 1980’s the president’s office was still deeply involved in the Finnish domestic politics that circulated – without the exception of bilateral Soviet relations – mostly around national matters. The parties’ cooperative possibilities were restricted (the ‘red-ochre’ had dominated the scene under Kekkonen’s guidance since the mid-1960’s), over half a million people were card carrying party members and the party-leaning newspapers still provided the window to the world of politics for many. In short, politics was nationally oriented, partisan, restricted in scope and ‘slow’ in terms of pace. Contemporary parties operate in a very different kind of context.

The parliamentarization of the Finnish political system arrived to a finale in 2000 when the new constitution stripped away all presidential powers in domestic politics. While foreign policy is still formally operated under the ‘dual-leadership’, the EU affairs that make the bulk of all foreign affairs are the government’s responsibility. Eduskunta is a strongly executive-dominated assembly. As stable majority governments have become the norm – due to the increased coalition potential – and a meaningful opposition has waned217 – due to the generalization of the surplus majorities and the rejection of the qualified majority rules – almost all successful bills emerge from the government. The prime minister is the new ‘president’. As a leader of the largest party he/she gets to choose the other coalition parties. Under the new constitution the Eduskunta votes for the prime minister after the PPGs have ended their negotiations and the prime minister proposes other cabinet ministers. The president only formally nominates the ministers. After the cabinet is formed the prime minister assumes the role of a ‘CEO’: he/she directs the government’s daily work by heading all ministerial committees that prepare government bills and he/she manages inter-party relations and oversees that the government program’s agreements are fulfilled. The other ‘chairman-ministers’ from coalescing parties join him in a small group that makes

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217 It should be noted, though, that despite of its legal strongholds (the qualified majority rules and the minority’s right to postpone legislation) the opposition was rather weak already in the 1960’s and the 1970’s. Because of the highly fragmented party system it was incoherent and the NCP’s thrive to government reduced its will to use legal tools. Significant oppositional action stemmed from the populist Finnish Rural’s Party’s demonstrative efforts. Also, while politics ‘governmentalized’ only in the 1980’s in the sense that president withdrew from domestic politics and the governments stabilized, political practices in the post late-1960’s state planning ethos leaned strongly on the government’s coordination while the parliament was often left to the sidelines. The consolidation of the strong corporatist linkage after the late 1960’s strengthened this side of ‘governmentalization’ as well. (Nousiainen 2006, 251–254, 255–256, 264–271)
most important alignments in contemporary Finnish politics. (Paloheimo 2005, 250–265.)

If the dissolution of presidency removed the prime ministers’ obstacles, parties’ organizational evolution has slowly relieved the party leaders’ societal connections. As the previous chapter showed, after the 1980’s the focus of organizational work has shifted from an extra-parliamentary to parliamentary arena. Changes in the organizational activity also highlight the decline of membership-based party politics. In 1980 the Finnish parties’ combined membership was 607 261 – 15.5 % of the electorate. In 2006 it had almost halved (347 000, 43 % decrease), diminishing the members’/voters’ ratio down to 8 %.218 The decrease was not confined to the 1980’s; still between 1998–2006 the parties lost 13.5 % of their members. (Van Biezen et al. 2012.) It appears that the decline has continued in 2010’s as well (Kauppalehti 13.3.2011). In 2011 the combined membership of the parties that were represented in Eduskunta was around 314 000 (Karvonen 2014, 56). Similar development has faced the local party branches too: the total amount has decreased from the 1980’s 8813 down to 5948 in 2012 (-32.5 %) (Karvonen 2014, 55; Mickelsson 2007, 405). The mass party era is over and, as Sundberg (2012, 127–132) seems to suggest, the Finnish parties have evolved to meet the needs of the ‘audience’ democracy. The important implication of this development is, as Van Biezen and Poguntke (2014, 214) point out, ‘those who arguably act on behalf of their constituencies are far less bound to these constituencies than they were before because […] the organizational anchorage through mass organization has waned’. The EPO’s claim to intra-party power has decreased.

At the same time politics’ personalized aspects have become more important – especially in relation to the chief executive’s office. The party leader is now more important for the voters and their success is more important for the parties. The ‘prime minister question’ is a significant factor in determining voters’ choices. (Karvonen 2010; Karvonen 2009, 112, 121–122; Paloheimo 2005, 261.) It begun to gain more importance in the early 1990’s – along with the strengthening of the prime minister’s office. The Centre placed a lot of weight on Esko Aho in 1991 and after his success the SDP and the NCP countered in the 1995 and 1999

218 Over half of these (192 000) were the Centre party’s members (Biezen et al. 2012, 44, Mickelsson 2007, 404). The Centre has been criticized for sloppiness in keeping their records (Kauppalehti 13.3.2011). In 2014 when the party begun to go through its register inspectors found 400 over 103-year olds. Before the inspection the membership was 137 000. (Italehti 13.6.2014.) The number of active party members is likely a lot smaller. According to SDP 6 SDP’s active membership in the 2010’s was around 5000 strong. According to Karvonen (2014, 56) the SDP’s total membership in 2011 was 50 000.
elections. The 1999 election was framed as the battle of the ‘three titans’ although the candidates undermined the importance of their personal characteristics. The first parliamentary elections after the constitutional reform were held in 2003. The president’s departure from the scene raised the format on to a new level. The SDP explicitly set Lipponen as their prime minister candidate who went against the Centre’s Anneli Jäätteemäki and the NCP’s Ville Itälä. (Anttila 2006, 159–171). In the 2000’s the concept generalized. It is now customary that major newspapers portray in-depth characterizations of all ‘prime minister candidates’ before the elections. The prime minister’s role is very pronounced in the Finnish media; all aspects are covered, from personal characteristics to daily politics (Berg et al. 2009, 77).

The relationship between the media and politics that tightened considerably in the 1990’s entered a new phase at the turn of the 2000’s. It is grounded in the emergence of the ‘new media’, i.e. the generalization of digital information technology and the deep cultural changes that it brought into human interaction (Nieminen et al. 2000, 7–12, also Nieminen 2000, 18). According to Herkman (2011, 147–154) the emergence of internet-based communications technology was at least as significant a change for the media as its commercialization in the 1980’s was. Besides that it combined all old medias (tv, radio and newspapers), it created a completely new one, the social media, which demolishes barriers between the publisher and the audience. The ‘new media’s’ most important feature is that it lacks space and time limitations: information runs without borders, in real time, all the time. It revolutionized communication between politicians too as they may now be in constant contact with each other. As Pitkänen (2009b, 139) points out, the traditional top-down style where the media passed stories about the politicians down to the audiences is gone; now politicians, citizens and the media can initiate interaction between each other whenever they see fit.

The emergence of the ‘new media’ has significantly altered the party elite’s working environment. The early 1980’s respect is gone; the media is more independent and the politicians need to think about their public images constantly (Pernaa et al. 2006, 275–278). Unlike the party press, the modern media complex is impossible to control. When scandals erupt no one can tame them: ‘Rumours and unconscious fantasies play at least as big a role as facts and real life events’. (Herkman 2011, 11–15, 26–29). The social media’s unpredictability and ‘eternal memory’ have created completely new kind of challenges for career politicians (see Suominen 2013, 253–265). At the same time, however, they have become more dependent on visibility. This suits journalists who in the midst of increasing
competition are highly dependent on good contacts. A deep symbiosis has emerged. However, while politics has no doubt become more ‘intimate’ and the surface level is extremely visible, politicians often want to hide the actual politics. Thus, ‘[T]he hard core of political decision-making is still very closed. Nowadays decisions are made even more secretly than before the current ‘age of openness’ (Herkman 2011, 11–15, 26–29, 146). Leaks are harder to get – even from the administrative level – and as governments now survive the whole term and follow the government program strictly they aim to keep their internal cohesion – especially in relation to the external world – pristine. (Pitkänen 2009a, 102–103.) Wider secrecy is also made possible by the modern IT; multi-member discussions can now be held easily without holding actual meetings.

In terms of the internationalization of the economy and politics Finland’s situation has not gotten less complicated in the 2000’s – quite the contrary. After it survived the depression after the mid-1990’s it begun to seek its place in the global economy. The next task was to prepare the country for the European Economic and Monetary Union (EMU) as soon as possible. All alignments – in relation to financial and monetary policies and labour markets – were made to meet the EMU criteria and Finland’s export oriented ascent from depression mixed efficiently with the Euro project. (Puoskari 2012, 147–148). Finland joined the European Economic and Monetary Union (EMU) already in 1998, during Lipponen’s 1st government, and adopted the joint currency Euro in 1999 as a calculatory unit. The membership stripped away Finland’s traditional economic ‘weapon of choice’ that had been used for decades to increase its competitiveness, the independent monetary policy that allowed the de- and re-valuation of the currency.

Although the Euro was created to provide economic stability, the global financial environment has been rather unstable throughout Finland’s membership. Already in 1998 the Asian economic crisis shook the world and in 2000 the overheating of the IT market caused a minor recession in most industrial countries. However, the financial market continued to expand rapidly until 2007. Then the American mortgage credits begun to stack up on banks’ and investors’ accounts, creating severe payment problems and the crashing of prices. In September 2008 the investment bank Lehman Brothers collapsed when the US government denied its bailouts. Shortly after the financial crisis globalized. The Finnish GDP that continued to be highly dependent on exports decreased by 8 % in 2009. When some private sector debts were transferred to the states in the Euro region the countries started to face problems with the EMU’s debt criteria. This, then, launched the European states debt crisis (the Euro crisis). (Patomäki 2012, 5–15,
39–47, 71–73). Between 2008 and 2013 the Finnish industrial product decreased by 30% – especially the technology and the forest sectors suffered. Finland has been struggling with mass unemployment, which applies pressures to the public economy that struggles with the EMU criteria. (Patomäki 2014, 25–35.) It appears that Kantola’s (2002) prophecy of a ‘permanent crisis’ was warranted at least to some degree. In 2016 Finland’s economy has not experienced almost any growth in 8 years and the crisis mood has dispersed effectively – at least within the political elite.

However, while these ‘environmental’ pressures should enhance the party leaders’ autonomy considerably, their leverage over policies seems to have decreased. In economic terms Finland is not an independent entity anymore. Besides that the monetary policy is completely out of the question, the EU’s tight debt monitoring hinders fiscal policies too. Also, as this has made public spending harder in the Euro region, the EU countries’ demand for Finnish exports (that make a half of all of its exports) has decreased. More generally, the ongoing competition for credit ratings ties national leaders tightly into the global financial markets’ ‘moods’. (Patomäki 2014, 18, 22, 29–34.) Politicians are not omnipotent in domestic circles either. In the 1990’s the leading bureaucrats consolidated their strong role in policy preparation. Especially the ministry of finance whose experts provide the overall framework for all state finances is now a very prominent power centre in Finnish politics. Ministries begun to prepare the government program over a year before the elections – the parties merely provide the ‘icing’ on the negotiations. The minister who takes the lead of it usually adapts rather quickly to the bureaucrats’ views. Although the ministers make the final decisions, they very rarely differ from bureaucrats’ proposals. (Murto 2014, 134–136, 291–295.)

6.5.1 The SDP in the 2010’s: leadership dominance – in a democratic spirit

After the 1995’s massive victory the SDP entered into an electoral downfall. The 1st ‘rainbow coalition’ cost 12 seats in 1999 elections. After winning back 2 in 2003 the party lost another 8 seats in 2007. Even the 4 year term in the opposition during Vanhanen’s/Kiviniemi’s bourgeois coalition (2007-2011) did not make the SDP’s situation better, it lost again in 2011 (3 seats). In 1995 the SDP that had dominated the Finnish elections almost continuously since the mid-1960’s commanded almost a one third of Eduskunta’s power (63 seats out of 200). In
2011 its dominance had shrunk down to one fifth (42 seats).\footnote{After the 2015’s 8 seat loss the SDP’s control has diminished almost down to one seventh (34 seats out of 200), roughly to a half from its 1995 parliamentary power.} (Official statistics of Finland.)

The vanishing electoral power has reflected in the party leadership. The ‘red-ochre’ made a return after the 2003 elections where the SDP finished second after the Centre. Paavo Lipponen who had led two previous governments and was still chairing the party did not enter the government at all but instead he chose the Eduskunta’s speaker’s post. Like in the summer of 1987 when Paasio replaced Sorsa but did not enter the cabinet the party chair was again out from the ministerial group. In the 2005 congress party secretary Eero Heinäluoma replaced Lipponen and got inducted in the government. However, already in 2008, in the next party congress after the 2007 elections where the SDP lost 8 seats and entered opposition Heinäluoma resigned unexpectedly.

According to SDP 3 the situation begun to resemble the early 1990’s: reminding of the quick ascend of the bank manager Ulf Sundqvist in 1991, ‘in the heat of the moment’ the party congress chose the 32-year old Jutta Urpilainen to save the party. Urpilainen decided to aim for the chair only after Heinäluoma’s sudden abstention and she was genuinely surprised at her win. Her first objective was to unify the fragmented party. (Urpilainen 2011, 78–83). However, the beginning of her term was not easy. Right after her selection she stirred attention by criticizing the SDP’s largest external contributor’s, the Central Organisation of Finnish Trade Union’s (SAK) involvement in the party’s matters. It was also widely speculated that she was merely the old party men’s puppet, although some of the SDP’s old men criticized her too. The SDP lost the next municipal (2008) and the euro (2009) elections. Although Urpilainen begun to receive more support when the 2011 parliamentary elections got closer the party’s poor state was heavily personified in her and pressures to change the leader surfaced. (HS 4.4.–7.4.2011, Niemi 2013).

In 2011 the concept of a ‘prime minister election’ had consolidated firmly. The elections’ primary function was to determine the party leader who forms the coalition and starts to lead it. The largest party’s leader’s primacy in the formation process was formalized in a PPGs’ agreement in 2002 (Nousiainen 2006, 322). The party leader’s importance in the elections became crucial. Since 1995 the leader’s perceived skill had been statistically significant predictor of the voters’ party choice (Paloheimo 2005, 216). Just a few weeks before the 2011 elections almost 70 % of the voters of the three large parties considered the chairman issue to be an important motive for choosing a party (HS 1.4.) This was problematic for the SDP
because, as SDP 3 put it, the idea of a ‘prime minister election’ is good for a party that has a strong leader; if the leader is weak the leader’s unpopularity begins to reflect on the party’s support. According to SDP 5 the party’s poor record then begins to reflect back to the leaders power as his/hers ‘exit deterrent’ diminishes: if he/she says ‘I’m leaving’, others might think ‘well that’s what we’re waiting for!’ According to SDP 5 Sorsa and Lipponen were powerful because the SDP was powerful. Urpilainen’s poor reception in the media forced the party to build the campaign on a strong program (SDP 6). Still, the SDP lost another 3 seats in the 2011 elections.

Before delving deeper into the process one thing needs to be pointed out ‘outside of the framework’: it seems that in the 2000’s a large amount of the formal party organs’ powers has slipped to more informal gatherings (SDP 7).\(^{220}\) While unofficial gatherings have always existed (SDP 8) it appears that a few of them have consolidated to the extent that they can now be considered as independent entities. According to SDP 7 the most powerful organ in the 2011 process was the ‘troika’, ‘the innermost inner circle’ that headed the operative leadership and the policy preparation, and designed how things were taken to the party organs and the public. Most importantly, according to SDP 7 the ‘troika’ could bypass other organs whenever it needed to.\(^{221}\) In 2011 the ‘troika’ included the PPG chair Eero Heinäluoma and the party secretary Mikael Jungner. Urpilainen had personally selected both and they were said to be very loyal to her (HS 4.4.). According to Urpilainen (2011, 91–93) she wanted to endorse ‘team leadership’ by selecting three ‘completely different individuals’ to this organ that met every week to ‘go through the week’s upcoming events’ from the viewpoint of the PPG (Heinäluoma) and the party office (Jungner). Urpilainen considered herself as the head executive: ‘In the end I draw the conclusions. I decide what we’ll do in the near future, what’s our strategy and our plans for next weeks’. In terms of style she placed herself somewhere between Sorsa and Lipponen: ‘The leader’s task is to draw conclusions from several different opinions and show direction’. During the negotiations Heinäluoma – a former party chair – was often portrayed as the true leader of the SDP (HS 2.6-6.6.). SDP 7 suggested that the ‘troika’ was deliberately kept in the

\(^{220}\) As the study sought to find out whether formal party organ’s matter in intra-party processes or not this kind of information was not deliberately asked during the interviews, it emerged spontaneously.

\(^{221}\) One example of the ‘troika’s’ power was the so-called ‘child concession’, a tax reduction paid by the number of children. The troika had decided that whenever the chair was on TV she had to make a new proposal in order to stay in the headlines. After an ‘almost non-existent preparation’ the troika came up with the idea that was ‘totally against the [party] line’ (including party program). (SDP 7.)
background to hide Heinälouoma’s ‘extraordinarily long’ shadow. SDP 6 however claimed that in the end Urpilainen called the shots.

Whatever the relative balance within the ‘troika’ might have been it seems quite plausible to argue that the ‘troika’s’ independent powers have increased since the 1980’s. Sorsa and Liikanen who were generally considered as a very strong duo had to circulate all proposals through the NEC, which could at least delay the process if it was unhappy. Today, according to SDP 7’s characterization, this is not the case anymore. Although conclusive evidence is missing, the 2011 process (like the 1995 process) supports the idea that even in crucial junctures the core leadership is now able to operate fairly autonomously, and effectively avoid formal party organs’ interference (see below).

Another important informal ‘organ’ is the presidium, a joint leadership gathering that comprises of the EPO’s and the PPG’s leaderships, the party secretary and the PPG’s general secretary. In the 2010’s it met weekly (on Fridays, after the parliaments work week) and it could hold phone conferences too in order to react quickly to salient matters. (SDP 7.) While not using the term presidium, in her memoir Urpilainen (2011, 93) confirmed that she met the ‘deputy chairs’ every week. It appears that the presidium consolidated in the 1990’s. On 18.4.1991, little after the SDP had decided to enter the opposition the NEC appointed the PPG deputy chairs a right to attend its meetings.222 While the leaderships’ joint meeting had convened earlier as well, on 22.11.1991 the idea to make it permanent was presented. It was suggested that the joint leadership should convene at least once a month to ‘discuss current issues and especially the preparation of the SDP’s wider alignments’. Such a meeting was considered ‘very important especially in securing the PPG’s and the NEC’s cooperation and understanding, but also a place where the party leadership could have “pressure resistant” open discussion’. This meeting also ‘established a need to connect the PPG and its committee groups more efficiently’ into the party’s operations. (Tuomioja 2014, 70–75, 103, 175, 237–238). While the presidium was never formally assembled (it is still only a informal gathering) and originally it was an opposition term invention, it continued to meet during Lipponen’s term as well. It was mostly a discussion forum, less of a decision-making unit. (SDP 8.) According to SDP 7 the presidium is the main deliberative organ. Its most important task is to provide the leadership a forum where it can discuss the hardest questions openly and in private. For example in

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222 Formally, only the PPG chair had a right to attend the NEC meetings (SDP EPO rules 1990).
2011 the detailed debate on the party’s tax policies took place in the presidium; ‘predominantly this kind of a discussion never took place in the NEC’. (SDP 7.)

Three initial conclusions can be made about the presidium’s role (all these all clarified below). Firstly, it appears that while political journalism has become more aggressive, politicians have invented effective ways to escape it. Not even official minutes are left behind from these meetings. Secondly, and more importantly, in relation to the intra-party power balance the most important thing is that the presidium is a compound of extra-parliamentary and parliamentary leaders. Compared to the early 1980’s undisputed NEC primacy, the parliamentary ‘face’ has clearly strengthened. Thirdly, the presidium is more or less the same as the NG. Instead of having a specially appointed committee the negotiating core leadership is well formed already before the elections. As has been pointed out many times, unified leadership is very hard to oppose ‘from below’. The joint leadership’s presence in the 2011 process was extensive. It advised Urpilainen on what to answer to the formateur Jyrki Katainen’s questions (SD 20.5.) and it met daily to assess the progress of the negotiation (SD 30.5.).

While participation in the government has become more important over the years, formal party organs’ role in the process has become limited. Most of the ‘steps’ that in the 1980’s had to be taken through party organs are no longer meaningful, are dealt in advance or somewhere else. Firstly, ‘to negotiate or not to?’ is not a relevant question anymore. As basically every party can cooperate with one another, coalitions have stabilized and their working capacity has increased and the opposition is thus not a desirable aim anymore, all parties aim for a governing position in every election. While before the problem was how to accommodate differing interests into a working coalitional agreement nowadays the problem is how to exclude some of the parties. (Nousiainen 2006, 297–298.)

The Centre party lost a whopping 16 seats in the 2011 elections and opted directly for the opposition. Yet, after the SDP’s and the NCP’s negotiations halted for a while and opened a door for another bourgeois coalition the party was immediately ready to join it. Similarly, the Greens, another firm opposition-goer ended up in Katainen’s ‘sixpack coalition’ when it received the chance (see below). Despite of reaching a historical low not to negotiate was completely ‘out of the question’ in the SDP. Paasio’s decision in 1991 ‘was so traumatizing an experience that it will never happen again’. (SDP 6.) The decision to seek a place in the upcoming government was generally shared in the leadership (SDP 3). Although Urpilainen postponed her announcement over the NEC meeting (HS 19.4.) the other members of the leadership voiced out the party’s willingness to negotiate (SD
and the leadership met the NCP’s Jyrki Katainen – whose party had won – immediately after the election (HS 18.4.). The ‘automatization’ of this step – combined with the extensive preparations (the NG was set before elections and policy objectives were ready, SDP 6) – set a strong path dependency to the process.

The second important step that is nowadays largely decided outside of the party organs is the base issue to which the 2002 agreement gave the winning party’s leader a strong prerogative. The media reported that the ‘party leaderships and their entourages already begun to discuss on the night after the elections’ and just one day after the elections the NCP chair Katainen declared that the new coalition will almost certainly build on the NCP, the SDP and the True Finns’ cooperation. (SD 18.4., HS 18.-19.4.). Katainen’s announcement came out before Urpilainen entered the NEC or the PPG. After Katainen received the parties’ answers he personally decided (without, according to the SDP, even asking from them) that the ‘blue-red’ and a few smaller parties will continue negotiations. (HS 13.5., SD 13.5.). Although the SDP leadership likely informed Katainen of its willingness to negotiate ‘externalizing’ the base decision to the formateur allows to the bypassing of the party organs.

The third ‘automatized’ feature is that policy objectives appear to be more clearly set before the process and the 1980’s style scrutiny during the negotiation is likely to have vanished. As programs have become more detailed and the pace of the negotiation has increased, parties need to be very clear what they are after for. According to SDP 5 the end result depends largely on the quality of party’s papers, which need to be ready right after elections. SDP’s objectives were prepared well before negotiations started (SDP 6). Party’s sine qua non’s, for example, were in the media weeks before elections (HS 4.4.). According to SDP 5 and 7 the main physical locus of SDP’s programmatic work was the party office. However, although the program was dealt in party committees and the preparation was coordinated by the NEC the ‘troika’ drew all major alignments and the presidium debated on the details. (SDP 6, SDP 7). According to SDP 8 the working group system that used to be the main preparatory organ has gradually weakened. Nowadays, the SDP’s political planning happens in a more ad hoc manner, among the party leadership, the ministerial special assistants and other extra-party functionaries. ‘When we [SDP] prepared the government program sketch for potential negotiations [in 2011], the paper came to the NEC in the morning completely outside of the working group machinery; ‘these need to be approved’”. However, compared to the NCP where the policy preparation is completely parliamentarized (see below) the SDP’s EPO still appears to be relatively well
connected to the party’s policy work. In general, however, many crucial steps seem to have been taken before the party organs convene.

The most important over time change in the SDP’s internal balance of power is the gradual diminution of the NEC’s preponderance. In the 1987 negotiations which took less than 1.5 months the NEC convened 8 times and took part in all crucial ‘steps’. In 2011 it convened 7 times during the negotiations that took almost 3 months. It made only a few approvals, usually on issues that were already in motion. Urpilainen suggested in the first NEC meeting (following Katainen’s announcement) that the SDP should negotiate with the NCP and the True Finns. She also proposed the NG members (which according to SDP 6 had been set in advance) – the NEC agreed on both proposals unanimously. (SDP NEC minutes 19.4.2011)\textsuperscript{223}. While other members of the leadership had voiced their preferences in public Urpilainen followed the old protocol. However, it seems highly unlikely that this carried any risk. According to SDP 6 the chair was responsible for the NEC’s agenda and she would not take anything there that would not go through; it was her most loyal group. More generally, intra-party conflicts do not happen in ‘this day’s world’. The NEC is the party leader’s ‘tool’ for 1) gathering the will, 2) committing the group, and sometimes 3) ‘sparring’ the chair.\textsuperscript{224} The NEC will never, however, act against the leader’s will. ‘It’s impossible to picture a situation’ where the NEC disagrees with the party leader, confirmed SDP 7 and SDP 4 too. Urpilainen’s (2011, 93) own view contours these descriptions: the NEC ‘supports and helps to make political analyses’.

According to SDP 1 the NEC’s role changed in the 1990’s and today ‘it’s not nearly as political as it used to be’. According to SDP 8 up until Sundqvist’s term the NEC took part in decision-making but in Lipponen’s term leader-centrism strengthened. Change had a lot to do with Lipponen’s personal style but it continued to live after him. Now the chair opens the meeting and sets its agenda ‘but rarely in a way that there’s even a purpose to conclude or decide anything’. the NEC might have ‘general political discussions’ but it does not ‘directly relate to concrete decision-making’. If something is concluded, the chair concludes. According to SDP 7 the replacement of votes with chair’s ‘conclusions’ was one of the most important practical changes that diminished the NEC’s power in the long term. The NEC cannot bypass the PPG anymore either (SDP 8). The PPG made the formal decision over the SDP’s answers to Katainen in 10.5. (HS 10.5.) – the

\textsuperscript{223} As it was pointed out in table 1, for SDP’s 2011 case only ‘decision minutes’ were available and therefore meetings’ discussions are not quoted.

\textsuperscript{224} SDP 4 calls NEC a ‘practice opponent’.
NEC convened after they were delivered (SDP NEC minutes 12.5.2011, SDP 7). Later in the process the NEC activated twice. First, it gave the NG a mandate to carry on the negotiation after they had halted (SDP NEC minutes 26.5.2011). According to media sources the negotiations had continued long before this meeting (HS 20.5.). Later the NEC gathered to hear Urpilainen’s report. While some members raised the idea of opposition Urpilainen aligned that the party should aim for the government. (SDP NEC minutes 9.6.2011). Again, the media content suggested that she had already continued negotiations with Katainen (SD 9.6). Compared to the 1980’s processes where all major decision went through the NEC’s rather detailed scrutiny at least in the confines of this specific process it has clearly weakened over time.

According to SDP 3 several factors can explain the change. First, in earlier periods the NEC’s deputy chairs (and according to SDP 1, NEC members more generally too) were the party’s biggest names. Nowadays it seems that they are selected in order to provide diversity for the party’s public profile. Secondly, district organizations have different methods for selecting their NEC representatives: some restrict MPs participation as the MPs have already enough avenues for influence, others aim for a regional minister and push their top MPs forward. This creates heterogeneity into the group, which undermines its operative unity. The third factor is the most important: the party leader may nowadays choose where she/he builds backing for his/hers initiatives; instead of the NEC she/he can ‘employ’ the PPG or the ministerial group as well. This dynamic was clearly detectable already in the 1995 process. The gradual ‘leveling’ of the party organs gave the leadership possibilities for divide and conquer politics. As undisputed ‘institutional thresholds’ do not exist anymore no real veto exists either.

Two more general factors that explain the transference of power from formal to informal organs can be added: the speed of politics and the fear of publicity. According to SDP 7 ‘[B]ack then [in the 1980’s] it was possible that the NEC which convened every two weeks aligned the party’s policy, but the cycle of politics is so much faster now that it is not possible anymore. Reactions have to emerge faster, the media expects them immediately […] it leads into a situation where these faster organs [refers to the troika and the presidium] that are predominantly composed of people who work in the Arkadia hill [where Eduskunta is situated], can be gathered fast. I text to them ‘now to this and this room’ and in half an hour they have all gathered there from various parts of the building. Compare this to a situation where I text to a NEC member who lives in Kemi [city in Lapland, northern Finland].’ As the public eye’s interest in intra-party politics has increased
and party organs have tended to be good sources for leaks it is nowadays mandatory to hold important meetings in informal circles: ‘...the general conception is that if you take something to the PPG, it’s almost the same as if you handed it over to the public’. (SDP 7.) When the SDP’s basic organizational framework was erected in 1906, these issues were not a problem. Considering how much the parties working ‘environments’ have changed, it is in fact quite unbelievable how little their formal organizations have transformed. They are, of course, deeply embedded into national legislation.

But although all the interviewees agreed that the NEC’s power has decreased and its role in the negotiation process is rather small compared to the 1980’s situation, keeping it along is still highly valued and, in fact, necessary. During the 2011 negotiations the NEC was well informed all of the time (SDP 7.). According to SDP 6 Urpilainen put a lot of effort in binding the party organs to the process. The reason is traditional: when party activists are properly committed through the party organs, making politics in the long term becomes easier. This reflects the other main difference that continues to exist between the old parties. Despite of the gradual strengthening of the leadership the SDP still endorses a proactive leadership style while in the NCP the chair is trusted as long as everything goes smoothly (as SDP 6 points out and forthcoming analysis shows). Both SDP 7 and SDP 5 concur that the NEC is still the main ‘tool’ for intra-party legitimacy and therefore all action has to circulate through it. It still formally appoints the ministers and it also selects special assistants and state secretaries, unlike in the other parties (SDP 7). While its decision-making powers in political processes may have diminished, neglecting it brings trouble as the party’s core activists still expect certain attention. This is the legacy of party tradition where members are more than cheerleaders; they are stakeholders (see Scarrow 2015 for definitions).

The other major change in the SDP’s intra-party relations has been the gradual strengthening of the PPG. Its overall presence in the process has strengthened since the 1980’s and the ‘public office’ has become more prominent arena for intra-party politics a more generally too. Nowadays all ministers are expected to be MPs (SDP 8) and the PPG takes a larger role in policy processes via Eduskunta’s committees (SDP 7). Eduskunta is a strongly committee-centered parliament where the relevant work takes place in sectoral committees that allow the MPs to specialize in various policy areas (Nousiainen 2006, 332). In 2011 the PPG convened only four days after elections. In the 1980’s its organizing took around two weeks and most ‘steps’ had already been taken at that point. This progress is of course partly undermined by the fact that in today’s negotiations most things are settled in
advance. When the PPG convened the negotiations had already begun (SD 20.4.). However, by continuing the incumbent leadership’s mandate (SD 21.4., Gustafsson 22.4. Annual reports 2010 & 2011) its participation in the process from the beginning was ensured.225

Although SDP 7 claimed that the PPG was even weaker than the NEC it at least took part in a few important junctures. It advised the NG about Katainen’s answers (SDP 7) and later (10.5.) it mandated Urpilainen to pursue the SDP’s objectives in an issue that helped to settle the base question (SD 12.5.). Here, however, it seems that Urpilainen informed the SDP’s position already on 9.5. – after a NG/presidium phone conference that was held on 8.5 (SD 20.5.). Following its new constitutional role the PPG was also the only organ that formally approved Katainen’s invitation to negotiate with 5 other parties. Again, however, Katainen apparently knew the SDP’s answer in advance. (HS 17.5.) Nonetheless, the 1980’s style where the NEC just informed the PPG ‘is now out of the question’ (SDP 8). Although these decisions were quite obviously made somewhere else, the PPG’s approvals carried weight. Most importantly, they reflect the new intra-party dynamic where the leadership can build backing in various organs.

According to SDP 3 the PPG’s strengthening stems from three sources. First, as the significance of the parties’ field organizations has diminished, the MPs in fact now work closer to ordinary citizens. Secondly, along with the increasing complexity in the political domain the MPs’ sectorial specialization has strengthened. Due to their presence in Eduskunta’s committee groups that follow political developments from the closest possible distance the MPs are now more strongly linked to the parties’ programmatic work. And thirdly, as the previous chapter pointed out too, the PPGs’ resources have increased considerably. Overall, party work has clearly shifted to the ‘public office’ and therefore the party chair’s only potential counter force is nowadays the PPG, claims SDP 3. However, it is important to note that the PPG’s strengthening does not mean that it has developed into a similar powerhouse than the NEC was in the 1980’s. According to SDP 7 the PPG with all its assistants is too large for coherent discussion. Although intra-party politics now take place more often in the ‘parliamentary sphere’ the PPG itself has not developed into a major decision-maker. SDP 4 states that when the SDP is in governing position the PPG ‘too often’ becomes a

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225 It should be kept in mind, however, that Urpilainen personally nominated the PPG chair (HS 4.4.). According to SDP 8 Urpilainen’s public personal selection went further than anyone else before her, but the PPG complied. What this simply suggests is that although PPG has strengthened, its position towards party leader is not autonomous.
rubberstamp: ‘...the chair or the ministerial group does not want or dare to test their ideas in some questions by bringing them first to our table’. In the opposition the PPG’s role is clearly stronger but this time it is on the ‘late train’ because of the lack of ministerial resources and information. However, as the political agenda nowadays runs mostly through Eduskunta’s committee system the PPG is closer to the action than any EPO organ. The parliamentary sphere’s primacy over the extra-parliamentary sphere is mainly based on information flow. (SDP 4 & 5.) But while the PPG has strengthened, at the same time it appears to stay below party leadership and ministers, as Heidar and Koole (2000b) observed, too. Thus, the strengthening of the public ‘face’ carries more complex dynamics than Katz and Mair’s (2002) simple model purports.

In the 2011 government formation process the party organs’ weakness led into a negotiation dynamic that reminisced of the NCP’s retroactive leadership culture. If the processes in the 1980’s were marked by a constant interaction between the NG and the party organs (especially the NEC) in the 2010’s the NG’s autonomy appears to be vastly larger – like in the 1995 process. According to SDP 7 [W]hen this negotiating committee was set the ball rolled there more or less completely'; it negotiated autonomously, molded the party’s objectives when necessary and only the end result was judged. Two general factors explain the NG’s preponderance. First, it was widely represented. In addition to the leaderships (i.e. presidium) it included sectoral policy specialists and parliamentary committee members. (SDP 5 & 3). According to SDP 3 sectoral emphasis ties the MPs more tightly to the process and eases a proposal’s take through in the party organs. In larger parties ‘about a half of the group’ is tied to the process, in small parties all MPs are. The troika added additional NG members (SDP 7) and the whole group gathered every day to assess the results (SD 30.5.). As all relevant players from all relevant organs are ‘in’ from the beginning, intra-organizational conflicts do not emerge. As SDP 5 stated, the negotiation is ‘not a place for intra-party conflict… there are no inter-organ power battles in negotiations’.

The second general factor that explains the NG’s autonomy in the 2011 process relates to publicity. When negotiations started, the formateur set a complete ‘radio silence’ to provide ‘industrial peace’ and to prevent leaks to the public. According to SDP 5 in theory the party organs could have convened during negotiations but in reality the ‘radio silence’ provided the NG a total autonomy. It produced much needed openness and trust into a very intensive atmosphere and ‘opening the process even for your to your own people is not wise for the negotiating spirit because there is always people who have a need to know more than they know and
speculations begin to circulate…’. Although the ‘radio silence’ was heavily criticized by academics (HS 14.6.) and journalists (HS 17.6.) the idea was widely supported by politicians. Urpilainen declared that it is better to tell about the negotiations when ‘things have been decided and the whole thing is ready’ (SD 23.5.). Building group cohesion MP Jouko Skinnari (Skinnari 23.5.) declared that ‘every negotiator has a great responsibility to make sure that unfinished issues are not leaked’. Only the party chairs were allowed to speak publicly as the SDP PPG’s 2nd deputy chair Jukka Gustafsson underlined (HS 30.5.). Wide representation and mutually agreed secrecy emphasize strong intra-party uniformity, which is a typical feature of contemporary Finnish intra-party politics – and strongly against the mass party model’s idea of contending party ‘faces’.

Despite of Urpilainen’s somewhat weak position and the existence of various informal or temporary ‘boards of directors’ her independent leadership appears to have been – in cross temporal comparison – very strong. It manifested most clearly in the end of the process when the negotiations had halted. She personally decided to continue negotiations with the NCP (HS 7.6., SDP 6,) and she started to negotiate already before the NEC convened (SD 9.6.). Twosome, like Lipponen and Niinistö in 1995 Urpilainen and Katainen set the ‘big line’ for Katainen’s ‘sixpack’ coalition (HS 14.6.) and, most importantly, Urpilainen personally selected her ministerial entourage (HS 19.6., interviews). While in the 1980’s alternative proposals and even votes might have been taken in the NEC in the 2000’s ministerial nomination is just ‘a run-through’ of the chair’s preferences (SDP 3). In formal terms the NEC is still the strongest organ as it appoints the ministers ((i.e. accepts the chair’s list) (SDP 7, SDP 5). The PPG gives its ‘blessing’ but it does not challenge the leader. The consolidation of the leader’s right to nominate ministers provides the chair a powerful stronghold over the inner party circle. As 1) everybody wants to be a minister and 2) in order to become one needs to please the chair (who leads the ministerial group), 3) criticism wanes. (SDP 4.) Control over career possibilities (which can also take place in the EPO leadership and the NEC) promotes a centripetal power dynamic, which is a core feature of the new populist right parties’ centralized leadership model (Betz & Immerfall 1998; Mudde 2007; Johansson 2014).

The importance of this observation is tied to the relevance of the third informal power unit, the ministerial group. Almost all interviewees pointed out (spontaneously) that nowadays party work – when the party is in the government, that is – takes place almost completely in there. In the NCP, which entered the 2011 negotiation from a governing position, the ministers acted as main
negotiators (see below). According to SDP 3 in the 1980’s ‘the political agenda for the week’ was drawn in the NEC, now it is drawn in the ministerial group. Moreover, since Lipponen’s 1st government the government’s inner circle, ‘the chairman ministers group’ (colloquially known as kopla (‘the gang’) ‘builds up compromises and all significant decisions’. Thus, the party leaders’ power is immense. According to SDP 4 the party leader handles the ministerial group ‘like a monarch’: she ‘picks her entourage and sets the agenda […] she hears out and listens’ but in the end ‘she needs to decide, she announces the SDP’s stance’. As it was already pointed out, in this scenario the PPG’s role is more often that of a rubberstamp.\textsuperscript{226} When the SDP took part in demolishing the wealth tax in 2005, the MPs read about it in the newspapers. When they asked why the issue did not pass through the PPG, the ministers answered that it would have not passed (also Ahde & Hakkarainen 2013, 423). According to SDP 7 ‘when the party is in the government it supports the coalition and everything is very much centered in the ministerial group’, which also takes care of political ‘scheming’. As the Finnish government model does not include independent extra-governmental institutions for monitoring, clarifying and mediation, the specification of policies is in the ministers’ hands and party organs operative role remains limited (Nousiainen 2006, 317). This all, of course, strengthens the public ‘face’. At the same time, however, it should be again noted that this does not mean PPG ascendancy; rather, \textit{omnipotent public ‘face’ here refers to the unified leadership.}

The media content suggests that in the 2000’s the final decision phase has lost even its festive meaning. Neither of the NG members’ blogs or the country’s largest newspaper mentioned the NEC’s, the PPG’s or even the councils meetings at all. Only the party paper (SD 20.6.) reported that the council ‘confirmed the party’s attendance’ to Katainen’s government. The article, however, focused almost exclusively on Urpilainen’s speech. According to SDP 1 the ‘party council has evolved into the chairman’s speech forum […] more and more in Urpilainen’s term’. This has not always been the case. In the 1960’s council meetings used to be venerable occasions, which often ended in a vote. Nowadays anyone can view them from the Internet and voting is inconceivable. (SDP 7.) Matti Ahde, a party veteran, a multi-time minister, former PPG chair and a party deputy chair who acted as a council leader in 2005–2008 tried to enhance its status but failed (Ahde & Hakkarainen 2013, 419–420). SDP 5 and SDP 6 confirmed that the party council is nowadays merely a ‘forum for public display’; if frictions exist, they have been

\textsuperscript{226} According to Paloheimo (2005, 255) PPG’s possibilities for affecting politics lay now in the government negotiations where it can try make proposals to the program.
‘sieved’ elsewhere. In relation to subnational parties SDP 7 brought up another informal gathering: the district chairs’ negotiation, which also consolidated during Lipponen’s term and was used regularly by Urpilainen.\textsuperscript{227} It gathers every two months to hear the leadership’s thoughts and give districts’ ‘greetings’. An informal organ, it too is a venue for trusted talk: ‘sometimes the district leaders received information on so delicate matters that they were not delivered to the NEC at all’. According to Urpilainen (2011, 93) she met the district leaders on a regular basis.

\textit{A few features in the SDP’s 2011 process reminisce of old times} – and mark a difference to the NCP anno the 2010’s. Firstly, although the party organs do not seem to engage with similar precision anymore it is still important to keep them aboard. SDP 6 emphasized that it was necessary that Urpilainen committed the party organs by explaining all developments and choices; ‘[F]or a while you can act like the NCP’s chair, but that path do not last long. … People do not accept it, it is not enough for them that you just announce something’. SDP 7 suggests that one reason for Urpilainen’s dismissal in the summer of 2014 was her rather authoritarian attitude in dictating the ministerial nominations.\textsuperscript{228} Antti Rinne who succeeded Urpilainen learned from this and ‘made a number’ out of his ministerial re-shuffles by circulating them through the party council. Thus, it seems that the SDP’s internal affairs need to at least appear as democratic. While real decision-making power might have escaped from the party organs, neglecting them can have real consequences. The NEC’s relatively strong involvement in the formal policy process is likely to stem from this mindset too. It too marks a difference to the NCP.

Another marked feature of the process that also reflects a symbolical departure from authoritarian image was that almost every member of the leadership performed public duties. Compared to Jyrki Katainen who was the NCP’s solitary face (see below) Urpilainen’s personal public presence was rather small. According to Urpilainen (2011, 84) ‘a multifaceted party is better than the SDP that only has one face … I don’t believe in authoritarian leadership… it’s not my leadership style.’ However, according to SDP 7 this was clearly about appearances: ‘of course it was very carefully considered who says what’; ‘the talking heads’ were coordinated by the party leadership. The PPG chair Eero Heinäluoma, a tall and heavy man who looks like a ‘traditional Social Democrat’ was ‘used’ to appeal to the traditional workers. The EPO deputy chair Ilkka Kantola, a priest, addressed moral issues

\textsuperscript{227} Apparently a similar gathering existed already in early 1990’s (Tuomioja 2014, 46).

\textsuperscript{228} True, Lipponen did this too, but ‘he was a strong leader’ (SDP 7). This is a good example how party’s strength reflects back in leader’s independent power.
while the second deputy chair Piia Viitanen – a sympathetic-looking advocate of softer values – delivered the ‘bad news’. Council chair Jouni Backman who is known for his calm and quiet demeanor played the role of a mediator. The most important thing was that all ‘talking heads’ had to hold formal positions within the party organization. Without the exception of Heinäluoma (who was a former party chair and secretary) all ‘talking heads’ were EPO leaders.

The final factor that reminded of the ‘old times’ was not a gimmick: the NG/presidium was genuinely incoherent while holding its detailed discussions. It is now the main site for leaderships backing and in this sense it resembles the role that the NEC had in the 1980’s. (SDP 7.) Despite of the withering of the NEC’s power and the emergence of dominant leadership practices the SDP’s working procedures continue to embody traces from their past. Although these traces are mostly symbolical, the leadership has to take them into consideration when enhancing its initiatives and it still is, therefore, more restricted.

That being said, it is also clear that the power balance in the SDP’s actual practices too has over the years bent towards the public ‘face’. Starting from the top, nowadays all members of the core leadership work in the parliament, the government or nearby. Under the pressures of publicity and high velocity demands this produces an informal, strongly personalized and tight operative network that can handle the hectic reality of ‘fast politics’. Under these conditions the traditional extra-parliamentary steering becomes impossible. At least partially amateur-based decision-making units like the NEC are not fast, closed or fluid enough to react. Due to the parliament’s increased resources and its nature as an information hub the parliamentary sphere is now the main site for policy preparation too. As the national political agenda becomes alive in Eduskunta’s committees, the best available information resides there and in the ministerial committees as well of course. The PPG chair has surpassed the party secretary in the ‘troika’ a long time ago although he/she seems to be clearly subservient to the party leader, too. Although the PPG is still not a significant independent decision-making unit its increased presence in political processes has lowered the NEC’s prestige and nowadays the party leadership can choose where to build backing for its initiatives. The ‘presidentialized’ core leadership that builds on the tight compound of the PPG and EPO leaders guarantees that the leader’s vision enters the organs in a unified manner and the leader’s tight grip on career paths makes sure that opposition is minimal.

According to SDP 1 the party has always had strong leaders (like Väinö Tanner and Kalevi Sorsa) who were very hard to oppose ‘from below’, but over the years
the party leader’s power has institutionalized: the chair has become a decisive organ in itself. SDP 4 noted too that ‘she is an institution’. According to SDP 2 Paavo Lipponen was the first ‘non-delegator’. Nowadays chairs refer to themselves, not to ‘us’ (as the party community). Another marked difference with past times connects to unity. SDP 8 reminded that while Tanner was a very powerful leader there was always powerful opposition against him too. Nowadays such opposition does not exist. According to SDP 4 ‘[P]olitics has become so hectic ... [that a] large party’s chairman ... needs to be in the pole position all the time’. This reality quite obviously differs a lot from the 1980’s ‘slow politics’ where the NEC could sit for hours and postpone important decisions. The change is significant.

6.5.2 The NCP in 2010’s: sovereign and open leadership dominance

Leadership problems found the NCP too at the turn of the new millennium. Ville Itälä who succeeded Sauli Niinistö in 2001 wanted to re-introduce more democratic leadership practices. Like the previous ‘democratizer’ Pertti Salolainen Itälä too was generally considered as a weak leader. Quickly after his selection that took place in the midst of Lipponen’s 2nd ‘rainbow’ Itälä entered into a problematic relationship with the PPG, which he was not able to tame despite of several attempts. First the PPG challenged Itälä’s ministerial re-shuffles but his demise really started when he tried and failed to dismiss Ben Zyskowicz from the PPG chairs position. (Yli-Huttula 2006, 140, 151–155, 216–217). Itälä’s weakness swung the power pendulum temporarily back to the party’s historical power base.

With a strong support from various former NCP chairs and several younger fellow MPs 32-year old Jyrki Katainen was elected to succeed Itälä in the 2004 party congress (Yli-Huttula 2006, 225–230). Like ten years earlier a very strong leader followed a weak one. A few factors can explain this. First of all, the 2000 constitutional reform formalized party leaders’ ascendancy in domestic politics. It can be argued that this suited the leader-centric NCP better than anyone else as its retroactive leadership culture was still strongly intact. NCP 4 assured that ‘the NCP is a very leader-centric culture. When the leader is selected, he takes charge’. The power is total – until it is taken away: ‘the party chair and the party secretary have very much power until they have none […] when you drive that ship you may drive it, and if you don’t know how to drive it, you will be kicked out very quickly’ confirmed NCP 5 too. This ethos matched well with party leader’s growing expectations. Compared to more collectivistic organizational cultures Katainen enjoyed very auspicious conditions where to grow his dominance. The second
factor supported this too: as the party was again recovering from a leadership deficit, a strong demand for unifying force was again present.

Thirdly, unlike Niinistö who merely ‘forced square blocks into round holes’ Katainen employed his collegial personality to bind the party together. Katainen was not ‘an iron fist’ like Niinistö; he listened to a wide array of opinions, concluded on the ‘big lines’ and left a wide autonomy in the details for his trustees. (HS 28.3., NCP 2). Katainen was an excellent communicator who listened very carefully to those closest to him and the PPG, and he also put more weight on the EPO (NCP 3). He was a very clever moderator: ‘in Jyrki’s time the NCP was exceptionally unified’, ‘he always committed [all parties] behind decisions...’ and he was gifted in building coalitions: he did not hesitate to ‘lift to the core [i.e. the ministerial group] those who some others might have considered as political rivals’ (NCP 5). Katainen had SDP-style leadership qualities. The strict division of labor within the party however shows that the nature of committing was still a lot narrower.

Fourth, and perhaps the most important factor for Katainen’s dominance built on these qualities. Katainen’s positivity created a positive cycle within the organization (HS 28.3.) and the newfound unity created an exceptional winning streak (NCP 5). Already in the 2004 Euro elections the NCP was the largest party. It increased its vote share in the 2004 municipal elections and almost managed to win the 2006 presidential elections (NCP candidate Niinistö lost by a 1,8 % margin to the incumbent president). In the 2007 parliamentary elections the NCP increased its vote share by 4 % (around 100 000 votes), increased its group with 10 new seats and after four years in the opposition formed a bourgeois coalition with the Centre Party. Although the Centre finished first (only with a one seat margin, though) this was the NCP’s historically best result. The party also won the 2008 municipal elections and the 2009 Euro elections and it entered the 2011 race in a very good position. (Statistics Finland.) A few weeks before the elections HS (28.3.) called Katainen a ‘golden boy of good times’ who enjoys ‘hysterical popularity’.

Through his personality, the party’s unity and electoral fortunes Katainen had an extremely strong standing – even in NCP standards (NCP 5.) All significant decisions in the 2011 process were assigned to him. Katainen called the parties to negotiations and personally adjusted to the SDP’s initial demands (HS 10.-13.5., NP 13.5.). He agreed to continue with the SDP after the negotiation halted, he also

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229 According to NCP 2 Katainen was strongly an ‘era politician’: party activists had grown tired of old and grey ‘depression men’ and the strengthening of media politics demanded positivity (NCP 2) (which was Katainen’s personal trademark characteristic).
solved large economic problems and in the end he personally set up the ministerial group (see below). Also, he set up the ‘radio silence’ with the other negotiating party leaders (HS 17.6.). Although the process was extremely strenuous for Katainen who had to build his government around six different parties and make large concessions to he set up the ‘radio silence’ SDP during the process, his support never ceased. Throughout the negotiations the party stood behind him firmly, ‘no one challenged Katainen’s status as a party leader’ (HS 16.6.). According to NCP 4 this can be used as an example of the depth of the NCP’s leader-centrism.

However, Katainen was not alone. The NCP’s power system too built on a strong compound of EPO and PPG leaderships – and the EPO’s reduction into an electoral machine. Katainen’s and his long time friend PPG chair Jyri Hämäläinen’s bond was exceptionally strong. According to NCP 4 Katainen and Hämäläinen were ‘thick as thieves’; they always schemed and weighted options together and selected the best ways to proceed. Their cooperation was ‘completely seamless, always’. According to NCP 5 replacing Zyskowicz with Hämäläinen was equally important for the power system as Katainen’s ascension: it avoided setting ‘the party and the PPG against’ and instead allowed them to set ‘parallel to each other’. Strong coordination enabled movement in the same direction. However, according to NCP 4 the PPG chair’s support for the strong leader was institutionalized in Niinistö’s term. While in the past strong PPG chairs could dominate weak EPO chairs nowadays the PPG chair is clearly subordinate: the party chair always selects him/her.

The same applies to party secretaries that since the 1990’s have developed into campaign managers whose main task is to harness the party apparatus for electoral victories. The NCP’s party secretaries no longer interfere with politics. (NCP 3, 4 & 5). But while the NCP’s ‘troika’ clearly leaned towards the parliament, party secretary Taru Tujunen’s strong determinacy in leading and committing the EPO was very valuable and important for Katainen whose leadership aimed for unity (NCP 3 & 4). Overall, the NCP’s ‘troika’ worked exceptionally well exactly because leaders’ roles were clearly separated and everyone dominated only their own fields (NCP 5). The inner circle’s cohesion was the fifth factor that explained Katainen’s strength.

The NCP was a front-runner in the polls. Before the elections Katainen claimed that the chair of the largest party gathers the coalition and starts to lead it. He set

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230 Only (internal) critique was generated by the fact that NCP had to coalesce with SDP, not Centre and few MP’s feared that NCP would be played out when first round of negotiations halted (NCP 3 & 4).
himself into this position. (HS 11.4, 15.4.) Then, for the first time in Eduskunta’s
history the NCP won more seats than any other party (Official statistics of
Finland). The party community’s immediate response was that Katainen would be
the prime minister (for example Toivakka 18.4.) and already on the next day
Katainen stated that the NCP will start negotiations with the SDP and the True
Finns (HS 19.4.). According to NCP 3 it was unanimously agreed that the most
important thing was that ‘the NCP is in the government and that the prime
minister is from the NCP’. Highlighting ‘governmentalization’ NCP 5 pointed out
that the party’s ‘parliamentary position’ (i.e. is the party in the government or in the
opposition) is now the most important factor that determines a chair’s political
future. When Itälä was unable to steer the NCP into the government in 2003 the
‘internal mechanism’ activated and he was quickly replaced. This of course builds
strong incentives for the leader to get into a government – at any cost.231

The first organ that convened after the elections was the NCP’s incumbent
ministerial group (NCP 4). In the NCP too it is the main ‘tool’ when the party is in
the government; ‘the body that factually makes all decisions’. The ‘widened’
ministerial group included ministers, the EPO leadership (including the council
chair and the party secretary), the PPG leadership (including the PPG’s general
secretary) and the group’s special assistant. In short: it was an amalgamation of all
significant party leaders, from all party ‘faces’.232 The opposition term’s tool was
‘the fist’, a compound of PPG and EPO leaderships and their secretaries (NCP 5,
Yli-Huttula 2006, 187) – equivalent to the SDP’s presidium.

All rules regarding the NG’s composition were erased from the party’s statutes
in 2003 (NCP PPG rules 2003). Due to their specialization and experience the
NCP’s ministers from Kiviniemi’s government that preceded Katainen’s ‘sixpack’
coalition formed the backbone of the NG by acting as head negotiators in their
fields of administration. Although this made sense politically – cabinet ministers
are undeniably the best political professionals in their own field – only 2 out of 7
(and 3 out of all 9 head negotiators) held formal positions in leaderships during the
2011 negotiations (Annual reports, Government negotiations organization
27.5.2011). A group that was handpicked by Katainen in 2007 or during the 2007-

231 Despite of the significant loss (7 seats) in 2015 elections chair Alexander Stubb who succeeded
Katainen in 2014 managed to place NCP in Centre’s Juha Sipilä’s ‘basic bourgeois’ coalition –
probably saving his career. Now, in spring of 2016, the party has voiced widespread disappointment
to NCP’s effort in the government and Stubb has been openly challenged. This might indicate a turn
back to less ‘governmentalized’ practices.

232 In the end of Katainen’s term (2014) he often invited only the ‘narrow ministerial group’,
ministers and their secretaries, in order to have ‘more strategic conversation’ (NCP 5).
2011 term dominated the NCP’s NG. Moreover, as NCP 4 pointed out, ministerial special assistants create nowadays another informal elite that plays a very important role in the political preparation processes. As the formal organs’ involvement in the process is very small and even their leaders are inferior to incumbent ministers, the possibility for the 1980’s style intra-party resistance seems to be weak. As Nousiainen (2006, 318) has noted, it seems that the strengthening of ‘governmentalization’ has begun to detach parties’ upper leaderships that more often work as ministers from parties too. Also, as in NCP too the highest power seems to operate above the PPG, too, public ‘face’ ascendancy refers first and foremost to the ‘presidentialization’ of the party leadership.

The ministerial group’s preponderance follows from the NCP’s internal ‘division of labor’ which was agreed in 2008. According to it 1) the EPO is responsible for campaign work and long-term programmatic development, 2) the ministerial group handles operative leadership and everyday politics and 3) the PPG takes care of Eduskunta work and provides backup for the ministerial group. The ‘executive group’ that consisted of the party secretary, the PPG’s general secretary and the ministerial group’s special assistant attended all meetings in order to control the division. In the elections the PPG secretariat prepared the electoral program while the party office focused on campaigning. This agreement helped to dismantle the old confrontation between these ‘faces’. It was made possible by the party community’s strong will to continue winning. (NCP 5.) Although nothing guarantees the absence of ‘mutinies’ in the PPG, explicit agreements make them less likely. As the party leader’s legitimacy to appoint the PPG chairs has consolidated there are now fewer possibilities for the PPG’s resistance than in the 1980’s or the early 1990’s.

The NEC held its first meeting in Eduskunta. The historical win build a ‘fantastic’ atmosphere. MP and NEC member Heinonen did not mention any decisions, but following traditions from the 1980’s the meeting dealt the election results. (Heinonen 21.4.). This also suits the NEC’s contemporary role as an electoral machine’s coordinating group (see below). Helsingin sanomat did not mention the meeting at all and the NP’s (21.4.) story focused on Katainen’s speech. Katainen declared that the party will negotiate and emphasized that hard times ahead require compromise potential. Resembling 1995’s developments NCP 4 emphasized a crisis’ value for the leader: although it hurts, something needs to be done and because Katainen was now the formateur he used ‘other the parties’ mandate’ too by bearing the main responsibility for the coalition formation. Although the NEC’s minutes were not available, other data indicates that the NEC
was more or less meaningless in the process. It appears to have convened only twice and its only decision seems to have been the acceptance of Katainen’s list of ministerial nominees. The EPO leadership, of course, took part in the NG.

All interviewees agreed that in the NCP too the NEC’s relevance has decreased during the research period. According to NCP 2 it has experienced ‘a very dramatic change’, NCP 3 stated that ‘its influence within the NCP has clearly diminished, it’s very small’. NCP 2 and 3 gave almost identical descriptions. In Suominen’s era (1979-1991) the NEC was still ‘significant’. It deliberated, struggled and aligned policies, ’it was a political place’. But Suominen was the last chair that understood ‘the field’s’ relevance.233 When Salolainen – a long time MP from Helsinki – took over, the NEC’s relevance decreased as he did not understand what it was for. Interviewees disagreed about Niinistö’s term: while NCP 3 claimed that even in Niinistö’s era ‘fairly relevant discussions about politics were had in there’, NCP 2 claimed that Niinistö did not want to hear advice and after Salolainen’s term the NEC could not take back its position. As was already pointed out, this latter view is strongly corroborated by Yli-Huttula (2006) who stated that in Niinistö’s term the ‘the NEC was completely powerless’. Latter developments suggest too that the NEC never regained the political role that it used to have in the 1980’s.

According to NCP 3 Katainen tried to revitalize the NEC but nowadays its main function is to deliver the chairman’s speech to the public. District representatives might send their ‘greetings’ but politics is made in Eduskunta. NCP 2 corroborated that in Katainen’s term everything transformed into a ‘spectacle’. ‘People were applauding in a NEC meeting! [...] Then they gave a few comments, which all competed in ‘brown nosing”. ‘People were competing for the leadership’s attention’ and therefore no one dared to say or change anything. The group has become too large. The ‘trail’ of party office workers and MPs has grown year by year and ‘it’s not an executive committee anymore, it has transformed into a theatre act. It has turned into party council II’.

NCP 5 confirmed that today the NEC is not a strategic and aligning leadership unit. Resembling of SDP 7’s characterization, NCP 5 stated too that it is unrealistic to think that a ‘firm body’ like the NEC could lead a party. ‘Its speed will never suffice, it’s too static’. In contemporary NCP the NEC is a place for committing the district leaders, whose

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233 It should be noted that all NCP interviewees characterized the NEC more as a part of the ‘field’ organization instead of separate national leadership unit.

234 NCP 3 concurred that similar development plagues all larger gatherings, like the congress: political importance is very low, they are 'show occasions'. It remains unknown, however, how much this holds in relation to PPG too.
main responsibility is to approve the party’s campaign strategy, which is executed by the districts’ executive directors who now work for the central party organization. The NEC has an important role in the overall scheme as it is ‘the field’s’ main committing tool but it does not have anything to do with the party’s operative or political leadership.

While the PPG has always been the NCP’s strongest party organ its presence in government negotiations has been – due to the NCP’s leader-centric party culture – smaller than the SDP’s deciding organs. It has, nonetheless, fought back fiercely whenever its interests have been threatened and it has been the main site of approval for the leadership’s propositions. During the 2000’s its independent power seems to have decreased to some extent. The main reason for this is the tight compound between EPO and PPG leaderships that consolidated in Niinistö’s term. According to NCP 4 a conflict between the party and the PPG is nowadays more or less theoretical: the PPG chair and the party leader work in close conjunction, in a way that the party chair leads and the PPG chair keeps the PPG together. According to NCP 5 the PPG leadership is very important for the overall functioning of the party and the party leadership pays a lot of attention in keeping it on board. These characterizations and the consolidation of the party chair’s right to pick the PPG chair suggests that the PPG mainly reacts, it does not initiate. Its relationship with the ministerial group that stems from the ‘division of labor’ strengthens this conception too. Again, these developments point towards ‘presidentializing’ dynamics. However, as Itälä’s case showed, in absence of other power concentrations (i.e. after the NEC has disappeared completely from the intra-party power map) the power is likely to find its way back to the PPG if the leader proves unable to lead.235

It must also be noted that in the 2011 process the PPG made all major approvals and it was thoroughly committed throughout the process (NCP 5). In its organizing meeting Katainen ‘gave a political overview and we discussed it’ (Lauslahti 26.4.) and the PPG appointed the incumbent leadership to continue through negotiations (Heinonen 21.4.). Unsurprisingly, as NCP 3 pointed out, the group was unanimously for negotiating. In the process the PPG gave various other approvals too. It approved the party’s answers to the formateur (Heinonen 2.-3.5., Toivakka 3.5.), the party’s stance in the Euro issue that set the coalitional base (HS

235 In NCP’s current leadership crisis chair Stubb has been challenged especially from the PPG while the whole field organization (including EPO leaders) have explicitly stayed behind him. While the representatives of the field organization of course select party chairs and therefore possess ultimate power over them, losing of control over the PPG poses more immediate problems as party’s governing capacity builds on this linkage.
When Katainen/ the NG made decisions – like solving the base issue (HS 13.5.) or extending it with the Left Alliance (HS 17.5.) – the PPG gathered soon to hear reports and voice their consent (Heinonen 13.5., Heinonen 18.5.). After negotiations halted the PPG gathered to ‘decide on the continuation of negotiations’ and to ‘align the future’. The meeting gave ‘110 %’ support to Katainen and ‘the constructive and supporting discussion ended in vibrant applause’. (Heinonen 7.6.) Another meeting was held only a few days later (10.6.) because the ‘government schemes seemed not to settle’ (Heinonen 9.6.). Of course, Katainen and his inner circle settled all major alignments. But in order to avoid problems in the NCP it is highly important that the chair keeps the PPG informed and intact (NCP 3 & 5). From this study’s research period Suominen’s, Salolainen’s and Itälä’s experiences are powerful reminders of what happens when the chair tries to bypass the parliamentary group. However, as long as the inner circle stays cohesive no problems should emerge.

The PPG has clearly strengthened in one domain: the preparation of the party’s policy is nowadays entirely its responsibility (NCP 3). As was just noted, in the SDP the NEC is still involved in policy work – at least as a coordinator and formal approver. Already in the 2007 elections, before the ‘division of labor’, the PPG handled policies and ‘the party took care of the elections’ (NCP 4). In 2011 the PPG’s ‘working groups [...] prepared the government program’ while the ‘party handled the campaign’. The main function of this operation was to motivate and commit the MPs. (NCP 5.) The PPG’s committee groups began their work well before the elections. For example according to MP Lauslahti (3.5.) her committee group started to prepare the party’s objectives in the fall of 2010 and ‘many of them now show in our electoral themes and governmental objectives’. When the negotiations begun, the MPs were divided to ‘background groups’ – according to their committee assignments – to assist the NG. The groups were waiting for the ministers’ call ‘all the time ready to provide investigations and our opinions’ (Lauslahti 3.5., also Heinonen 2.4.5.). This maintained communication between the NG and the PPG and it helped to ‘keep it along’ (NCP 5).

Two factors should be pointed out, though. First, the policy work was still directed from the top echelons by the ministers that the chair had appointed. Second, the MPs involvement via the specialized committee assignments effectively ‘chopped down’ the PPG. From the leaderships point of view these methods serve two purposes: one, organizational ‘take through’ becomes easier when most of the group has actively taken part in the preparation and two due to
the atomization of the PPG unified resistance against the leadership becomes very hard – especially considering that the PPG leader is in the party leader’s ‘pocket’. Thus, rather than overemphasizing the PPG’s decisional capabilities it seems that these methods mainly serve rather similar purposes than the SDP’s ‘democratizing’ efforts.

As was already pointed out Katainen and Urpilainen wound up the negotiations by themselves (HS 11.-15.6., Häkämies 10.6.). Katainen’s personal power also showed in the ministerial nominations. As HS (17.6.) wrote: ‘as a head negotiator Katainen alone negotiates which portfolios the NCP receives and dictates who fills them’. However, Katainen did submit his list for the party organs approval too. Before the council’s and the PPG’s joint meeting made the final verdict the NEC got a chance to voice its opinion (HS 13.6.). This meeting served a special purpose. According to NCP 5 the leader used the NEC to build backing for his choices in the joint meeting. As district leaders are already committed in the NEC it is impossible that the council (that selects the NEC) would go against it. This, then, builds force against the PPG from where the ministers are nowadays expected to emerge (NCP 3) and where personal disappointments that could create problems might erupt (NCP 4). This operation gave some power to the EPO too. However, all this was rather theoretical in Katainen’s case. According to NCP 4 ‘the chairman creates the chain of ministers’ and that was it. NCP 3 pointed out that Katainen’s prestige was so high that absolutely no one dared to challenge his views. All Katainen’s proposals were accepted unanimously in the joint meeting (Sarkomaa 18.6., Heinonen 18.6. and Häkämies 18.6.). While it still holds the highest formal power in the government formation process its actual effect was almost non-existent. According to NCP 4 nowadays ‘the council’s task is to … praise the leadership’.

Even in a party that has traditionally emphasized the leader’s role Jyrki Katainen’s position in the 2010’s was extremely strong. Besides that the constitutional reform had finally provided a legal basis for the party chairs ascendancy, the party’s incoherence prior to his term, his ability to unite it and most importantly his capability to lead it into several consecutive victories made Katainen omnipotent. The strong compound with (subordinate) the PPG leadership and the party office’s coincidental regress into an electoral organization formed a pristine inner circle, which – due to a strong ‘division of labor’ – kept

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236 Interestingly, Helsingin sanomat (20.6.) observed that without one exception Katainen’s ‘team’ was the same group of people that in the NCP’s election commercial travelled with him in a bus towards the a ‘betterfare state’.

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very cohesive. To top it off, Katainen (like Urpilainen) could dominate the upper leadership with his ministerial nominations.

Another way to assess the party leader’s power in the NCP in the 2010’s is to look for potential sources of resistance. Starting from the bottom, it seems that the party council has never been considered as a decision-making unit and its role has certainly not strengthened in the 2000’s. According to NCP 4 nowadays it is hard to even find speakers for its meetings. A long time ago its intermediate role between the party congresses made it a place where subnational representatives could interact with the leadership. Nowadays, when humans and information travel a lot faster and with less costs, it has become hopelessly redundant. (NCP 2.) A similar fate has faced the NEC, which, as NCP 2 put it, has turned into ‘party council II’ where the party chair gives a public speech and the crowd hoorays. Today, its role is confined to committing district people behind the party offices campaign plans. It does not seem to have any political or operative relevance. In short: in the contemporary NCP the EPO’s role in political decision-making is very low or almost nonexistent. Some take part in long-term program work, which according to NCP 2 has also withered along with the decline of organizational activity. After its short detour in the mass party world the NCP has returned to its original cadre party model.

Due to the weakening of the EPO, the centralizing of political planning to the PPG and the ascendancy of the ministerial group the intra-party balance of power in the 2010’s NCP leans clearly towards the public ‘face’. The PPG, which is still the main locus of leadership’s committing work is also the leadership’s only existing worry. Yet, compared to 1980’s its independent power seems to have waned. Three things are important: the consolidation of the PPG chairs subservience, the leader’s nomination prerogatives (most importantly, the ministerial nominations) and the PPG works’ ‘atomization’ into the committee groups. Due to these reasons the PPG’s independent resistance potential against the party leader seems nowadays rather limited. In the current circumstances such unity, which it was able to create in 1987 would be hard to acquire. Thus, the public ‘face’ ascendancy in NCP too refers mostly to the ‘presidential’ dynamics within the leadership. However, as several prior incidences have shown the NCP’s PPG should never be underestimated. While Niinistö was able to dominate it the PPG’s resistance was a main contributor to Itälä’s demise (Yli-Huttula 2006). If the leader loses the election and/or the party faces opposition, heavy turbulence is likely to emerge.
If the old parties’ internal life in the new millennium that is marked by amalgamated joint leaderships’ dominance and redundancy of the party organs reflects theoretical expectations, the Greens are the anomaly. In the spring of 2011 they executed two previously unseen operations that bear high significance for intra-party democracy. Firstly, for the first time in the political history of Finland they selected the party leader in an open membership ballot. Secondly, and more importantly for the current task at hand, in the 2011 negotiations the Green council openly rejected the party leadership’s and the PPG’s attempt to steer the party into an unwanted coalition in a joint meeting. The process also demonstrates that the party does not just appoint an exceptionally large amount of power to their council, the overall power structure is still characterized by diffusion: all party organs possess power at some level of decision-making, making the intra-organizational dynamics inherently unstable – and less predictable for the leadership.

The Greens arrived to the 2011 elections in a strong position. Since 1999 they had increased their share in all parliamentary elections and before 2011 they also won in the municipal and Euro elections. According to GREEN 4 the party enjoyed good support in polls too and their ministers in Vanhanen’s/Kiviniemi’s bourgeois coalition had performed well. The party council was also pleased. But when the elections got closer the Greens’ poll lead vanished – involvement in the bourgeois coalition affected them too (HS 12.4-15.4.). In the 2011 parliamentary elections the Greens experienced the largest setback in their history by losing a third of their seats (from 15 to 10). To make things even worse their arch enemy the True Finns increased their support by 15 % and got a firm grasp on a government position. (Official statistics of Finland.) The ‘blue-red’ had been the leaderships’ favorite before the elections. The majority of the district leaders disliked the NCP. (VL 8.4.) As it was shown, it quickly developed into a ‘natural’ base for the new coalition – with reinforcement from the True Finns.

The Greens path was stuck. Besides that it lost the election and its nemesis was heading to a government, chair Sinnemäki had explicitly promised to take the party...

\footnote{It should be already noted that due to the Law of Association’s (1989, § 17, 23) restrictions the ballot was only advisory. Nonetheless, interviewees confirmed that diverting from its result would have been impossible.}

\footnote{The election result’s importance in determining coalitional bases has increased since early the 1980’s (Nousiainen 2006). Alongside, of course, speculation of what constitutes a win and what does not.
into the opposition if it loses (VL 21.4., Sinnemäki 18.5.). Sinnemäki kept her promise (HS 18.4., Sinnemäki 19.4., VL 21.4.) and she was quickly joined by the rest of the leadership (Tynkkynen 19.4., Brax 19.4., Haavisto 19.4.). According to GREEN 5 this was her personal decision. The battle for the party leader's position was on and after the loss Sinnemäki was pressured to step aside. (VL 21.4., HS 22.4.) However, only a week later she decided to compete after all (Sinnemäki 29.4.) and few days later PPG chair Niinistö joined the race (Tynkkynen 2.5., HS 3.5.). It seems likely that Sinnemäki’s determination to stick with her opposition promise was caused by a need to please ‘the field’ that was about to vote for her position. According to GREEN 5 the whole upper leadership and the PPG were ready to negotiate. Eventually, through a clever strategic coordination the leadership steered the Greens into negotiations and the government. The Greens 2011 case is another example of how a unified and determined leadership can operate effectively even in the most democratic organizational conditions. The ‘presidential’ logic seems rather general.

When Katainen handed over his questions, the Greens which ‘were still heading to the opposition’ voiced their willingness to ‘offer advice’ (HS 28.4.). In the Greens too policy objectives had been prepared well in advance by a group of party, PPG and ministerial group officials. Like in the SDP the NEC coordinated the work. It had decided that the ‘objectives are to be used in the negotiations (if we get there)’ and that they ought to be used by the NG when crafting answers to the formateur. The NEC approved the initial list for the other organs’ approval and the council’s and the PPG’s joint meeting was initially set to take place on 2.5.

On 29.4. the NEC held a meeting where Sinnemäki repeated that the Greens are heading for the opposition. The meeting also dealt with policy objectives but decided to conceal them from the public. (Sinnemäki 29.4., GREEN NEC minutes 1.4.2011., 29.4.2011). The NEC’s minor role, which was tied to policy coordination apparently ended here. According to GREEN 5 the NEC is first and foremost an ‘organizer of practical things’. It participates in politics through commenting – to arouse publicity – but the party council and the congress craft the ‘big line’ and the PPG takes care of daily politics. In the process it could attend meetings but it could not vote in them.

No signs of the council and the PPG’s joint meeting that according to the NEC minutes should have taken place on 2.5. exist in the minutes, the press or the blogosphere. Usually the Green council’s meetings create a lot of interest because they are considered ‘unpredictable’ (for example HS 6.6.). It also remains unknown whether the party answered to Katainen or not. It seems likely that the joint
meeting was cancelled/postponed because the party was still heading for the opposition – all public statements said this clearly. If someone answered to Katainen (or ‘advised’ him) it was the NG that had the NEC’s mandate to clarify party’s objectives.

On 2.5. the True Finns turned down the NCP’s Euro bailout policies. To save the prospective coalition Katainen proposed that the bailouts should be dealt as a separate matter, before the government negotiations. Almost immediately the Greens PPG chair Niinistö deemed Katainen’s motion irresponsible. Niinistö argued that the NCP is trying to buy support from the pro-Euro parties that were heading for the opposition. (the Greens were one of the strongest Euro supporters in the Eduskunta.) Niinistö promised to take the issue to ‘my group and to the party chair’ before making conclusions (HS 4.5.). Already on the same day the Greens presented a new condition for their support in the Euro matters: they will support bailouts (from the opposition) only if the upcoming government supports them too. (HS 5.5., Sinnemäki & Niinistö 5.5.). As the Green leadership was certainly aware that the NCP’s and the True Finns Euro views were fundamentally incompatible, Katainen’s options were limited down to two: either to make a u-turn in the NCP’s pro-Euro line and continue with the True Finns or seek new coalition partners that shared their pro- Euro leaning. According to GREEN 5 the condition was the leadership’s idea – and motivated by the possibility to play out the True Finns from the negotiations.

If the True Finns left the negotiation the Greens probabilities to get back in to the governing business increased considerably. Possible coalitions show that they had a strong leverage. The SDP’s and the NCP’s coalition (86 seats) left far from the majority. The inclusion of other pro-Euro groups, the Swedish people’s party and the Christian democrats would have produced 101 seats (out of 200). As the speaker of Eduskunta does not vote the majority would have decreased down to one MP. Considering the long tradition of surplus majority governance and the fact that small parties would have held a pivotal role in the coalition, the one seat majority was clearly too small. As the Left Alliance was unconditionally out of the picture (along with the True Finns) (HS 5.5.) Katainen was left with the Centre and the Greens. After a massive loss the Centre too had positioned itself firmly into the opposition. However, even if they had crawled out from there (which they eventually did) the SDP would have not agreed on the ‘three large’ (for historical reasons and because it positioned itself strongly against the bourgeois alliance in the elections, HS 14.-15.4.). The NCP’s and the Centre’s bourgeois alliance faced even graver problems than the ‘blue-red’-based options. After the Centre’s 16 seat
loss they would have not been able to create a majority even with the SPP and the CD. In both cases the Greens were Katainen’s only option.

The Green PPG played a critical role at this juncture. First, it confirmed on 10.5. that ‘a permanent majority’ is needed behind government’s EU policy (HS 11.5.). On the next day (11.5.) the SDP found agreement with the NCP (HS 12.5.) and on 12.5. the True Finns leader Timo Soini announced that they will not be able to join Katainen’s coalition. After this, the Green PPG ‘dealt the issue thoroughly and decided to call in the council whose permission is needed to join the negotiation’ (Soininvaaara 12.5.). Although the leadership’s motion to introduce the condition for supporting bailouts ignited the process, the PPG’s participation was integral as it provided formal backing for the initiative. Although the council’s approval was still needed, a sudden jump from a certain opposition role to being a potential coalition partner changed the situation profoundly. The ‘point of no return’ got much closer to the council, and put all of the pressure on it.

On 13.5. the joint meeting convened to decide whether the Greens should negotiate. It should be underlined again that the Green council’s role in these critical junctures is exceptionally strong. Other parties’ council’s do not get to decide whether to negotiate or not, let alone set the parties main objectives. The meeting was a ‘tough case’ and it lasted until ‘late at night’. Several dozen comments were given pro et contra but the general line was that if the party enters the negotiation terms should be really tight. The unanimous meeting set very strict demands for assessing the end result, including three explicit sine qua nons. (HS 14.5, VL 20.5., Karimäki 29.5.). Sinnemäki underlined that the sine qua nons need to be met before the Greens will even start to negotiate and the party will proceed only if the leadership enjoys a very strong support from the members. The party opened a membership poll for advice and backing. (Sinnemäki 13.5.). It gathered 2200 answers and wide recognition in the media. 89 % of respondents were for negotiating (HS 20.5.). (HS 20.5.). However, the council also mandated that the party should be able to exit the negotiations (Tynkkynen 15.5.).

The strictness of the council’s demands caused problems in the negotiations (Sumuvuori 8.6.). Partly it was about the council’s critique against the PPG that had been overly positive towards the negotiations in the public after the True Finns decided to step out. More generally too the 2011 process was characterized by a generational clash: the PPG was mainly composed of older party people (including many former chairs) while younger activists dominated the NEC and the party council. (GREEN 5). The leadership’s ‘lousy compromise’ would not have satisfied the council’s ‘feisty youth’ (HS 27.5.). A few days later Katainen accepted the
Greens sine qua nons and invited them to the negotiations (Sinnemäki 18.5., HS 19.5.). After the PPG advised the NG (HS 20.5.) the negotiations begun. The ‘radio silence’ was respected and party organs did not convene during the process.239

On the 1st of June the negotiations halted in the SDP’s and the NCP’s disagreement. Trying to find a way out Katainen came up with idea of a bourgeois coalition (with the Centre). However, Sinnemäki (1.6.) declared that because the ‘situation has changed’ the Greens needs to call in a joint meeting. Sinnemäki noted that it is not clear at all that ‘the Greens will continue in the government negotiations’ (HS 2.6.). According to the newspapers the ‘[P]arty leadership most likely wants to join the government but in the party council critical voices might very well have the majority’. The majority of council members were ‘not enthusiastic to continue with the Centre’. (HS 3.6.) As the bourgeois coalition was dependent on the Greens support the continuation of the whole process ended up in the hands of the Green council.

It is unthinkable that any other party would have asked their activists’ opinion at such an important juncture. According to SDP 6 this crystallizes the parties’ differences: the SDP leadership would have never taken such a critical issue into an open meeting and the NCP’s council would have never voted against because they support the leader as long as he/she is the chair. The SDP chair commits, the NCP chair might inform but the Green chair has to listen too. Marking the second occasion during this study’s research period when a party organ dismisses the leadership’s proposal (first was NCP PPG in 1987) the joint meeting rejected the idea to join another bourgeois coalition. The proposition lost 23-16. Only one MP voted against it, the council was fairly unanimous as well (22-8) (Soininvaara 6.6.). Both Niinistö and Sinnemäki voted for negotiations. Katainen was genuinely surprised about the council’s reaction (HS 8.6.).

The decision was meaningful from intra-party perspective; it reminded the PPG and the leadership of the party’s original spirit. According to GREEN 5 ‘the council took back the power which belonged to it but which it has not previously used’ (in this extent). It was a reaction against the oligarchization of the Green elite, which the incumbent PPG – with its large amount of emeritus chairs – represented. The council was originally built to ensure that the MPs ‘don’t swim too deep into that world’ (GREEN 4). This brings out a fundamental problem in

239 According to GREEN 5 the party chair and the PPG chair acted as lead negotiators while the party secretary and the PPG’s general secretary were ‘messengers’. The whole team of around 25 people attended the NG meetings, which took place more often than in other parties.
intra-party affairs. The party operates on two levels: some (i.e. MPs) know negotiators personally and share past experiences with them while some (i.e. council members) do not have a personal link and mainly view issues from a strict political perspective (GREEN 2 & 4). The Greens’ field is strong because the party does not have large external donors or positions in state administration that could be used for remuneration. Activists are their only resource-base and therefore they cannot be neglected. (GREEN 3 & 4.) The party paper saw ‘the field’s’ action against the ‘governmentalized party elite’ as a possibility to refresh party’s identity (VL 10.6).

Eventually the ‘blue-red’ got back together and as the council had already approved the plan to proceed with it (it only dismissed the bourgeois coalition) new joint meetings were not needed. As it has been noted already the end of the process was firmly in the party leaders’ hands and the Greens was no exception. According to GREEN 5 the negotiating procedure that consolidated during Lipponen’s 1st government gives a lot of weight to party leaders who personally solve all tough problems that cannot be decided in negotiating groups: ‘the harder the question, the smaller the amount of participants’. Katainen received a right to a final attempt in 7.6. (HS 8.6.) and the leadership met him right away on same day (HS 11.6.). On 10.6. the ‘sixpack’ continued – already before the same day’s NEC meeting that focused on party congress preparations (GREEN NEC minutes 10.6.2011, Soininvaara 10.6.). The Greens party congress was held on 11.6. Ville Niinistö won the chair by receiving 55.5 % share in the membership poll. Sinnemäki was left third with only 18.3 %. According to GREEN 4 the change increased the leader’s power right away. Niinistö assumed the head negotiators role and personally steered the negotiations to the end. He informed that he is aiming for the ministry of environment (HS 12.6., HS 14.-17.6.).

As has been already noted the Greens ministerial game continues to differ from the old parties’ ‘guided’ practices. The most important difference is that candidates ‘are not confirmed beforehand’ (GREEN 3). Decisions are made in the joint meeting without the NEC’s formal proposal. Candidates are proposed in the meeting, ‘providing a possibility for a surprise’. (HS 13.6.) In 2007 chair Tarja Cronberg won only after the vote – like Pekka Haavisto in 1995. Cronberg’s opponent, former party and council chair Heidi Hautala decided ‘in the last hour’ to challenge Cronberg. (GREEN 4.) Other ministers were voted in 1999 too (GREEN 3). In 2011 the decisive joint meeting lasted for 7 hours. The Greens received two ministerial portfolios. Chair Niinistö was selected unanimously but Heidi Hautala received a challenge from council chair Johanna Sumuvuori who lost
in a vote (34-13). Again, Hautala had assigned to the race only a week earlier. (HS 21.6.) This practice too highlights the Greens party culture’s central characteristic: spontaneity. *It stands in direct juxtaposition against the SDP-style ‘preparation’ through circuital committing and the NCP’s deeply internalized leadership autonomy.*

As was already noted in the 1995 case the Greens overall balance of power is somewhat hard to assess because the power is diffused among several organs. However, compared to 1991’s almost complete lack of boundaries it appears that nowadays the party organs take part in a sequential manner. In other words: their organizational roles seem to have consolidated. Again the NEC provided a venue for policy preparation and it also made the initial choice of the NG members. Later in the process it regressed to its traditional role as the council’s ‘stooge’ by mainly focusing on party congress preparations. Its status has strengthened over the years: nowadays it discusses current issues, ‘gives feedback’ and convenes more often than the council (GREEN 3). According to GREEN 5 however despite of its gradual strengthening the NEC is still mainly an organizational unit; the political power lays in the council and the PPG.

The interviews suggest that a similar generational change that took place in the NCP during the 1960’s and the 1970’s is now taking place in the Greens. The youth and student organizations are well represented in the NEC and the council and they have begun to demand more power for the party and less for the PPG. Some activists have wanted to transform the Green NEC into a similar political powerhouse that the SDP’s NEC used to be. (GREEN 4 & 5.) While ‘for us 1980’s ‘punk generation’ the idea of a political party is still a pretty traumatic thing […] these fellas go and print “I’m a party member” t-shirts’ (GREEN 4). Unlike the founding activists the new generation is politically very experienced and professional: most have already gained significant experience in municipal councils and other representative bodies (GREEN 2). However, as GREEN 4 points out, while even Niinistö has often tried to lean onto the NEC it has not caused anything in the PPG that still holds firmly onto its autonomy. One possibility is that the new generation is merely just ‘employing’ the party organs to gain prominence within the party. If this is the case the conflict might smother through an effective co-optation. In the 2015 elections four former party chairs dropped out voluntarily and gave way to younger participants.

According to public sources the PPG’s independent role in the process was more or less confined to the bailout issue, which, however, proved out to be very significant. By confirming the party’s conditions and deciding to seek the council’s approval to join negotiations the PPG helped the leadership to put the Greens
onto a certain path. In everyday politics the Green PPG is even stronger. GREEN 3 emphasized that the MPs presence on the ‘detail level’ guarantees them strong leverage over ‘party people’ who convene infrequently and watch the game from a distance: ‘[T]hose who work with something everyday, they are always on top when stances are taken...’. The PPG’s strong position that reminds a cadre party model as Paastela (2008) has noted is perhaps best manifested in its relationship with the party’s ministerial group. In a true parliamentary spirit (that in contemporary Finnish politics often turns on its head as Nousiainen (2006) has noted) the Green ministers are accountable to the PPG, not the other way around. The ministers have to share information and commit it, the PPG may legitimately argue against it. (GREEN 3 and 4). The MPs autonomy is still explicitly codified and the party membership is not a necessary requirement for them (Green PPG rules 2013). ‘Historical spirit among those who have been elected has been that because we are elected by the people, we are not under the NEC’s rule’ and it is hard even for the council to direct the PPG (GREEN 5.)

Paradoxically, in major issues all other organs (including the leadership) are subservient to the party council’s decisions. In the 2011 government negotiation process it (in cooperation with the four times smaller PPG) made the party’s decision to negotiate, set strict demands for assessing the quality of the end result and rejected the leadership’s proposal to enter a bourgeois coalition. The council also approved the final proposal and assigned ministerial nominations – to which it could also make independent suggestions. The joint meeting can also decide to end the party’s time in the government – like it did in 2002 and 2014. Compared to other party councils’ powers these are exceptionally strong prerogatives. The fact that the council is also ready to use them significantly reduces the Green leadership’s autonomy. As GREEN 4 stated: ‘the fear of the council is the root of wisdom’ (an idiom that is coined from a biblical proverb). However, it is important to underline that during ‘normal times’ the council mainly lines wide policies that the PPG does not have to comply with, at least in detail (GREEN 1 & 3). Nonetheless, the strong council that provides good possibilities for traditional SDP-style representation and the direct leadership selection that the party is likely to employ in the future too provide the Greens’ small yet active ‘field’ much better opportunities for meaningful involvement.

The final piece of the puzzle is course the leadership. The logic that follows directly from this study’s distributional conception of intra-party power is that when several organs are empowered, dominance becomes harder. As the Greens’ organs are clearly more empowered than other parties’ organs it means
automatically that the Green leader is less autonomous than his/hers counterparts. Even though the party leader’s position has clearly strengthened in the Greens too since the early 1990’s along with the more general ‘presidentializing’ tendency the idea of an omnipotent ‘party CEO’ still fits poorly within their transparent, spontaneous and anti-authoritarian party culture and diffused power structure. In some questions the leader has to consider the PPG – like when she/he runs the ministerial group –, in other times the EPO organs – for example when the party is deciding on major issues in government negotiations. However, while these practices mark a clear difference to other studied parties it certainly does not mean that the leader is powerless. As GREEN 5 underlined, in contemporary Finnish party politics party leaders are central figures in all parties. In the negotiation process the party leadership played out the True Finns and paved the Greens way to the negotiations. Niinistö also finished the process by negotiating directly with Katainen. It similarly applies to the Greens too that when the leadership is unified and determined it is very hard to resist ‘from below’. Also, returning to what was said in this chapter’s first paragraph, it is essential to remember that while parties inhibit differing and sometimes very strict internal regulations, they always operate in wider contexts that set demands for what is actually possible. It is clear that the Green leader’s power too has been enhanced by the requirements of contemporary party politics.

Two general trends are noteworthy. First, despite their democratic ideals the Green leadership too negotiates in similar conditions. According to GREEN 2 contemporary negotiations take place in a ‘hermetic tank’ that is facilitated by modern IT. It is a closed environment, characterized by a rapid ongoing process that knows no pauses. In intra-party terms it means that it is simply impossible to seek more mandate in the middle of the process. Secondly, general trends in political activism affect the Greens too. In the 1990’s the realist vs. the fundamentalist division was still alive and activists often threatened to take issues to the council (GREEN 4). According to GREEN 2 the majority of today’s council members are well-established and professionalized local politicians who aspire for MP’s career. Because the ‘party council is a part of their political career [...] they have to find a balance as to how much they can act like raucous revolutionaries and how much they prepare for big tasks’. As the council has evolved into a future leader’s ‘training camp’ the boundary between the grassroots and national politics has become less clear. This weakens party organs vis-à-vis the leadership.
6.6 The main findings and conclusions: the ascendancy of the public party ‘face’ in actual party practices?

For the most of the 1980’s the SDP was led by a very strong duo, chair Kalevi Sorsa and party secretary Erkki Liikanen. Still, in the government formation processes – that can be considered as one of the most important party decisions – all important proposals were carefully circulated through the party’s central decision-making organs. First, through the national executive committee that scrutinized and approved the leadership’s proposals and later through the parliamentary party group to which it was explained how things were proceeding. The party council mainly gathered in the end of processes and its significance was rather small: all significant alignments had been already made in the NEC to which the council’s powers were delegated. Yet, the party leadership put serious effort in explaining its choices to it too. This strenuous practice – that has been named here as proactive leadership culture – was based on the idea that all relevant players should be committed behind leaders’ initiatives in advance in order to make governing easier in the future. In relative terms the extra-parliamentary sphere that was represented especially by the NEC was clearly more powerful, as the mass party model lead to expect. It was generally considered to be the legitimate decision-maker.

At the turn of the 1990’s this balance begun to change. Already in the 1987 negotiations the PPG received more attention from the leadership, ‘leveling’ out the difference to the NEC. In the 1991 process the NEC was partially bypassed by the leadership that sought wider backing for its opposition wishes directly from the party council. This undermined the NEC’s primacy. In the early 1990’s the PPG’s deputy chairs gained rights to attend NEC meetings and not long after the leadership detected a need to establish an informal joint leadership unit, the presidium, to coordinate the EPO’s and the PPG’s work. These developments set seeds for the gradual thawing of the border between the extraparliamentary and parliamentary ‘faces’. Eventually this development melted the intra-organizational resistance potential by undermining the NEC’s predominance. This showed clearly already in the 1995 process that was characterized by Paavo Lipponen’s ‘presidentialized’ dominance and apparent ‘equality’ between the weakened NEC and the PPG that continued to increase its prominence.

Slowly, along with the general strengthening of parliamentarism the PPG evolved into an arena where the leadership could also build backing. The coincidental weakening of the NEC lead into a situation where no clearly defined counter-weight exists
anymore. The NEC is also too slow and rigid to operate as a true operative leadership unit in a contemporary hectic political reality. Today the operative leadership in the SDP takes place in various informal gatherings that combine party leaders from all relevant ‘faces’. Most importantly, the party leader has institutionalized into an independent leadership unit that effectively controls the ‘inner circle’ with nominations. According to SDP 8 ‘all goes pretty much through the party leaders. They have their own restrictions and ‘stakeholder’s’ that affect their alignments and stances. But the decision-making is not [...] a very formal commitment anymore. In relation to formal decision-making the party chair has very free opportunities and hands, but factual restrictions of course exist’. Due to personalization and ‘de-institutionalization’ the process is now ‘much vaguer and harder to grasp’. The SDP’s over time development, which has been strongly conditioned by the ‘environmental’ change that has been elaborated in these chapters (see next chapter for detailed evaluation), clearly reflects the tendency that was described by Katz and Mair (1995, 2002). However, instead of highlighting PPGs’ ascendancy (as the cartel theory seems to do) the ‘presidentialization’ of the party leadership emerges as the most important development (see also Poguntke & Webb 2005; Webb et al. 2011; Passarelli 2015). In addition to the EPO leaders omnipotence (that Poguntke and Webb’s original model claims) this new dynamic highlights the tight compound of it and the (subservient) PPG leadership.

The process reconstructions demonstrated that the NCP’s leadership was relatively autonomous already in the 1980’s – as the cadre party model led to expect. In the NCP’s retroactive leadership culture the party leader is a trustee that receives wide legitimacy to pursue his/hers ‘line’ but when it stops pleasing the ‘crowd’ he/she also maintains the total responsibility. Besides judging leader candidates in party congresses, the NCP’s EPO seems never to have been a noteworthy independent political player – at least in the confines of these processes. The leader’s real counter weight has always laid in the parliamentary party group – just like the cadre party tradition presumes. However, this too has changed over the years. In the 1980’s the party leadership and the PPG were clearly separated units that could disagree openly. Most clearly this manifested in the 1987 government formation process where the PPG confronted the chairman and walked over his plans, producing a completely different kind of a coalition. This left no doubts where the final power in the NCP rested in the 1980’s.

After the party office’s and the PPG’s confrontation that characterized the turn of the 1990’s begun to dilute in the mid-1990’s the EPO and the PPG leaderships started to amalgamate. Party chair Sauli Niinistö’s and PPG leader Ben Zyskowicz’s
‘unholy alliance’ and the weakening of the central party apparatus undermined the old confrontation. With Zyskowicz’s help – and by controlling the ministerial nominations – Niinistö gained an upper hand towards the PPG too and eventually the PPG chair’s subservience to the party leader consolidated. Although the PPG maintained its primacy vis-à-vis other party organs, its independent power seems to have weakened due to the consolidation of the compound leadership scheme.

Two other factors have decreased its independent power and, thus, potential for intra-party resistance in the NCP. In 2008 the party agreed on internal ‘division of labor’ that aimed for abandoning the contradictions between party units. In this division the PPG received the sole responsibility for the party’s policy work. While this no doubt increased its power vis-à-vis the EPO (that was reduced to a campaign machine) it also ‘atomized’ the PPG’s influence as the MPs policy work happens predominantly through their committee assignments. It is now harder for the PPG to raise opposition against the party leadership because most of its constituent units (i.e. MPs) are deeply embedded in the policy process. In a way this reminds of the SDP’s proactive leadership culture.

In an equally paradoxical way the generalization of the principle that parties’ ministers should hail from the PPG has actually decreased its independent power because the party chair that leads the ministerial group makes the nominations. Control over the MPs’ career path is likely to induce strong centripetal dynamics. The ministerial group, which along with the ‘governmentalization’ of Finnish politics has emerged as the most powerful party unit, received in the 2008 plan the highest political and operative responsibilities. Overall, the developments in the NCP too suggest that the probability for severe intra-organizational resistance has become low: the PPG is tightly tied to the processes and the EPO organs have lost all of their political relevance. However, while the public ‘face’ has clearly strengthened, this has not lead into the ascendancy of the parliamentary party per se, but rather to ‘presidential’ ascendancy of the leadership compound that represents all relevant party ‘faces’.

Already in the early 1990’s government formation process the main characteristics that have continued to mark the Greens internal practices – transparency, spontaneity, anti-authoritarianism, etc. – were clearly detectable, as well as the diffusion of party power to a strong party council, an autonomous PPG, a weak NEC and, as a consequence of all these, a relatively constrained leadership. During the 1990’s the council’s powers decreased to some extent as other party units consolidated their positions. The party leader’s autonomy increased when he
succumbed more deeply into ‘normal’ party leader’s practices. Some of the general ‘presidential’ dynamic caught Greens too.

However, compared to the old parties the Greens are still markedly different in their internal practices. The ‘stagnation’ of the diffused power system provides the clearest demonstration against the all-encompassing force of ‘environmental’ pressures. Especially the Greens council, which unilaterally overturned the leadership’s and the PPG’s major initiative in 2011 is still an exceptionally strong party organ. Unlike other party councils (and for that matter other party organs too) it convenes at important junctures (i.e. when the party has to make a path-defining decision) and it faces concrete alternatives (i.e. it does not just listen to the leader’s speeches) from where it is expected to choose a basis for binding decisions (i.e. not just give ‘advice’ for the leadership’s free use). Such openness puts the leadership’s initiatives under uncertainty. Therefore, it could be considered as a necessary precondition for a true representative IPD.\textsuperscript{240} The spontaneity that reaches down to ministerial nominations creates unexpectedness that differs hugely from the old parties’ heavily ‘guided’ practices. To make things even more complicated the Greens PPG has always been autonomous against party decisions and ministerial initiatives. However, compared to the early 1990’s when the Greens leader could not even be an MP simultaneously the leader’s position has clearly strengthened in the Greens too, as he/she is constantly involved in general practices of national ‘high politics’.

Despite of the strong converging tendency the old parties too revealed some continuing differences in their internal practices. According to SDP 6 the problems that led to the halting of negotiations in 2011 were largely caused by differing organizational cultures: the NCP leadership interpreted Urpilainen’s efforts to commit the SDP organs as time playing. Although the SDP’s NEC has lost most of its resistance potential it is still very important to commit properly as it is the most important source of the party leader’s internal legitimacy. The party community will not stand if it is just being informed. Also, due to the PPG’s strengthening it too requires more nowadays; the times when it was ‘just informed’ are far behind. Urpilainen’s ‘multifaceted leadership’ and current party chair Antti Rinne’s ‘group decides’ initiatives are a part of this scheme, as well as the NEC’s relatively deep involvement in policy preparation, which in general nowadays takes place in the

\textsuperscript{240}However, instead of straightforwardly crowning the Greens as the only democratic party – albeit only their ‘diffusion’ corresponds with the conception of the IPD that equates it with the dispersion of decision-making authority – it could also be argued that the SDP and the NCP too endorse democracy, in their own ways: the SDP through proactive circuital committing and the NCP through clear leadership accountability.
parliamentary realm. Although the main purpose of these methods is to make things look more democratic than they actually are, a failure to deliver bears concrete consequences. If the SDP leader starts to behave like a dictator he/she will not be a leader for very long. Proactive party culture prevails at least on the level of appearances.

On the contrary, in the NCP dictator-like qualities seem to be sought after and therefore a contemporary leader-centric culture should fit it perfectly. However, although Jyrki Katainen’s omnipotence was undeniable it would be a mistake to declare that the party has permanently transformed into a one-dimensional leadership machine. As Ville Itälä’s fairly recent case showed when the leadership is weak the PPG does not hesitate to take back its power position. Although nowadays it should be harder – due to the ‘division of labor’, the PPG chair’s subservience and the ministerial nominations – it needs to be remembered that the deep amalgamation of the parliamentary and the extra-parliamentary ‘faces’ is based on an informal agreement, which – as it has been shown – can melt under stress. The current party chair Alexander Stubb has recently attracted strong criticism, not from the EPO that has explicitly stood behind him but from several MPs that have openly questioned his line. On 2.4.2016 a first term MP Elina Lepomäki openly challenged Stubb, who is ready to defend his position in the summer’s party congress (Iltalehti 2.4.2016). Eventually Stubb lost to a member of his own ‘entourage’, MP Petteri Orpo who acted as the minister of internal affairs in Stubb’s cabinet. Prior to the congress many members of the PPG voiced openly their dissatisfaction with the incumbent leader and were active in promoting leadership change. Majority of the group had already aligned behind the successful challenger. (HS 5.5.2016.)
‘Parties may become more alike politically and in certain practices, while remaining different as organizational types. Old Leninist parties may adopt modern communication techniques while remaining Leninist, and mass parties may hire more experts in media handling while remaining mass parties. In other words: parties may change in the same direction but within different modes.’

– Knut Heidar & Jo Saglie (2003, 220)

The introductory chapter presented four wide research questions. This chapter provides ‘condensed’ answers to them by reviewing the main findings and reflecting them against relevant theories. As all findings have been thoroughly summarized in the previous chapters only the most important ones are presented here. The chapter is divided into four sections. The first one assesses the founding empirical-theoretical question: has the internal balance of power in Finnish parties shifted from the parties’ internal representative organs to the parties’ public ‘faces’ as a result of specific ‘environmental’ pressures? The second section brings in the main independent variable and asks: do significant inter-party differences nonetheless continue to prevail? The conclusion – which reflects the quote above and ties these views together – is that while Finnish parties’ public ‘faces’ have certainly strengthened, clear differences continue to exist, too, and under the right conditions they may significantly affect the functioning of the parties. The third section considers the normative implications of the developments and asks: what does party change (and partial stability) mean for Finnish democracy? The two normative models of democracy that were presented in the very beginning of this thesis are employed in assessing the problems of current party practices for democracy. A specific model of IPD that could provide some improvements to the democratic performance is also introduced. The chapter ends with a short consideration of the blind corners of intra-party politics that require further attention.
7.1 The inevitable path to leader-centric party politics

This study’s main inspiration and viewpoint stemmed from Richard Katz’s and Peter Mair’s (1992; 1993; 1994; 1995; 2002; 2009; 2012) work on party organizational development in the Western democracies. It resulted in the formation of the famous cartel party theory (1995) and later (2002) in a more concentrated idea of general intra-party power change. Submitting their theory under a genuine cross-temporal in-depth test was the main objective of this study.

In a nutshell, the thesis purported that due to partisan detachment, emergence of public party funding and the ‘governmentalization’, mediatization and internationalization of politics those organizational/operational party ‘faces’ that used to provide party members avenues for representation in intra-party affairs lost their powers to the parties public ‘faces’. The public ‘face’ comprise of elected officials that manage ‘high politics’ in national parliaments and governments. The main ‘losers’ are the mid-level party activists in representative party organs who played a significant monitoring and decision-making role in the mass party era. (Katz & Mair 2002, 122–126.)

Because of this, this study has focused especially on the changing balance of power between national-level organs of the extra-parliamentary party (EPO) and the principal organizational manifestation of the public ‘face’, the parliamentary party group (PPG). In addition, the study has considered the changing role of the party leadership, which in studies of ‘presidentialization’ of politics (Poguntke & Webb 2005; Webb et al. 2011) has been defined as a rising independent power ‘face’. Like in most other European democracies, Finnish parties’ ‘field organizations’ (memberships, local branches, etc.) have eroded since their early 1980’s apogee (van Biezen et al. 2012; Mickelsson 2007; Karvonen 2014). Unlike in many European countries where more direct and inclusive methods of membership participation have been introduced to tackle the decline, Finnish party members have not gained new rights (Scarrow 2015, 181–200, 208). Thus, if intra-party democracy (IPD) exists, it operates via representative EPO organs.
7.1.1 ‘Parliamentarized’ party resources and leadership positions and the emergence of leader-centric decision-making processes: evidence for the general tendency

This study found an extensive amount of evidence to support the general power change thesis. Therefore, the strong resistance thesis, which claimed that parties that inhibit strong internal resistance potential do not change under external pressure at all is clearly refuted. Especially in party activities that connect to national ‘high politics’, parties’ internal resource distributions (understood in the widest possible sense, including nominations and decision-making procedures, and the allocation of material resources) have increasingly come to reflect the idea of a party that is first and foremost understood through its national public ‘face’ – especially the party leadership that is now clearly its most important public manifestation.

The most obvious change has taken place in ‘the means of production’, that is, in the distribution of parties’ financial and human resources. The most important historical change was the parties’ initiative to introduce public subsidies in the late 1960’s when they faced financial pressures. It revolutionarized the parties’ income logic and increased their financial and labor-related strength significantly. (Rantala 1982; Wiberg 1991; Sundberg 1994; 2003; Venho 2008). Considering that the parties played an integral role in the process, the case sits well with the cartel theory’s logic. As subsidies were approved in Eduskunta and their net sums are still decided there, PPGs have been especially important. Public subsidies now make the clear majority of all party incomes. Parties can survive without members but not without subsidies and therefore an inherent electoralist logic has been built into the parties’ funding scheme as the subsidy level is dependent on the amount of votes. While the party subsidy that is paid to central organizations continues to be larger (roughly around 4 times), it has mainly sustained its real value while the PPGs office subsidy has increased tenfold since the late 1960’s. In absolute terms the parliamentary ‘face’ has clearly strengthened.

One especially important change in the development of the main funding instruments took place during the 1990’s depression. Between 1991 and 1993 Eduskunta cut party subsidy by 13 % (in real value) and simultaneously increased office subsidy by almost 15 %. The party subsidy reached its 1991 value only in 2008 while the office subsidy continued to grow almost annually. This, as will be shown shortly, produced serious consequences in party offices. Another important

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241 This presentation focuses on the main developments in a rather general level. More detailed information (including exact references) can be found from the previous chapters.
decision where the PPGs enhanced their own resources took place in 1997 when Eduskunta approved the MPs’ personal assistant system that quickly developed into a permanent fixture (Ruostetsaari 1998; Wiberg 2006). Eduskunta’s overall staffing resources have at least doubled since the 1970’s (compared to Noponen’s (1989) observations) and since then also the ‘ministerial entourages’ (special assistants and state secretaries) have expanded significantly (for example Wiberg 2008). Overall, the public ‘faces’ party-independent resources have increased significantly and provided them with considerable autonomy from the EPOs that on the other hand have detached themselves from party member dependency.

Change in overall resources has caused major changes within the parties. The emergence of party subsidies inflated all party offices right away but in the late 1980’s the EPO offices were still significantly larger (Wiberg 1991; Sundberg 1994). In the 1990’s the picture begun to change: while the PPG offices continued to grow, the central offices began to weaken rapidly. Between the late 1980’s and 2010 the SDP’s central office staff halved and in the NCP the overall staff level reduced down to a third. The Greens’ central office has slowly strengthened as the party has institutionalized, but so has their PPG office. Overall, the direction is clear: the combination of office enlargement and the consolidation of assistant systems show that ‘parliamentary party complexes’ (Heidar & Koole 2000b) are getting stronger while the party offices – once the bastions of party power – weaken. Aside from mere size-related questions it seems that their functional orientation is changing too. An increasing percentage of the party office workforce and money is used for ‘electoral-professional’ tasks while the cultivation of the mass party networks is becoming less important. There are clear signs that the party offices are developing into ‘media agencies’ whose predominant task is to support public ‘faces’ publicity control and campaigning (see also Farrell & Webb 2000).

The latest initiative in public party funding reflects this general change too. Before 2008 parties press subsidy, which in size has historically almost equalled the party subsidy, had to be directed to the parties’ traditional local and national newspapers. In 2008 its terms of use were ‘liberated’ considerably: now, parties may use it how they wish as long as it supports their ‘publicity and communications’. Unsurprisingly, after the reform the support for newspapers begun to diminish rapidly and instead the parties decided to allocate more to their own publicity work. In terms of convenience this reminds of the introduction of party subsidies that took place after party members’ interest to invest in party activity began to decrease (Sundberg 2003). Although the press subsidy reform had
an external push (the EU’s competition directives) party actors took great advantage of the situation in a time when the mediatization of politics required more capital. The role of party newspapers had diminished for decades (Mickelsson 2007) but the press subsidy provided them a solid foundation. The change in its terms of use allowed the party leaders to get rid of the unnecessary historical baggage (party press) and invest money to more general promotion.

It is very important to notice that while mass party theory builds a confrontation between different uses of resources (for example it assumes that party activists value traditional press more than nationalized publicity) in the contemporary party ‘environment’ (i.e. under parties total dependence of electorally determined public subsidies) electoral fortunes have become crucial for all organizational ‘faces’, not just for the public ‘face’. Thus, the traditional juxtaposition between the interests of extra-parliamentary activists and public officials has at least to some extent waned. The overall change in the distribution of ‘the means of production’ clearly suggests that an increasing amount of party work takes place in or is directed towards the public ‘faces’.

A similar trend can be detected in the occupation of highest party positions – although in more longue durée. Prior to the 1960’s only little over half (57 %) of the appointed ministers were MPs and the distinction between leading politicians and leading bureaucrats was not clear (Törnudd 1975). Since 1968 the relative amount of ministers who held an MPs status during the time of their nomination has increased roughly around 10 % per decade, reaching over the 90 % mark in the 2000’s. In today’s Finnish politics a minister who is not an MP is a rarity. The ‘normalization’ of minister’s MP status can be interpreted as a reflection of an increase in the prestige of public-office holding. A similar trend can be detected in parties ‘core leaderships’. Although the MPs presence in party leaderships and national executive committees (NEC) has always been strong (Borg 1982) this research period witnessed a minor increase, which was caused by increasing MP representation in the EPOs’ leading offices. Today, around ¾ of all leading party positions are handled by MPs (less in the Greens, though).

Intra-party decision-making structures present a more fragmented picture. The formal decision-making procedures have not changed much during the research period. The most significant change was the strengthening of the Greens EPO, which resulted from the party’s institutionalization that led to the acknowledgement of the EPO in the party rules that at first were almost completely devoid of its links to the PPG. While the formal decision-making procedures have in general remained very stable (i.e. the public ‘faces’ have not strengthened) it is noteworthy that the EPOs’
strengthening that continued until the late 1970’s (Borg 1982; Sundberg 1994) stopped in the turn of 1980’s. Notwithstanding the Greens, the EPOs have not strengthened either after their ‘golden age’ in the 1960’s and the 1970’s.

The analysis of the actual decision-making power was based on a micro-level reconstruction and comparison of 13 intra-party government formation processes between 1983 and 2011. Unlike formal analysis, it revealed clearer over time changes (see chapter 6 for detailed results). First major finding however holds over the research period. R.T. McKenzie (1955, 589) noted after his classic study on IPD in the British parties that ‘the classical theory attributed to the electorate an altogether unrealistic degree of initiative; it came near to ignoring completely the importance of the leadership in the political process’. This holds true in the Finnish parties as well. While statutes tend to give a highly democratized picture of the process, in reality the party leaderships are very important in it (and by extension, in all party decision-making) as they prepare and present all initiatives to the party organs. Overall, the analysis highlighted the importance of the ‘second face’ of power, A’s ability to manipulate the agenda and procedures in a way that reduces the emergence of options that run contrary to its wishes (Bachrach & Baratz 1962, 948). By contrast, the party councils, which often appear as the most important decision-makers in the party statutes (as the saying goes, it is the ‘party congress between party congresses’), have not been too important in actual decision-making. Their impotence results from two interrelated factors. First, their role is usually confined to ‘baptizing’ the end result. While it has been popular in political science to highlight the actual decision (this emphasis likely results from Robert Dahl’s (1957; 1958; 1961) seminal studies) the process itself includes all the important decisions and ‘non-decisions’, and the actual ‘point of no return’ has usually passed way before the proposal enters the council. Second, when the council finally gets to decide, it is simply too large and internally heterogeneous (due to the fact that it is based on regional representation) to provide any effective counter-weight to the leadership. It must be noted, however, that the Greens’ council marks a clear difference to this general scheme (see below).

But while the leaders have always been powerful, the degree of intra-party resistance potential that they face has weakened over time, suggesting a ‘presidentializing’ dynamic. In general, the autonomy of party leadership was more restrained in the 1980’s than it is now. Back then the old parties (NCP and SDP) encased significant intervening powers, which corresponded with their historical predispositions. As mass party theory would suggest, in the SDP the national executive committee (NEC) was by far the most important location for activist
committing. The leadership had to circulate all its proposals through it and get sufficient approvals. Although the NCP strived towards mass party character in the post-war era – in formal terms their EPO got significantly stronger in the 1960’s and the 1970’s (Borg 1982) – its actual power system in the 1980’s was characterized by two very ‘cadre-partyesque’ features: vast leadership autonomy and strong position of the PPG, which emerged as the final arbiter when disagreement surfaced. While leaders clearly initiated and directed the processes, they were still constrained to by other party organs.

This changed in the 1990’s that witnessed the emergence of heavily leader-dominated decision-making routines. The main ‘symptom’ of the power change in the SDP was the NEC’s gradual weakening and coincidental strengthening of the PPG, which connected to its heightened constitutional status. In 1991 the government program was submitted under Eduskunta’s review and approval (for example Jansson 1993). Already in the mid-1990’s party chair Paavo Lipponen could seek backing for his initiatives from the PPG, undermining the NEC’s status as the final arbiter. The pivotal power center (Katz & Mair 2002, 122) shifted towards the public ‘face’. Lipponen’s determined leadership style relied more on explaining things to the party organs than asking their approval. When the idea of a final arbiter slowly waned the party leader himself became it.

The NCP’s internal turmoil in the early 1990’s resulted in the erosion of the last remnants of the EPO influence and to the strengthening of the already strong PPG. But when Sauli Niinistö assumed his exceptionally strong leadership position, he formed a strong alliance with PPG chair Ben Zyskowicz and the confrontation between the party and the PPG that characterized the turn of the 1990’s waned. Thus, the central development in the 1990’s – along with the party leaders strengthened position – was the dilution of the ‘mass partyesque’ juxtaposition between the EPO and the PPG and the gradual emergence of amalgamated and unified party leaderships. The Greens took part in the government negotiations for the first time in 1991 and showcased their trademark style of diffused decision-making. The party leader who at that time could not even be an MP was not visible and the negotiations ended in the party council’s ultimatum. However, albeit the diffused system continues to exist today (see below) the Greens leadership too has strengthened. Already in 1995 party leader Pekka Haavisto played a much stronger personal game when the party entered the government. In terms of actual decision-making Finnish parties experienced a clear ‘presidentializing’ turn in the 1990’s.

In the 2010’s the features that were put in motion in the 1990’s seem to have consolidated and the ‘presidential’ practice has overshadowed even the strengthening of the
PPGs. After the constitutional reform was completed in 2000 the party leaders ascended to a supreme position and the PPGs were appointed the main role in the government formation process (Nousiainen 2001; 2006; Paloheimo 2003; 2005). After competing in ‘the prime minister elections’ (Anttila 2006) the party leaders engaged in individual-level negotiations and often took explicit responsibility for major decisions, including those that related to the coalitional base, crucial policy compromises and ministerial nominations. To negotiate or not to, with whom to coalesce et cetera were important questions in the 1980’s and often carefully dealt in intra-party processes (at least in the SDP). In the 2010’s they are mostly irrelevant as all parties aim for the government and significant ‘no go’ coalitions do not exist anymore. Moreover, as the procedure where the largest party’s chair automatically becomes the formateur has consolidated, he/she is now the one who makes these important decisions – after negotiating with the other party leaders. The main point is that these crucial decisions are now made predominantly outside of parties altogether. The process is characterized by a personal, efficient, fast, forward moving thrust, which seems to leave very little room for serious intra-party deliberations and, thus, interference by party activists or even MPs.

In general, serious intra-party conflicts in party organs (including the PPGs) seem rather unlikely nowadays. Instead of seeking approval, leaders go there to explain their decisions. Nowadays important discussions seem to take place in various more or less informal gatherings, which bring together leaders from all relevant party ‘faces’. While such gatherings have no doubt existed before too, in the 1980’s organizational boundaries were clearer and party leaders had to receive at least formal approvals from designated party organs. Today the boundaries that informed mass party thinking seem to have waned: party power has ‘de-institutionalized’ and at the same time centralized. A unified clique that gathers the most important actors runs the show and no party organ can be reasonably expected to resist it. As party leaders have strong rights to nominate party notables (ministers, PPG chairs, party secretaries) they have effective means to control the ‘inner circle’. As most of these leaders operate in Eduskunta or nearby, they can convene rapidly in gatherings that are hidden from the public eye. In the 2011 negotiations core leaderships negotiated under a total ‘radio silence’ with policy papers that were prepared in advance under the party leaders’ surveillance. The possibility for party organs to even receive information during this process was very limited. The idea of a politically significant intra-party ‘pow-wow’ has become unfeasible because the party organs are too slow for operative leadership and too open for publicity.
While they still may be committed behind decisions, their ability to exert real influence during the process has become very limited.

At least in terms of actual decision-making ‘presidentialization’, not ascendancy of the PPG, characterizes Finnish party practices most realistically (see also Paloheimo 2005). However, an important addition to Poguntke and Webb’s (2005) EPO driven model is the apparent amalgamation of several leaderships, including the PPG leadership. This development is a direct consequence of the gradual convergence of EPO leaders, ministers and PPGs, which Heidar and Koole (2000b) observed over a decade ago.

However, it should be disclaimed already at this point that this is a crude generalization and parties still bear important differences in the distribution of formal and actual decision-making power. Formal differences are quite clear and while actual differences between the old parties are more a matter of symbolism, the Greens’ internal procedures differ significantly from this characterization. However, in the Greens too the leader’s position has clearly strengthened since the early 1990’s when she/he could not even be an MP simultaneously. It must be underlined that the Greens’ chair too has to operate within the same procedural boundaries (see below) when he/she takes part in negotiations. Indeed, the fact that the main thrust for change emerges ‘outside’ of the parties strips away a lot of their organizational autonomy, which tends to be exaggerated. However, while ‘presidentialization’ of party practices seems to be strongly driven by systemic factors, party genetics can bear importance too (see Passarelli 2015).

7.1.2 Explaining change: the crushing force of major societal transformation

According to the ‘environmental’ adaptations theory of party change, which is promoted by Katz and Mair (1992, 9; 1993, 356; 1995, 6, 15–17; 2002, 129–130), party change is a dialectic process where party actors react to changing ‘electoral environments’. While parties may also affect the ‘environment’ (like in the case of the party subsidies) and changes in parties require agency (i.e. the party offices’ resource distribution or party statutes do not change automatically) external pressure is considered to be the ultimate source of change. Instead of sudden, abrupt shocks (like electoral losses) that may also encourage party leaders to seek organizational change in the short term (see Harmel & Janda 1994) this narrative emphasises the effects that large and gradual societal transformations have on intra-party resource distributions. The main pressures that were extracted from Katz and Mair’s (1995; 2002; 2009) writings, and were also shown to exist strongly
in Finland, were partisan detachment, emergence of public party funding and the ‘governmentalization’, mediatization and internationalization of politics. While making direct causal links at this level of analysis is of course impossible, some persuasive connections can be drawn. *All these factors are quite clearly attached to the phenomenon of party power change.* However, as Finnish parties had already in the 1970's begun to convert towards leader-centrism (Rantala 1982; Nousiainen 1998; Mickelsson 2007) they should be understood more as amplifiers and facilitators than primary causes.242

Without making any claims on primacy, the general weakening of the party/member linkage that helped to create party subsidies is quite obviously somehow related to the power change. Whilst the direction of influence is debatable – subsidies were introduced in the late 1960’s, leader-centrism emerged in the 1970’s but memberships begun to decline only in the 1980’s (for example Mickelsson 2007) – this development clearly enhanced two tendencies that strengthen party leaderships and the public ‘faces’ more generally: 1) the parties’ dependence on membership resources weakened and 2) the members’ and their representatives’ claim to legitimacy in party affairs declined (along with the decreasing member/voter ratio). While numbers are not the only and probably not even the most important factors on this matter (see below) the general legitimacy of strong partisan claims seems to have decreased. More importantly, parties’ heavy dependence on electoral victories that determine the level of subsidy, which now is the primary source of party income, presents a clear and almost unavoidable incentive structure for the whole party apparatus. As even the most passionate regional party activist is now dependent on subsidies (and the national party is less dependent on his efforts) his incentives in relation to electoral efficiency do not contradict the central office professionals’, prospective candidates’, incumbent MPs or party leaders’ incentives. Thus, *a unified logic that leans onto the public ‘face’ primacy drives all party work.* As such, the idea of multidimensional interests that is a major component in stratified party models (like the mass party) has in the Finnish case lost its importance to some extent.

Moving up to the higher rungs of Finnish politics, the regime change from semi-presidentialism to parliamentarism that begun in the early 1980’s and was formally finalized in 2000 has had serious effects on intra-party matters. In the 1980’s party leaders were not constrained just by their parties, the president could

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242 Again, this presentation is only a concluding, generalizing overview; detailed information on the change factors (including more exact references) is presented in chapters 3 and 5. For the sake of brevity and clarity they will not be restated here at length.
Constitutional reforms that began in the 1980’s weakened the presidency and when the Soviet Union collapsed in the early 1990’s the need for personalized foreign policy leadership ended. In the 1990’s the president’s de facto prominence in domestic politics decreased significantly. The main result was that the party leaders ascended to the top position in domestic politics. Now, one of them always controls the head executive and a few other party leaders accompany him/her in the ‘gang’ (the governments inner circle) that controls large and stable coalition governments, whose powers and working capacity increased simultaneously with the weakening of the presidency. Nowadays all significant political influence runs through the government. (for example Paloheimo 2003; 2005.)

The most obvious effect of this change is of course the emergence of dominant party leaderships, which seem to build a distinct intra-party dynamic. As they can often ‘pick their teams’ the whole ‘entourage’ turns into a closed, controlled caste that steers policies with their massive professional resources and merely appoints them for the PPGs’ approval. However, as most legislative work takes place in the parliamentary committees, the PPGs are deeply connected to the overall process. The idea of extra-parliamentary party office/ organs that would take substantial part in the policy process seems even more unlikely: their resources (money, expertise, time) are nothing compared to what public office holders have at their disposal and because of this the party offices tend to transform into electoral agencies (Murto 2014, 71–75). Consolidation of the ‘governmentalized’ work routine that leans heavily on party cohesion seems to lead into ‘functional differentiation’ within the parties: instead of engaging in wide and potentially heterogeneous deliberations, everyone handles their own ‘slot’ and parties become more like business than political organizations (as Downs (1957) argued). The professionalization of party activity has important bearing for the intra-party representation as well: as the career of an aspiring MPs runs through the party organs which in theory are supposed to provide counter-weight to the leadership (that controls party careers in the upper echelons), it is not hard to see why she/he might want to keep the most radical thoughts for herself/himself. Duverger’s (1967[1951], 140–141) quote on party congresses where ‘employees [are] facing their employers’ is a good way to characterize this dynamic. As power becomes more concentrated, the cost of effective resistance increases – and makes it less probable.

Two final ‘environmental’ transformations that can be connected to the observed party changes relate to more general changes in the Finnish societal structure. The mediatization of politics begun to strengthen in the 1980’s when
after its commercialization the media abandoned its distant and respectful attitude towards politicians and created a more critical and personalized style. In the 1990’s the technological change (the generalization of the internet and mobile phones) deepened the trend. In the 2010’s basically everyone is constantly connected via their smart phones to a worldwide network of personalized information channels that never sleep. The political media, on the other hand, lives strongly off personal scandals. (For example Herkman 2011.) This change from relatively closed, impersonal and heavily mediated political publicity to an open, personalized and unpredictable media environment has had at least three important consequences for intra-party power. Firstly, and most obviously, it has enhanced the highly personalized political practice, which increases the presence and prestige of central leader figures. The ‘aura of importance’ directs attention, and usually the actual practice too; more and more resources are directed to ‘permanent campaigning’. Secondly, and more importantly, the velocity of modern communication is something that people in the 1980’s could not even dream about – let alone the drafters of the basic organizational structures of Finnish parties in the first decade of the 1900s. While in the 1980’s it made sense – and in fact was technically mandatory – to settle party issues in face-to-face meetings, today the political ‘scheming’ is in constant motion. As everyone within the elite is connected with others all the time and the media expects answers in real time, meeting-based ‘conclave’ democracy becomes unneeded and in fact practically impossible. A party that has to arrange a meeting of subnational delegates before announcing its stance on topical matters will not thrive in the contemporary ‘agile’ political publicity. Thirdly, the media revolution has exposed politicians in ways that would have been unthinkable in the 1980’s. Not only are the press and bloggers significantly more interested in politicians’ various affairs, new technology (including the social media) provides tools that were not even science fiction 30 years ago. As digital footprints are everywhere and even the traditional footprints are a lot easier to document, politicians have to be very careful about their doings and this produces incentives to hide decision-making. Every formal intra-party meeting is a potential source of a ‘leak’ and therefore they are now more often used deliberately for spreading a party’s message rather than developing it.

The second factor that has increased complexity and velocity in the political domain is the internationalization of politics and economy. In the early 1980’s Finland was a relatively isolated small country that mostly operated within national economic confines, without the exception of strong bilateral connections with the Soviet Union (Alasuutari 1996; Luukkanen 2009). Two major changes at the turn
of the 1990’s changed the situation more or less completely. The collapse of the Soviet Union allowed Finland to seek cooperation in the Western front and it quickly became a member of the European Union. This opened a whole new horizon for Finnish politicians that suddenly had to take increasing supra-national responsibilities into consideration. (For example Raunio 2008.) The second major factor that shook the old order was the opening of the Finnish economy and its quick overheating at the turn of the 1990’s, which led to the worst economic depression in the country’s history (for example Kiander & Vartia 1998). In the middle of the 1990’s Finland found itself between deepening European integration, globalizing economy and grave economic hardship. While the depression slowly ended and gave way to a prosperous period, since 2008 Finland – along with other Western countries – has dwelled in a long recession (for example Patomäki 2012). Coincidentally, Finland's connection to the EU, which is now struggling with an exploding immigration crisis and challenges from right-wing extremism, has only deepened. Put simply: the scope of the challenges that Finnish party leaders and public office holders now face differs gravely from the situation in the early 1980’s.

Increasing complexity changes intra-party power because it makes amateur involvement harder. Party work became less approachable and more professionalized already in the 1970’s along with the state expansion (Rantala 1982, 85; Borg 1986; Nousiainen 1998, 68). Considering that this was still the age of nationalized ‘slow’ politics, one can only speculate how much room for initiative the contemporary, fast changing and internationalized political reality leaves for ordinary party activists. At least three developments are important. It has been argued that the general feelings of crisis and emergency that first emerged during the mid-1990’s economic turmoil transformed political leaders into ‘non-partisan’ mediators that were widely considered as essential for the country’s survival (Kantola 2002). In such an environment it is practically hard to involve ‘party men’ to the decision-making processes. In a way, such action could also be considered illegitimate, as party activists involvement introduces sectional interests to matters, which are framed in terms of ‘general good’. At the same time the EU issues began to take an increasing share of the political agenda and as Eduskunta’s committees took the main responsibility for overseeing them, their position strengthened. As most of the relevant information circulates through Eduskunta and not the party organs, MPs have gained a ‘natural’ advantage over other party actors. (Raunio 2002.) Finally, even top politicians’ leverage seems to have decreased because of the bureaucrats’ strong role – especially in financial matters (Murto 2014). Overall, party activists’ leverage in a contemporary political process seems to be quite
limited. Therefore, the mass party model’s founding idea that activists ‘foist’ their interests to party platforms and then control the PPG to execute them seems nowadays unrealistic.

In terms of general dynamics of power change three conclusions can be drawn: 1) it was largely conditioned by dramatic changes in parties’ operating ‘environment’, 2) it accelerated when several pressure factors collided and created a ‘critical juncture’ and 3) although the push was largely ‘environmental’ some party agency was mandatory. First, it seems rather clear that these developments highlight, first and foremost, the extreme societal change that overturned the Finnish parties’ operating context in 30 years (see Karvonen 2014). Thus, this study is inclined to follow Katz and Mair and argue that a) the observed party change was largely conditioned by forces that operate outside of parties’ immediate ‘jurisdiction’ (but see point 3), which also suggests that b) these characterizations should be fairly generalizable to other Finnish parties too. Party-wise differences will remain, of course, but as all parties are deemed to operate under these conditions their internal dynamics are likely to follow similar overall characteristics.

The second conclusion builds on the idea that ‘actors are embedded in a multiplicity of institutions, and interactions among them may allow unforeseen changes in the ongoing distribution of resources’ (Mahoney & Thelen 2010, 9–10). While the pictured ‘environmental’ developments emerged more or less independently of each other and over a rather long period of time, their intersecting in the mid-1990’s seemed to accelerate the power shift. The president’s formal powers and de facto involvement in domestic politics waned in the early 1990’s after the collapse of the Soviet Union. Almost coincidentally the parties’ internal crises escalated, but the worries of membership decline quickly gave way to yearning for strong leaderships (Mickelsson 1999), whose guidance was needed as economic depression and internationalization were mauling Finland. Around this time mobile phones began to generalize and undermine the necessity of personal meetings, too. Many of these developments culminated in the 1995 government negotiations. Not only did this strongly leader-dominated process introduce a historical coalition that would have been impossible 10 years before, for the first time, operating under new constitutional rules, the parliamentary groups had to approve in advance the government program – which happened to incorporate a nasty cut list that emerged almost directly from the ministry of finance (Murto 2014, 108–109). Whilst this ‘style’ was strongly conditioned by the extreme conditions, it seems to have survived even after the initial conditions waned.
This dynamic corresponds with the main ideas of historical institutionalism, the ‘critical juncture’ and path dependency (Pierson 2000; 2004). It is true that the general power change in Finnish parties began already in the 1970’s. For the most part it has been a gradual process that can be attributed to a plethora of disconnected minuscule shifts in resource allocations and rule interpretations that have almost inconspicuously shifted prestige, leverage and capacity to the public ‘faces’, especially party leaderships (this is the basic dynamic of gradual institutional change according to Mahoney & Thelen 2010, 10–14). However, the mid-1990’s unexpected collision of aforementioned forces that had built steam for a long time can be seen as a ‘critical juncture’: it sped up the transformation and introduced a new ‘punctuated equilibrium’ to intra-party power dynamics, which later consolidated through path dependent dynamics. Remembering that it is likely that the ‘winners’ of the founding institutional struggle begin to deliberately fortify their power positions (Mahoney & Thelen 2010, 8), it should be noted that during this period the PPGs, too, were strengthened considerably with subsidy increases, personal assistant systems and constitutional reforms.

The third general conclusion relates to this latter fact. While the overall conclusion highlights the primacy of exogenous forces, agency had to play a role too because party resources and procedures cannot change automatically (Harmel & Janda 1994, 261). As Wilson (1980; 1994) and Panebianco (1988) have argued, party change is a ‘combined’ effort: an auspicious situation needs to be worked out by the party agents in order to make a lasting effect. While it is impossible to name specific participants who were responsible for these alterations – if such things even exist – the party and PPG leaders that operated in the mid-1990’s were especially important as their doings set new standards for public ‘face’-leaning and ‘presidentialized’ intra-party practices. Whether power change was their ultimate goal is of course highly uncertain. Moreover, while some actors necessarily had an active role in the process (albeit not necessarily a purposeful one that was directed at this specific end) we should not view the overall change in overly functional terms. More likely the process was initiated at some specific juncture and most participants just felt the tide turning and played along. After all, the increase of PPGs’ constitutional powers and the decline of the presidency were put in motion already in the 1980’s. This aspect of major institutional changes, however, clearly demands more research.
7.2 The emergence of a unified intra-party logic – or continuing co-existence of many logics?

Now, while the strong resistance thesis was clearly refuted as all parties have changed towards the suggested direction, it does not automatically mean that the strong adaptation thesis, which claims that a uniform ‘electoral environment’ eliminates all differences between parties’ operative capacities, is confirmed. A party type-specific adaptation is also possible. It reflects Heidar and Saglie’s (2003) idea, which was quoted in the beginning of this chapter: parties may adopt similar practices and continue to endorse their traditional ways simultaneously. Here, parties do travel in the same direction – or fight in the same war, so to speak – but because they start from different levels (here, in terms of intra-party power distribution) they end up in different levels as well. More important than the difference is, however, this: are the remaining differences strong enough to exert meaningful variation into parties’ operative capacities? If differences are merely ‘aesthetical’ (consider professional football teams’ historical jersey colors) then it can be claimed that the strong adaptation thesis actually characterizes political reality well, as operationally meaningful differences between parties do not exist. This question will be addressed after a short review of the most important still-existing inter-party differences.

7.2.1 The differing leadership cultures: evidence against general party power change

First it needs to be acknowledged that although many contemporary features of the Finnish national-level decision-making and campaigning support practices that highlight the public ‘faces’ preponderance, as long as the Finnish parties operate under the Party Act (1969) party leaders on all levels will remain constrained ‘from below’ because they are selected in the party congresses by local and regional delegates (Sundberg 2003). While alterations in the party subsidy systems and national-level decision-making procedures take place far from the party activists’ immediate ‘jurisdiction’, increase in the party leadership’s MP representation happens because the party activists decide so. Similarly, they still at least ‘baptize’ ministerial nominations and coalition governments, approve party budgets, and so forth. In short, there are many decisions that intra-party actors can affect if they decide to and therefore, as Koole (1996) and Kitschelt (2000) have argued, the public ‘faces’ can never totally detach themselves from party activists. However,
instead of simply assuming that all activists in all parties take advantage of their lawful rights to the fullest, real interference potential is conditioned by the ways in which party actors have interpreted their role. Here, we find significant differences.

The inter-party differences are clearest in the domain of intra-party decision-making power. The Party Act (1969) and the Law of Associations (1989) make demands on how parties should arrange their internal workings. However, as they mainly assert that decision-making should be based on the members’ wishes which can be delegated to representative units, laws mainly prohibit openly autocratic organizations and therefore leave fairly free hands for the parties (Sundberg 1997). Laws say nothing about the EPO/PPG-relations either; in fact the constitution prohibits such linkages (Constitution 2000, § 29). Thus, this crucial link has been and continues to be in the parties’ hands. Although the EPOs’ formal powers over the PPGs strengthened in both old parties up until the turn of the 1980’s (Borg 1982) clearly detectable differences that correspond neatly with the ideal typical party characteristics prevailed then and continue to exist today too. Thus, the emergence of a unified intra-party logic that stems from the strong adaptation thesis seems premature.

The SDP’s EPO has always been stronger than the NCP’s and it strengthened considerably until 1975 (Borg 1982). In the early 1980’s the formal balance of power within the SDP leaned clearly towards a ‘mass-partyesque’ extra-parliamentary dominance and *it did not weaken much during this study’s research period*. Despite a few minor alterations (for details see chapter 4) the EPO has retained its strong control over the PPG in most important dimensions. Comparatively speaking, it is still very strong in the government formation as the council continues to be responsible for all major decisions, which it can delegate to the NEC (despite the fact that the new constitution explicitly appointed negotiation to the PPGs). It is also relatively strong in the information gathering as the NEC still enjoys unlimited rights to participate in the PPG’s general meetings. In policies too party statutes still assign the formulation of policies to the party organs and their promotion to the PPG. Interestingly, while the world around the SDP has changed a lot, in purely formal terms the party continues to promote the very same basic operative ethos that it established already in the early 1900s. This does not, of course, mean that these rules are applied 1/1 as it was demonstrated a moment ago. However, they are certainly not irrelevant either (see below).

Much like the ‘contagion from the left’ thesis (Duverger 1967[1951]) proposed, the NCP’s EPO strengthened formally during the 1950’s, the 1960’s and the 1970’s – in fact quite considerably when compared to the pre–1950s situation when it had
almost no formal power over the PPG (Borg 1982). However, in the early 1980’s the strengthening stopped and the EPO/PPG linkage slowly begun to wane. More importantly, despite the EPO’s strengthening in earlier decades the NCP’s formal power distribution in the early 1980’s clearly followed their cadre party roots: the PPG was still fairly autonomous and the party organs (especially the NEC) were relatively powerless. Unlike in the SDP where government negotiations are handled by a group where at least half of the members are appointed by the NEC and decisions are made in the EPO organs only (council delegates to the NEC), in the NCP decisions are taken in a joint meeting between the party council and the PPG and the NEC has no formal role in the process. The NEC has no automatic rights to participate in the PPG either while the PPG rules still include the explicit denial of an imperative mandate. Also, the policy link between these party ‘faces’ has been gradually diluted. In the NCP, parliamentary group has been and continues to be much more autonomous.

Against some early ideals and models of activist parties the Greens’ PPG was exceptionally autonomous in the party’s formative years. But while the EPO has been gradually strengthened, Greens have never sought after total ‘grassroots’ control as the ‘amateur-activist’ party model suggested. Instead, the party has slowly developed a unique power structure, which is based on the principle of diffusion: all ‘faces’ possess some significant powers and instead of aiming for one-dimensionality (which traditional party models tried to do, in their own ways) a system of ‘checks and balances’ that reduces potential for leadership dominance has emerged. In some questions the EPO is strong. Since the early 2000’s the NEC has set the composition of the negotiator group and all decisions are to be made in the joint meeting between the PPG and the council. The difference to the NCP is that the decision-making rule is clearly defined, and strictly applied: all participants have one vote and because the Greens’ council has always been around 4 times larger than the PPG, it can walk over the PPG easily – as it has done (see below). On the other hand, the PPG has never had to report its actions to the EPO organs and the EPO members have never enjoyed automatic participation rights in the PPG. Also, an explicit denial of the imperative mandate is clearly stated in the first page of the statutes – and followed in practice as well. The power diffusion principle crystallizes here: while the EPO has strong means to exert demands on the PPG in government negotiations, it has no formal backing to demand obedience from it.

While the actual procedure of government formation has arguably come to favor the public ‘faces’ (especially party leaderships), some detectable variations that reflect these formal differences continue to exist too. The SDP’s decision-making
procedure in the early phases of the research period revealed a pattern. The party leadership first sought approval for its proposals from the NEC and after receiving it, it proceeded to other organs – usually explicitly pointing out that the NEC has already given its approval. This was repeated until all ‘layers of the onion’ were explicitly behind the proposal. The leadership saw a lot of effort in committing the relevant participants in advance and because of this their method was named as proactive leadership. The NCP’s procedure revealed an equally clear but different basic dynamic: the party leadership appeared in the party organs less frequently and instead of scrutinizing its proposals, the organs often gave just a ‘blank cheque’ to the leaders. But while the leadership’s operative autonomy was more extensive, it was openly challenged when the performance did not please the crowd. Their style was named as retroactive leadership, which highlights the results over the procedure. These concepts, which received corroboration in several interviews reflect two very different views of intra-party democracy: in the former case democracy means actual participation in the decision-making process while in the latter case it refers to the members’ right to change the leader when her performance is considered inadequate. *Traces of these methods were detectable in the 2011 government negotiations.*

While chair Jutta Urpilainen and her ‘inner circle’s’ showed strong leadership, several features in the SDP’s process resembled the proactive leadership and more generally the need to make the process to appear less autocratic. Compared to the NCP whose public appearance was completely exhausted by chair Jyrki Katainen’s presence, in the SDP those ‘inner circle’ members that enjoyed a formal standing within the party organization (party secretary, PPG chair, EPO deputy chairs, etc.) appeared frequently along Urpilainen, who lauded the idea of ‘team leadership’. More importantly, while the NEC was not a place for serious political ‘scheming’ anymore and not absolutely necessary for approvals either, it played a role in policy coordination and it was committed to the plans of the leadership as this tends to make governing easier – as the proactive leadership culture presupposes. The NEC is still the most important ‘tool’ for the leadership’s internal legitimacy and therefore all party decisions should circulate through it. As the PPG’s role has strengthened since the 1980’s it too is now a part of the ‘committing circle.

*Although nowadays wide committing seems to be more about ‘symbolism’ than actual participation in the decision-making process, it is nonetheless considered important.*

In an almost contrary manner the NCP’s community seems to expect some degree of ‘dictatorial style’ from their leaders. Two of their ‘softest’ leaders from the recent decades, Pertti Salolainen and Ville Itälä both faced a premature end of
their leadership when they could not show enough strength against the party organs (especially the PPG). Jyrki Katainen, who was not an ‘iron fist’ like Sauli Niinistö in the 1990’s, but still a very strong leader, was the only sovereign in the NCP’s 2011 process: basically no one else made any public statements or appearances and the party organ meetings focused solely on Katainen’s declarations. Despite of problems no one challenged his vision at any point of the process. Another difference to the SDP that also resembles the ‘old times’ was the PPG’s clear primacy over the EPO organs, which have after 1980’s reduced to mere ‘applause forums’ and, in the case of the NEC, into a campaign network coordinator. While it now seems unlikely that the PPG would openly challenge the leader as in 1987, it is still very important to commit it properly and keep it on board. Nowadays this happens especially via the MPs’ committee experience that is used to guide the party’s political work, which happens solely through the parliamentary channel (unlike in the SDP where party organs and office are still involved). *The NCP’s internal power system is still characterized by two very ‘cadre-partyesque’ features: vast leadership autonomy and the PPG’s primacy.*

However, a short disclaimer, which again relates to the party leadership and the contingent nature of political decision-making, is in order here. What needs to be acknowledged in all analyses of intra-party power – aside from the fact that party leaders are generally very strong – is that a leader’s strength can vary and along with it, his/hers ability to lead party work. Katainen enjoyed a very strong standing within the NCP while Urpilainen who operated under the shadow of former chairman Eero Heinäluoma was generally considered weaker (see chapter 6 for details). Therefore the observed differences could be explained with the leaders’ different standings within their respective organizations: Katainen operated alone because he could, Urpilainen had to ‘open up’ because she was weak. However, while not denying the overall impact that a leader’s strength has on his/hers autonomy, it does not seem plausible that it can overshadow the fundamentals of a party’s internal power system, i.e. the historical ‘rank ordering’ between the party ‘faces’. While Katainen had larger autonomy than for example Itälä in the early 2000’s, the PPG was still a lot more important for him than any of the party organs. In the SDP the situation is not as clear anymore as their ‘fundamentals’ have changed more over the years (i.e. the strengthening of the PPG has eaten NEC’s importance). Still, considering that the leadership legitimacy in the SDP has always stemmed from the ‘inside’, it is unlikely that the SDP leader – whether she/he is weak or strong – can ignore the EPO. While the actor-related
contingencies played a role in 2011, they do not undermine the relevance of the observations that highlight the continuing differences.

Even if differences between the SDP and the NCP’s actual power configurations are more or less ‘symbolical’, the Greens’ decision-making process in 2011 revealed factors that differ from the previously made generalization in very concrete and meaningful ways. While the leader of the Greens has strengthened from the party’s formative years, compared to the ‘old parties’ leaders he/she is still significantly more bound. This boils down to the diffused power system, which is even stronger in practice. First and foremost, the Greens’ leadership is bound by the Greens’ council’s exceptional strength, which became very obvious in 2011. Not only was the council meeting needed to determine whether to negotiate and with what kind of terms (the council set explicit sine qua non for the party’s involvement and opened a membership poll to gather ‘advice’), it openly stood against the party leadership and the PPG and overturned their proposal to join a coalition that it considered ‘unsavory’. The ministerial nominations were made there too – openly, without prior suggestions. The Greens council can also end the party’s time in the government – as it did in 2014. Unlike any other party organ in this study the Greens’ council exercises real decision-making power over concrete questions in most important situations. It is a bona fide decision-making unit, which most clearly resembles the ideal of representative intra-party democracy as it has been understood in this study (i.e. as the possibility for representative organs to exert power over the public ‘face’). But the Greens’ peculiarities do not end here: the other side of the coin, which sets them apart from the mass party ideal is that the Greens’ PPG also holds onto its autonomy and there is no guarantee that it will follow any agreements. The Green minister has to persuade the PPG and the MPs can legitimately abstain from following the party line if they feel like doing so. The institutional diffusion of power and the strong individual autonomy creates spontaneity that clearly differentiates the Greens from the old parties – and makes their leader essentially less powerful.

7.2.2 The consequences of inter-party differences: an analytic evaluation

The strong adaptation thesis asserts that the pressure that the ‘electoral environment’ exerts upon the parties will eliminate differences between their operative capacities. What needs to be determined, then, is can the existing resistance potentials be considered strong enough to potentially challenge the party leaders and the public office holders’ efforts and, thus, subvert the cartel thesis’
prediction about public ‘faces’ ‘undisputed position of privilege’ (Katz & Mair 2002, 122).

To start with the most obvious case, the Greens, two objections can be raised against the apparent resistance potential that was just characterized. First, it can be argued that the Greens is still a fairly new party (established in 1988) and the council’s actions in 2011 may merely have been signs of growing pains of a weakly institutionalized organization. However, the resistance did not emerge from just any random organ, the council did exactly what it was designed to do: it provided formidable counter-weight which was based on a wide activist representation against the party leadership and the PPG. In a similar vein, the PPG too played an important part in the process as its autonomy is explicitly supported. The NEC, however, has never been a powerhouse (like in the SDP) – also because it was designed not to be one. For the first five years the party did not even have an NEC because it was feared that it would evolve into a ‘clique’ that slowly amalgamates into the ‘inner circle’. While it was eventually created (in 1993) its powers were left clearly beyond the council’s and they have not significantly increased since then. In short, the 2011 happenings cannot be ignored as mere ‘growing pains’ because they were actions executed by designated power centers whose status is clearly institutionalized.

The second objection relates, again, to more contingent matters. As was documented in detail in the previous chapter, the 2011 case was characterized by a generational struggle: newcomers in the council wanted to snap the old elites in the PPG and thus it could be argued that the council’s actions represented mere ‘sectional’ interests. But even if one accepts such motives – and to make sure, there’s no reason not to –, the fact nonetheless remains that the activists used the council to challenge the leadership, not any other organ (like the NEC), and the leadership could not do anything to prevent its plan being overridden. As the Greens’ council is still clearly able to overcome the public office holders’ wishes (even in questions of highest importance) the party’s internal working logic allows operations that work against the spirit of the cartel theory and therefore the strong adaptation thesis cannot be sustained. The Greens’ case proves that it is still possible that a party, which clearly aims for a governing position may challenge the functional adaptive logics even under extreme pressures. In another words: the strongly systemic ‘presidentializing’ thrust is not overbearing.

Now, it can reasonably be asked if it is only the ‘extreme’ parties (greens and perhaps some far-left parties) that diverge from the ‘mainstream’? Although this does not weaken the fact that an intra-party style that differ significantly from the
predominant model can exist in contemporary Western politics, it does marginalize the effect a bit. Therefore, it is important to consider the ‘old parties’ too. What are the probabilities for intra-organizational resistance potential in the traditionally EPO-dominated SDP? Compared to the Greens’ ‘openly challenging’ model, the SDP’s activists are and have always been weaker. It is noteworthy that out of all the studied cases the SDP is actually the only party where neither one of the party ‘faces’ challenged the leadership explicitly during the research period – even the NCP’s PPG overturned chairman Suominen’s ‘strongbox deal’ in 1987. However, as has been argued all along, the power does not have to operate only through overt conflicts. In fact, the whole idea of a proactive leadership culture is to avoid such situations by making sure that everyone is behind the leader’s proposals in advance. While the party organs’ importance seems to have declined over the years, they are still solid parts of the procedure and need to be acknowledged. As one interviewee put it: if the SDP leader starts to behave like NCP chair (that is, high-handedly), problems are likely to ensue.

It cannot be denied that the ‘democratic’ features are nowadays more about ‘symbolism’ than actual partaking in decision-making. But while such measures are predominantly taken to make the party operations look more democratic than they actually are, it cannot be ignored either that the ‘symbols’ matter. As the famous Thomas theorem asserts: ‘If men define situations as real, they are real in their consequences’ (Thomas & Thomas 1928). While the NEC members and other high-ranking party officials probably know and accept that their direct input in national-level decision-making is nowadays quite modest, local activists who operate far away from national politics but still hold the button that selects party officials (including the NEC members and the party chairs) might see the situation otherwise. As the idea of the party members as stakeholders continues to live, a carefully orchestrated ‘act’ is needed to keep the relevant actors happy. While it might not affect the end result much, it can certainly slow down intra-party processes. For example, the transformation of the central party office into an ‘electoral-professional’ agency has been a much slower and weaker process in the SDP (see chapter 4 for details). If the arduousness of intra-party process reduces the leadership’s reaction potential, it might bear significant costs in ‘fast politics’. Therefore, albeit this ‘friction’ clearly differs from the Greens’ ‘openly challenging’ IPD potential, it must be acknowledged in the overall scheme.

In the case of the NCP it is of course not equally relevant to assess the EPO’s existing resistance potential as it was the ‘most likely’ case to adapt to external pressures. Against the party type-specific adaptation model, that seems to be the
most suitable characterization of Finnish parties’ organizational reactions to strong external pressures, it is, however, noteworthy to underline how fast its exit from the mass party thinking was. Up until the late 1970’s the EPO was formally strengthened. Chairman Ilkka Suominen’s EPO-friendly legacy carried on until the early 1990’s when the party office struggled with the PPG. But when this battle ended, the EPO’s political relevance declined rapidly and by the mid-2000’s it had regressed to an electoral machine – just like the traditional cadre party ideal suggests. This change too highlights this study’s main argument: that the party’s history matters. The expected organizational evolution that has been characterized in many pages of this book was clearly easiest if not even pleasant for the NCP, which emerged from a public office centered mindset. However, as the PPGs have strengthened throughout the line, and especially in the NCP where it was already very strong, its leader continues to be tied to its power and not even in the most leader-centric party has the leader raised into an ‘undisputed position of privilege’.

Overall, these findings support the idea that the original power distributions that were set in parties formative phases can indeed be very durable – albeit not pristine, of course. The importance of continuing differences relate to power distribution’s effects. As many recent studies have shown, several important outcomes like coalitional behavior (Bäck 2008; Pedersen 2010), parliamentary groups’ cohesion (Tavits 2011) and parties’ likeliness to introduce certain policies (Schumacher 2012) are affected by intra-party power distribution. As long as inter-party variation exists, parties’ actions and reactions are likely to vary, too.

7.3 Do the observed trends weaken or strengthen the Finnish democracy?

The desirability of intra-party democracy (i.e. the extent of the dispersion of intra-party power) in a representative democracy depends on which features one conceives to be the core values of democracy. If one emphasizes the democratic process itself then one should promote parties’ internal democracy. Instead, if one attaches the value of democracy to the lucidity of political options, then he/she should oppose the dispersion of intra-party power as the lines of accountability can blur when the number of decision-makers increase.243 (Teorell 1999; Scarrow 2005). Similarly, the goodness and badness of party organizational developments

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243 The most famous incarnation of this idea is John May’s (1973) ‘law of curvilinear disparity’, which asserts that party activists are likely to be more ideologically orthodox than other party actors.
depends on the normative standard one uses to assess them (Allern & Pedersen 2007, 84). To close the circle, the observed developments will now be assessed against these two ideal models. Because the current practice looks somewhat problematic from both perspectives, a ‘halfway solution’, which tries to combine the main virtues of both models, is also presented.

7.3.1 Normative problems in contemporary party practices

The value of intra-party democracy’s (IPD) for democracy can stem from a variety of things. It can promote a participant’s self-development, the quality of party ‘products’ (through better correspondence), the overall legitimacy of party government and so on (Teorell 1999, 368–370; Scarrow 2005, 3–5). In short: the pro-IPD view highlights the extent of citizen ‘embeddedness’ in the process and therefore it supports a practice where a maximum portion of the ‘demos’ intensively participates in party work. If this feature relates to the overall quality of democracy, it seems quite obvious that Finnish democracy has weakened during the past three decades. Not only has the physical size of party activity declined drastically (Karvonen 2014, 50–56), the possibilities for party activists to make a difference in party affairs has declined along with the strengthening of the public ‘faces’. Conversely, if we highlight the clarity of political options and the leaders’ ability to contour the voters opinions freely (abilities which are assumed to result from the lack of interfering agents, that is, party activists) (Teorell 1999, 364–366; Scarrow 2005, 4–5) then we can concede that the ‘presidentialization’ of parties has strengthened Finnish democracy as the party leaders and public officials are now more autonomous than they were three decades ago. Competitive democracy should now be stronger than ever.244

But the situation is more complex. First of all, Finnish party leaders are not autonomous. Depending on the party type they are still more or less constrained by party activists – or MPs. However, as the PPGs should be fairly sensitive to the voters’ needs as the MPs’ careers most directly depend on re-election, the NCP’s current form, which minimizes the EPO interference in intra-party decision-making, provides best prospects for behaving like competitive democracy expects.

244 While Allern and Pedersen (2007, 85) did not deny the general logic of this thinking, they showed that the relationship between general party organizational changes and normative models may be more complex. For example, it can be argued that even the competitive side of democracy has been harmed by the decline of mass parties as all parties are now arguably weaker at channeling societal demands.
On the contrary, a strong ‘conclave democracy’, where a small number of party activists can severely interfere with the public ‘faces’ doings is the most harmful for competitive democracy because it limits the party leader’s ability to contour the voters’ needs. This is now less of a problem in the SDP where the NEC has lost a fair amount of its operative powers, but in the Greens, where the council is strongly empowered, the leadership’s autonomy is constantly under threat – even regardless of the PPG autonomy, as the council can also end the party’s time in the government. ‘Conclave democracy’ can also build systematic skewness by enabling situations where radical thinking overtakes more moderate needs within a party (consider a socialist faction in a social democratic NEC). If party’s moderate voters are then ‘enclosed’ by more autonomous party leaders (for example in a center-right moderate conservative party), the party system level support does not reflect the ‘real’ social cleavages. It is a game of a catch-all party against a factional party.

Another general problem of ‘conclave democracy’ is highlighted in Katz and Mair’s (2002) model: if the central party merges with the public ‘face’ (considering the highly professional and careerist nature of contemporary Finnish politics, this is quite possible) representative intra-party democracy becomes nothing more than a façade for party oligarchy – exactly as Michels (1968[1911]) and Duverger (1967[1951]) suggested. Now, one might ask, is this not exactly what the competitive model asks for – a cohesive leadership that can provide clear options and contour voters’ opinions without the fear of interference? On the outset, yes it is, but if we look deeper we find that this model does not fulfill the founding idea of accountability in competitive democracy. Pure competitive democracy eliminates unsuccessful party leaders and rewards those who are able to satisfy voters’ needs. When party decisions are backed by a multilayered pseudo democracy, the party leadership avoids direct responsibility and he/she may be able to secure tenure without ‘delivering the goods’. While not perhaps as grave a problem as direct interference, this problem too can produce inefficiency for the party system and parties. Overall, then, in a world where the vast majority of people have nothing personal to do with political parties, an organization that concentrates great powers into small activist organs can be harmful in many ways.

This speculation seems to lead to the conclusion that the vast autonomy of the modern party leader is ‘democratically defendable’. However, it is very important to notice that the logic of competitive democracy works best under fairly specific circumstances: only a two-party system provides a clear measure for accountability as only one party at a time is responsible for the political outcomes. It makes sense to allow the public ‘faces’ to act autonomously when the linkage between their doings and the
political outcomes is clearly established and they can be held accountable for the outcome. It is no wonder that this variant of democracy has been highlighted especially in the American political science literature (see Teorell 1999, 364–366). In a multi-party system where government decisions are based on inter-party bargaining the linkage is less clear (for example Gauja 2013, 22-23) and it becomes even hazier if we include ‘the realities of governing’ into the equation. In the current Finnish politics where the ‘chairman-ministers’ of oversized surplus coalitions work under heavy bureaucrat influence in an ‘environment’ that is strongly characterized by unexpectedness (consider for example the surprise that the current migration crisis caused for the incumbent coalition) there is a risk that the connection between the politicians’ actions and the political outcomes becomes weaker and system legitimacy becomes undermined. The signs are already clear. Measures of mass democracy have declined along with the professionalization of political practices (Paloheimo & Raunio 2008) and populism has institutionalized at party level (Arter & Kestilä-Kekkonen 2014). In short: a total leadership autonomy under fuzzy conditions does not seem like an ideal option either, as leadership responsibility is hard to assess and the haziness can delegitimize political representation more generally.

7.3.2 A halfway solution? Direct leadership selection – and its obstacles

From a purely practical standpoint it seems understandable that the contemporary party leaders who are facing a fast moving and complex political reality need more operative autonomy than the party leaders of the 1980’s did. At the same time it seems equally obvious that if the political elites detach themselves completely from the masses they will lose their legitimacy and the major problems that Finland is already facing (recession, unemployment, mass migration, etc.) will produce even more severe instability. This problem is general to all of the West European countries. The general way to present it is to contrast the representative side of governing against the government's responsibilities. According to Peter Mair (2009, 5–7, see also Bardi et a. 2014b and Keman 2014) the gap between these virtues has been growing for decades. In a mass party democracy the parties represented clear societal classes with strict platforms that eventually provided the basis for governmental policy and responsibility. This simple and clear model brought the somewhat contradicting ideals of partisan representation and wider government responsibility fairly close to each other. Due to the weakening of class-based linkages and the coincidental emergence of complex ‘fast politics’ the responsible
side (i.e. politicians’ duty to handle general societal problems) has preceded the representative function (interest aggregation). According to Mair ‘parties have moved from representing interests of the citizens to the state to representing interests of the state to the citizens’ and therefore ‘parties become more like governors than representatives’. The practical problem that the parties face is, then, how to combine wide leadership autonomy that the responsible governing requires in contemporary conditions with sufficient popular support that also maintains governmental legitimacy?

The most obvious option would be a transition to majority elections and a two-party system, which provides clearer cues for voters. However, in the current situation this would require that the majority of parties took part in their own annihilation and therefore this option seems highly unfeasible even in theory. If we hold the main institutional framework constant – that is, we consider options that can combine leadership autonomy with popular support within a multiparty parliamentary government – it seems that we are more or less forced to find solutions from within the parties. Due to the strengthening of the Finnish party leaderships their lack of autonomy is not the main problem, popular legitimacy is. What is needed, then, is a revitalization of the spirit of the ‘golden age’ when party governance was widely supported (Ignazi 2014, 161). While the years of mass party politics are clearly behind us (Biezen & Poguntke 2014), the parties still command a plethora of intra-party and polity-level instruments that can be used to increase citizen engagement (Scarrow 1999b, 344–345). Indeed, in order to tackle the decline of mass activity, parties have in recent decades envisaged a wide array of ‘light versions’ of membership engagement. A popular alternative has been the widening of the party ‘demos’ further from traditional ‘conclaves’ by appointing ordinary members more direct powers in intra-party decision-making. (Scarrow 2015, 206–208).

Party members could be given more say in basically all the decisions that parties make. Some popular ones include candidate selection (Bille 2001; Pennings & Hazan 2001; Rahat & Hazan 2010) and the party policies (Scarrow 1999b; Scarrow 2001).

\[\text{245 It should be noted, though, that the Swedish ‘party block model’ where similar-minded parties coalesce before the elections to form two competing blocks is a recurrent topic in Finnish political commentary. Therefore, a transition to a system that mimics a two-party system is not too far-fetched. Finland is currently run by a coalition of three medium-large rightist parties while the opposition is personified in the SDP’s, the Left Alliance’s and the Greens’ efforts. Although the blocks are not entirely coherent (and two parties are excluded), they would surely work – like much less coherent coalitions that have operated under Finland’s extremely accommodating governmental practice. As such, this type of system would provide answers to the above-mentioned problems – albeit only partially, as governing would still happen under coalitional practice.}\]
et al. 2000; Gauja 2013). Recently some parties (German SPD) have even submitted the composition of the coalition government under the party vote (Scarrow 2015, 182). However, as most of these methods tend to decrease public faces’ autonomy over party policy, the focus here is on leadership selection, which could combine wide legitimacy with sufficient operative autonomy – at least when no other decisions are ‘democratized’ and the directly selected leader can use his/hers popular legitimacy to overcome interference from other party units.

The party leader’s task is one of the most crucial ones in contemporary advanced democracies because it now more often acts as the ‘gatekeeper position’ to the highest governmental posts. Thus, the methods that are used for selecting the party leaders bear an utmost importance for the functioning of democracy (Kenig 2009a, 2009b; Cross & Blais 2011). As previous studies (Paloheimo 2005; Nousiainen 2006) and chapter 6 in this study have highlighted, after downgrading the presidency party leaders have assumed an unquestioned pole position in Finnish politics too. In the 1980’s it was possible that the leader of a government party was not even a member of the cabinet (Paloheimo 2005). Today, when the concept of ‘prime minister election’ has normalized, one party leader takes over the head executive’s office and the leaders of coalescing parties are appointed to the most central cabinet ministers’ positions. Somewhat paradoxically, the party leaders’ ‘automatized’ status in the leading government positions has resulted in situations where a central cabinet minister has been changed after the party has changed their leader. This includes two prime ministers (the head executive) during the past 6 years time period. (see Rapeli 2010.) As parties can now change even the prime ministers in the middle of the term the method of leadership selection has become extremely important.

The main variable in the process, which most studies of leadership selection also focus on, is the ‘selectorate’, i.e. the composition of the group that makes the final selection (Kenig 2009b, 434). The history of representative democracy knows a great variety of ‘selectorates’, ranging from ‘a small group of party elites’ to the ‘supporters of the party in the general electorate’ (Cross & Blais 2011, 129). They can be arranged on a scale in terms of their inclusiveness (from most to least inclusive): voters (open primary), party members (closed primary), local party branches, the party convention/congress, the parliamentary party group, the party elite and a single person (combined from LeDuc 2001, 325 and Kenig 2009b, 435). While all of these methods have been used somewhere (for example in the Westminster model parliamentary groups have traditionally played a strong role (Cross & Blais 2011, 128) while in the US the open primary system where every
eligible voter can participate has often been used (LeDuc 2001, 326) in the European context leadership selection has predominantly been an intra-party affair.

Two main ‘selectorates’ have been used in the intra-party arena. The more traditional one is the party congress model where several hundred locally denominated delegates gather regularly to choose party leaders. The other, more inclusive option, is the ‘closed primary’ system; an open ballot where all enrolled party members can participate. (Kenig 2009b, 436). Interestingly, prior to 1990 the latter method was very rare, but since then – especially in the 2000’s – use of open membership ballots has increased significantly (Scarrow et al. 2000, 143; Kenig 2009b, 437–438; Scarrow 2015, 183–185). Ordinary party members now take part more often in leader selection directly while the powers of local ‘conclaves’ have reduced over the years. Another interesting observation is that while although the big picture suggests that Scandinavian parties have taken their members into account relatively well (i.e. decisions have been made in party congresses and not in closed elites or PPGs) (Krouwel 2012, 257), without the minor exception of Denmark the transition from the party congress model to membership ballots has been very modest (Scarrow 2015, 183–185). One can only speculate on the reasons, but a potential one is that the average turnout in general elections in the Nordic countries is still very high, around 80 % (IDEA 2016) and therefore established party elites simply might not have had enough incentives to share their power with ordinary members.

Finland, however, differs quite significantly from this general pattern. Turnout has declined for decades (Paloheimo & Raunio 2008) and the last parliamentary elections (2015) gathered only a 66.85 % turnout (IDEA 2016). This, combined with the decline in party memberships, local party branches and trust towards the parties suggests that Finnish party elites do not have an equally solid ‘back rest’ to lean on than their Scandinavian counterparts. The use of more inclusive methods of intra-party decision-making has stemmed from the parties’ attempts to re-engage with the citizenry (Scarrow 2015, 175). Opening the leadership selection to the party members might be a good way to combine leadership autonomy (as popular selection helps to bypass mid-elites) with popular support (as it engages more citizens to the process). According to Scarrow (2015, 193–195) it has often led to a good turnout, which has gotten even better when repeated, and therefore an open leadership selection might be a good way to foster positive engagement.

An open ballot involves a few risks, too. One is the fear that malicious forces will take over the party in order to enhance their own interests (LeDuc 2001, 326).
While this is certainly a plausible fear in open primaries, it should be a lesser problem in intra-party contests. Parties’ membership information has improved over the years due to the centralizing of the fee systems and databases and parties can now use this information to limit participation – for example to long-term members only (Scarrow 2015, 77, 194–195, 211–212). Another, perhaps a more relevant worry is that intense public competition between top contenders can reduce cohesion in the future (Scarrow 2015, 214). Of course, it cannot be denied that tough races can leave bodies in the battlefield and raise bitterness among the losers. This is still quite obviously the case in the SDP, where chair Jutta Urpilainen lost to Antti Rinne in 2014 after a long and very tight competition, which basically divided the party in half. However, in this case the final ‘selectorate’ was the party congress, not the members. It can also be argued that the old school method where the congress delegates are ‘bought’ behind the candidates can in fact lead to more significant fragmentation as the delegates continue to operate in various national and subnational party positions. An open membership ballot develops more distance between the selection and with what happens after it. While at least some of the losers will surely hold a grudge against the winners they have very limited possibilities to do actual harm within the party as they are still only ordinary members. Direct selection itself can also promote cohesion. According to Kenig (2009a, 246), who found that open contests are often fought between many candidates and won with clear margins, open contests ‘may consolidate the position of the elected leaders, for they passed a double legitimating process – they were elected by a broad selectorate and with a substantial majority.’ Indeed, winning an open race against many candidates with a vast majority would significantly bolster the winners’ claim to legitimacy and autonomy against any intra-party factions or organs.

There are two general obstacles for widening the party ‘demos’ in the leadership selection. The first one is legal. In the post-war world, party legislation was introduced in many countries to monitor and direct the use of party subsidies and, later, the parties’ internal features. It is somewhat ironic that because the laws tended to favor the mass party model that understood the IPD as layered representation, they created barriers for more ‘democratic’ innovations (Van Biezen & Borz 2012; Scarrow 2015, 214–215). This holds true in Finland as well where the Law of Associations (1989, § 17.3., § 23.1.) prohibits binding membership referendums in selected issues, including the selection of the executive

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246 A rumor tells that in the 1994 presidential elections, where the SDP and the NCP held open primaries, supporters of both parties deliberately jeopardized the other’s candidate selection with the result that both parties were represented by their relatively unknown number two candidates.
committee of an association (which the chair chairs). Moreover, the law does not only prohibit wider party democracy, it makes ‘conclave democracy’ mandatory by assigning supreme power to the party organs. The only membership ballots on the party leader that have taken place in Finland (the Greens in 2011 and Left Alliance in 2016) were only advisory and they needed to be ratified in the party congresses in order to become lawful. In other words: in order to succeed, this method requires that all relevant stakeholders, that is, local and regional party branches that sent delegates to the congress can reach a binding agreement in advance. This brings us to the second obstacle: the party actor’s motivation.

Scarrows (2015, 211–213) has noted that the extent of the ‘party demos’ is a delicate matter because it directly relates to the distribution of power within the party. According to her, the opening of leadership selection tends to reduce the party elites’ and other organized subgroups’ power. Therefore, it is not hard to see why established party ‘conclaves’ do not want to appoint the leadership selection to ordinary members – even though it would probably produce more popular support for the party leadership. From a personal point of view there are simply more important things at stake. Also, it must be remembered that this is not only about power within parties: because parties dominate the public domain, established party elites enjoy – via their intra-party power – a lot of power in national matters too. Through this linkage the second obstacle connects to the first one: if opening the leadership selection to wider ‘selectorates’ risks the elite’s position, they will not have much incentives to change the law.

According to Scarrows (2015, 195, 207) friction against wider democratic procedures is more likely to develop in parties that encase strong internal subdivisions and groups. Again, among the studied party cases the development towards more open leadership selection should be easiest and in fact most lucrative for the NCP. It encases the fewest EPO veto points, it builds on strong leader-centric tradition and direct selection could consolidate party chairs power over the PPG. On a similar note, it is obvious that such a transition should be toughest in the SDP, which hails from a strongly EPO-centric tradition that assigns much value to national and subnational party organs. However, from the SDP leader’s perspective the transition to direct leader selection could produce two important improvements. First, like in the NCP it would empower the party chair against the PPG and, second, it could help to demolish the last remnants of the NEC’s influence that can prove harmful for the leader who is now more vulnerable to

247 The Left Alliance selected their leader in the summer of 2016.
electoral fortunes (Niemi 2011). Again, the Greens is the strangest fruit: while direct democracy clearly fits the party’s historical character and they have shown interest towards it, popular election of a party leader would undermine the legitimacy of the ‘diffused’ power system and, paradoxically, make the Greens more like the other parties.

At last, it should be noted that empowering the party leaders through a direct popular vote connects with a form of democracy that differs significantly from the traditional party democracy. In it, ideally, the party members participated widely in the crafting of the party policy that was then offered to the voters and eventually enhanced in the government. In the new democracy this bottom up delegation of private interests changes into the leader’s public trusteeship that focuses on solving larger issues from the viewpoint of state (Saward 2008). In other words: responsibility is allowed to overshadow responsiveness. This new practice resembles the late 19th century estate rule where the traditional cleavages had not yet politicized. The difference is that as the masses have now been empowered (through widespread democratization) and the clock is hard to turn back in these matters, political leaders need to be tied to the masses somehow (through wide leadership ballots, for example). However, as the quality of the linkage in the new democracy is so different from the mass party model’s comprehensive ‘embeddedness’, instead of dreaming about the resurgence of ‘social movements’ we should focus – in normative terms – on how to make leadership democracy (Schumpeter 1942) work better. While this model stands in stark contrast to the mass party model, it should be remembered that before it established itself as the normative ‘yardstick’ for party organization it was widely considered as illegitimate (Manin 1997).

7.4 Where to go from here? An argument for an in-depth study of party leaderships’ ex post control

The decline of membership-based party politics has been well documented (for example Whiteley 2011 and Biezen et al. 2012). While party members continue to serve multiple organizational functions (Scarrow 2015), the societal linkage and the claim to intra-party power that stems from it seems to have become less important. As Biezen and Poguntke (2014, 214) note: ‘those who arguably act ‘on behalf of their constituencies’ are far less bound to these constituencies than they were before because [...] organizational anchorage through mass organization has waned’. While it is still valuable to know what the remaining members do and how
the party organizations work out their general functions (campaigning, recruiting, etc.), from the viewpoint of party decision-making the membership-based approach does not seem very important anymore. Members’ involvement in contemporary parties’ internal policy processes has been noted to be very limited while parliamentary groups tend to live in their ‘own world’ (Gauja 2013, 218–221). In terms of power, important party aspects lay somewhere else than in the withering remnants of wider mass party networks.

Accordingly, the most recent wave of party organizational studies has taken an opposite viewpoint and focused on the party leaders. The new ethos was nicely summarized by Pilet and Cross (2015, 4) (paraphrasing Poguntke and Webb’s 2005 presedentialization thesis): ‘[T]he traditional intermediary structures of political parties, such as delegate conventions, constituency party organizations, and parliamentary party groups have lost power and influence. Leaders now steer their parties with more autonomy than decades ago’. This is no doubt the direction in which this study’s findings point too. Future research on party organizations and power should most definitely put a heavy emphasis on the party leaders, as they are now clearly the most important intra-party actors in determining the parties’ actions.

The recent party leader studies have almost exclusively focused on the question ‘who selects the party leader?’ (to quote the title of one prominent text within this field, Cross & Blais 2011; also Kenig 2009a & 2009b, Cross & Blais 2012, Pilet & Cross 2014; 2015; Aylott & Bolin 2016). Some studies have also assessed their removal (Bynander & ‘t Hart 2007; Cross & Blais 2012), but what happens ‘in between’ – i.e. when the party leader acts in his office – still appears to be a lacuna in the field. Is it enough to focus on selection and removal? The question can be assessed from normative and empirical standpoints, and in both cases the answer is no.

Here, the normative standpoint refers to the questions that were dealt with in the very beginning of chapter 1. More specifically, it relates to the intriguing character of intra-party democracy that has motivated party studies throughout the past century (Carty 2013). To say that there is nothing normatively intriguing in studying party leadership beyond mere selection process postulates acceptance for the leader-centric ‘governor’ model that was just described. What the leader does after the selection is not of moral interest simply because the selection established the leader’s absolute mandate. However, the wide recent interest towards IPD (for example Cross & Katz 2013, Vom De Berge et al. 2013) suggests that party scholars are not there yet; leadership’s absolute post-selection autonomy has not
emerged as a new ideal of intra-party politics. And again, even if it was it would be normatively intriguing to seek hindrances of leadership autonomy (like Ostrogorski 1902). Thus, clear normative motives continue to exist for extending the study of party leaders beyond their selection.

A scientific-empirical view suggests the same. To say that the study of pre-selection methods is the only scientifically relevant aspect of a party leadership is to claim that no other intra-party players can affect what happens ‘between’ selections. Although the idea of a party leaders’ total ascendancy and independence has been sometimes taken almost as a given (for example Allern & Pedersen 2007; Cross & Pilet 2015) the fact remains that the topic is clearly under-researched (see Loxbo 2013 for extended critique). Also, strong theoretically grounded arguments have been levelled against the idea of the total withering of the intra-party resistance potential (Koole 1996; Kitschelt 2000; Müller 2000; Bolleyer 2009). Although this study’s findings, too, point towards heightened leadership autonomy, they also suggest that party leaders have not become entirely autonomous. Moreover, there are no reasons to expect a linear development either; the current thrive towards intra-party democratization (combined with giant leaps in communications technology) may produce mechanisms of leadership control that greatly exceed the depth and strictness of the traditional meeting-based ‘conclave model’ of intra-party democracy. Thus, future studies on intra-party politics should most definitely focus on the quality and scope of the party leader’s post-selection autonomy, too.

According to Müller (2000, 328–329) the methods that party activists may use to control their leaders after selection (ex post) include reporting and monitoring, and institutional checks. Reporting refers to party leaders’ (PPG, NEC) formal accounts to subnational bodies while monitoring extends to more proximate information channels, too. Institutional checks, on the other hand, refer to party agents’ possibility to block or veto other organs’ initiatives.

All ex post control mechanisms can be examined with a positional method, via formal statutes. Also this study made observations about the party organs’ reports, the organs’ potential to oversee other organs’ actions and the extent to which the organs need to cooperate in order to produce certain decisions. The burgeoning trend in the field has been the generation of large comparative cross-country data sets in the spirit of Katz and Mair (1992) that mostly rely on quantification of formal party statutes. This method is used in studying the interconnections of several intra-organizational factors (Scarrow & Webb 2013), intra-party democracy (Vom De Berge et al. 2013) and leadership selection (Pilet & Cross 2015). One
potential avenue for future research could be to map out and compare formal ex post mechanisms of party leader control.

The other option, to which the author of this study subscribes to, is to take a more thorough view on the matter and examine in-depth which types of constraints contemporary, supposedly ‘presidentialized’ party leaders actually face within their parties – and even outside of them.\textsuperscript{248} This emphasis stems from this study’s findings, which demonstrated that quite often the actual operating of a party diverts from the formal statutes’ idealistic notions – even in supposedly democratic parties and in such a high saliency issue as the government formation. There are strong reasons to believe that the gap between rigid formal institutions – that were erected decades ago to serve very different demands – and actual practices has widened along with the increasing complexity of politics. Although the study of actual intra-party processes is hard and laborious, it is mandatory for shedding light on parties’ actual democratic performance (Allern & Pedersen 2007, 86). In this study mere positional analysis would have left the most important features undisclosed.

In terms of data sources the insight that can be gained from interviewing party elites needs to be highlighted. As Gauja (2013, 8), who made extensive use of party interviews in her recent study, stated, ‘interviews [...] bridge the theory of politics with the reality, and provide a more engaging and grounded perspective on organizational dilemmas that otherwise might be obscured in documentary and statistical analysis alone’.\textsuperscript{249} This happened here too: very often insiders pointed to things that were completely outside of the framework; the end result would be very different without their insights. However, instead of treating interviews as the only information sources they should only provide one piece in a ‘robust, mixed method’ approach (Gauja 2013, 8). Also, besides using in-depth data only for in-depth single country studies, students of intra-party politics should make more effort in connecting more proximate insights with large N comparative studies by, for example, improving the validity of measures.

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\textsuperscript{248} It might be even probable that the contemporary party leaders’ external working environment (public administration, international relations, the media, etc.) produces more severe constraints than the intra-party arena.

\textsuperscript{249} From recent, wider, intra-party studies Cross and Blais’s (2012) study on leadership selection also made extensive use of interview material.
APPENDIX 1


The general criteria. 1) The main question: to what extent is the extra-parliamentary party organization (EPO) able to control/affect parliamentary party groups (PPG) functioning? 2) The scale (from lower to higher scores): no rule (total PPG autonomy) – the congress/referendum – the council – the NEC (total EPO control). 3) The codes reflect real options and variation in the statutes. 4) Both statutes (the party’s and the parliamentary group’s rules) are treated as equal parts of a whole.

A1) Government formation, decision: to what extent can the EPO affect party’s decision to join in or abstain from a coalition government? 1) The PPG decides (no formal role to the EPO), 2) the decisions have to be made in the PPG’s and EPO’s joint meeting, no formal decision rules exist; 3) the joint meeting decides, equal weight to both organs; 4) the joint meeting decides, one vote for every participant (i.e. EPO’s natural majority); 5) the EPO decides

A2) Government formation, negotiators: who negotiates about government formation? 1) No formal regulations exist (i.e. formal PPG autonomy); 2) joint participation, only PPG’s representatives are defined; 3) joint participation, explicit equal weight to each ‘face’; 4) joint participation, EPO majority; 5) only the EPO representatives negotiate

B) Candidate selection: to what extent are the EPO organs able to affect the result of the membership ballot? 1) The EPO can change a portion (1/5 or 1/4) of candidates, but not the best half; 2) the EPO can change a portion to others who took part to the poll; 3) the EPO can change a portion to anyone (i.e. it can bring new candidates outside from the party lists)
C) Leadership selection: to what extent can the EPO affect the PPG’s leadership selection? 1) The PPG decides; 2) the EPO can suggest a candidate (i.e. EPO has a right to speak in the PPG’s general meeting)

D) Policy: to what extent can the EPO direct the PPG’s policy positions? 1) No formally defined crafters of party policy in the EPO, no defined tasks for the PPG; 2) specifically designated crafter of party policy in the EPO, no defined tasks for the PPG; 3) the EPO organs are specifically defined as crafters of party policy, the PPG should work according to party’s principles; 4) the EPO organs are specifically defined as crafters of party policy, the PPG’s explicitly defined purpose is to carry out party’s programmatic aims; 5) the EPO organs are specifically defined as decision-makers, the PPG’s explicitly defined purpose is to carry out party’s programmatic aims, a specific organ monitors the PPG

E1) Information, PPG report’s review, extensiveness: to whom is the PPG obliged to report about its actions? 1) The PPG presents a report to the party congress OR the party council; 2) the PPG presents a report to the party congress AND the council

E2) Information, PPG report’s review, depth: how carefully do the EPO organ/organisms review the PPG’s report? 1) It is only presented to the EPO organs; 2) EPO organs inspect it

E3) Information, participation rights: to which extent may the representatives of the EPO participate in the PPG meetings? 1) No automatic participation rights for the EPO representatives; 2) limited participation rights for the EPO representatives (only leaderships/chairmen, etc.); 3: vast and automatic participation rights for the EPO representatives (all members from all organs)

F) Sanctioning: to which extent can the EPO sanction the PPG or its individual members? 1) The sanctioning of the MPs is PPG’s prerogative; 2) The sanctioning of the MPs is carried out by the PPG, but the EPO can suggests a sanction; 3) the EPO can suspend an individual party member if he/she has seriously damaged the party (vaguely formulated); 4) the central EPO organs have explicit rights to suspend party members who have acted against the party’s interests. The suspended member loses his/hers rights to act as an official of a party organ (incl. PPG) and he/she is not eligible for candidacy in elections
PRIMARY DATA SOURCES

General


SDP


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NCP


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Greens


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