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Europeanising Greens in an Evolving European Democracy: Roles and Limitations

Qingzhi Huan

UNIVERSITÄT
MANNHEIM

Qingzhi Huan

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Editorial Note:

*Qingzhi Huan is a professor in comparative politics at Shandong University, China, and a Humboldt
Research Fellow 2005/2006 at the MZES of Mannheim University, Germany.*

Abstract

Built upon a methodological assumption that conventional theory of democracy and party politics after some modifications can be applied to analysing the EU politics, this article offers a case study of the European Green Party (EGP) by focusing on its three aspects—political programme, organisational structure and political participation. As the main conclusion, the author argues that the EGP has evolved into a Euro-party by the end of the EP's fifth term in terms of certain standards, yet its roles as a system-maker for the EU's democratic transformation are still very limited.

Key words: European Green Party, European democracy, European Greens, environmental politics

Contents

1. Introduction

An interesting question arisen from the increasingly integrated Europe is whether there will be a European Union (EU) democracy based upon a European civil society or 'political space' to follow (Kohler-Koch 2003-6; Ruzza 2004:12; Ward 2004:ix). To uncover this intelligence puzzle, a commonly accepted research approach is to extend the conventional theory of democracy and party politics onto the supranational level of the EU—to examine the roles which political parties play in promoting the formation of a democratic European system or polity (Sweeney 1984:3-4). Following such a kind of 'analogical methodology' (Haas 1970:623), this article takes the European Green Party (EGP) as an example to investigate whether or to what an extent the forging Euro-parties really matter in the context of the EU's democratic transformation as many students may argue (Haas 1958; Marquand 1978; Pridham and Pridham 1981; Hix and Lord 1997; Deth and Poguntke 2001-4; Hix 2006). By focusing on the EGP's three aspects—political programme, organisational structure and political participation—as well as its main constituent parties in Western Europe, it will discuss three interrelated questions: How much progress has been made for the European Greens in moving towards a European party thus far? What are the EGP's contributions and limitations in the undergoing process of transforming the EU democratically and developing a European civil society? And consequently, what can we reasonably expect from the interaction of the Europeanising Greens and an evolving European democracy in a foreseeable future?

2. Conceptual Adaptation and Research Framework

Before turning to the above-raised questions, let me explain or re-define a couple of key words which will appear often in this article.

2.1 European democracy

The foremost and also probably most controversial concept is 'European democracy'. This term, in a singular or plural form, is usually used to describe the democratic system exercised by almost all the European countries today (Steiner 1998). In this article, however, it refers to the forming institutional complexity at the EU level or 'the EU Polity' constructed over the past 50 years under the inter-governmental treaties such as the *Treaty of Rome* (1957), the *Treaty* of *Maastricht* (1992), the *Treaty of Nice* (2001), and the *Treaty Establishing a European Constitution* (2004).

Although nobody can offer a universal definition for democracy in today's world, any convincing description of or prescription to contemporary democracy must imply a systematic combination of certain component elements including democratic ideology or values, institutional framework and decision-making mechanism. Thus, being a democracy means that several political institutions are united into a political system or 'polity' basing upon and sticking to some core democratic beliefs and

behaviour principles. Or according to the familiar cliché, democratic governments are *of*, *by* and *for* the people. In application of this standard, the EU today arguably is a quasi-democracy (Lodge 2005:284) instead of a pseudo-democracy. Directly-elected European Parliament (EP) since 1979 has attained a lot of key check-and-balance powers in the EU's decision-makings such as the budget approval and the European Commission (EC)'s formation and operation, as well as an equal legislative power in the policy areas to which Council of Ministers and European Council make the binding decisions by a rule of Qualified Majority Voting (QMV) based upon the initiatives of the EC (Lodge 1996:9; Smith 1999:63; Kreppel 2002:89).

It is understandable that democratisation of the EU will be a time-consuming process. The EU—European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC)—came into being in 1951 primarily as a regional economic cooperation and integration organisation. This fact can explain why, economic growth and efficiency for a long time was the major, if not sole, criterion guiding the development of the EU. Other issues such as social rights and environmental protection were considered only under the condition that they were economically-related and consequently often were dealt with in an economic perspective. More importantly, constitutional basis for the EU was, and to a large extent still is, an inter-governmental cooperation mechanism based upon the *ad hoc* mandate-and-power-granting from its member states. Putting the Council of Ministers—later on plus the European Council—as the supreme policy-making body and maintaining a consensus rule of decision-making, member states could control the development of the EU and protect their key national interests. Thus, if this picture had remained unchanged, there would be arguably no reason to talk about the phenomenon of 'democratic deficits'. Yet the reality is that European integration was not restricted within the economic field and a lot of dramatic institutional changes have occurred with the EU, especially following the *Single European Act* in 1986 and the *European Union Treaty*. And as a result, democracy and legitimacy of the EU's decision-making as well as itself are in question (Banchoff and Smith 1999; Eriksen and Fossum 2000). Retrospectively, the EU polity has indeed left far away from 'a common subsystem of their members states' (Reif 1985:1-2), if ever. As for today's EU, it can be described as a mixture of representative democracy through the EP and indirective representative democracy through the national governments of its member states.

2.2 Party democracy

Another crucial word for this study is 'party democracy'. A next-to-consensus percept in this respect is that it is indivisible between democracy and political parties (Schattschneider 1942; Epstein 1967; Sartori 1976; Budge and Keman 1990; Roskin 1991; Katz and Mair 1995), and the closest approximation to an ideal type in actuality is the West European democracies at the national level (Hix and Lord 1997:205), though one may contend by arguing that a polity with political party does not necessarily leads to a democracy (Müller-Rommel 2005). A detailed analysis on the relationship between democracy and political party, or the basic criteria measuring an ideal 'party democracy', is

beyond the scope for this article. What I want to emphasise here is that the common understandings above to party democracy provides us another theoretical basis for our further discussion.

It is unthinkable that there would be a European democracy without European parties and a European party system. One may imagine or even find some examples of direct democracies at the community level, as many eco-communalists or eco-regionalists did (Sale 1985:96; Pepper 2005). As far as the EU—the first supranational polity in contemporary world—is concerned, however, the only conceivable approach to transform itself into a democratic system, in the author's intelligence, is through introducing or strengthening the party competition along with interests representation among the European public and responsibility accountability in the European governance or the 'EU Government', no matter from where the first impetus to such a political change will come, such as the neo-functionalist 'economic spillover' (Hass 1961:369), the ambitious or rational national political parties (van der Eijk 1994:378-9; Hix and Lord 1997:2), or the politically-awakened 'Eurocrats' (Sweeney 1984:156), just to name a few of them.

Thus, we can reasonably assume that political parties will become an increasingly important political force at the European level and act in comparable manners as they do in the national politics (Hix and Lord 1997:204-5). Of the key functions for political parties, they include representing the interests of European citizens along with the social-economic as well as other cleavage dimensions, linking the European civil society and 'Eurostate' through cohering assorted interest groups into a unitary political framework, recruiting European political elites for the various EU offices, providing democracy and legitimacy for the EU's governance via the party competition within and outside of it, especially through participating in the EP elections. To fulfill these political roles, political parties in the EU countries have two strategic choices. The first choice is to make themselves more sensitive to the European issues through programmatic and organisational adjustments (Bomberg 2002), and the other one is to transform themselves into *European* or Euro-parties upon which the following section will discuss in-depth.

2.3 European political party or Europeanisation of political party

The third key concept concerning my study here is 'European political party' (Euro-party) or 'Europeanisation of political party'. Generally speaking, there are two approaches in interpreting the term 'European' or 'Europeanisation' (Bomberg 2002:31-2). They respectively emphasise one of the two aspects of European integration: the emergence and development of transnational or supranational political institutions at the EU level (Risse et al. 2000), and the response of political institutions at the national level to the EU institutions' impacts upon member states (Ladrech 1994:69; Börzel 1999; Bulmer and Burch 2000:9; Hix and Goetz 2000). Both these approaches are relevant, in the author's point of view, to describe and explain the evolution of political parties in the EU countries in the context of European integration.

On the one hand, 'Euro-party' by definition is a political party activated at the European level with similar organisation structure and political functions as that at the national level. Thus in the strict sense, a Euro-party should have a Europe-oriented political programme, a Europe-wide organisation structure and a EU-centred political participation. Moreover, European division-lines of political cleavage should replace the national interests as the major basis, along which Euro-parties are formed and operated., and accordingly there would have as many Euro-parties as the number of eco-social cleavages rather than the number of member states, upon which a EU party system is constructed. Undoubtedly, there are rare hope to find such pattern of Euro-parties in the EU today. If applying these standards less stringently, however, one can easily identify several Euro-parties in/around the EU polity—especially in the EP politics, such as European People's Party (EPP), Party of European Socialists (PES), European Liberal, Democratic and Reform Party (ELDR), and the EGP—successor of the European Federation of Green Party (EFGP), and so on (Hix and Lord 1997:24; Smith 1999:84; Dietz 2000 and 2002; Kreppel 2002:177). And arguably, a European party system or 'party family' is already there or emerging (Lodge 1996:195; Hix 1999:186).

On the other hand, political parties at the national level, as the term 'Europeanisation of political party' indicates, will play a key part in creating Euro-parties or a European party system. As a matter of fact, the current Euro-parties did not come from nowhere, but from a process in which all the major political parties in member states—both pro- and anti-European ones—have been involved. In other words, the formation and development of those Euro-parties appears more like a process of self-transformation of national political parties, than creation of new ones on the EU level. This fact suggests that, the maturity or 'configuration' of Euro-parties or a European party system can only be a long process of evolution, which very much depends upon the function-and-power-granting of national political parties and the development of the EU polity as a whole (Sweeney 1984:154-8; Hix and Lord 1997:215-8).

'Euro-party' and 'Europeanisation of political party' thus are utilised interchangeably in this article to conceptualize the ongoing process of Europeanising political parties, though they can be more strictly differentiated to describe one of the two sides of that phenomenon separately.

3.   Research framework

The preceding terminological analysis probably raises more questions than it may have answered, but upon which we can build a theoretical basis for our further discussion. The EU polity today is not a democracy in a strict sense of political system at the national level, and there is not any guarantee that it would eventually become a democracy as such (Deth 2006). Notwithstanding, it is undeniable that the EU has been moving towards an institutional framework with ever more democratic elements and is still strongly committed to be an even more democratic one (Kohler-Koch 1999; Wallström 2005). Thus we can safely describe the 'European democracy' as an 'evolving democracy' without a predetermined destination. Also, there is no unquestionable causal relationship between political party

and democracy including a EU democracy. Both our conventional wisdom and actual observation, however, point to the necessity and significance of Euro-parties for the development of a European democracy. Although the EU Establishments constitute an institutional skeleton which will constrain the operation of political parties, the latter can also, to some degree at least, reshape this polity through responding to it actively or even aggressively. With these general understandings to or believes in *European* political parties as the basis, we can start the case study of the EGP by focusing upon its roles and limitations in the context of an evolving European democracy.

As far as the EGP is concerned, two immediate features are conspicuous. First, it is a typical Euro-party from the outset. Most of its earliest constituent members were founded with impetus of the first European election in 1979, and benefited a lot from the relatively open electoral rules for the EP as well as its nature as a 'second-order' election (Reif 1985:28,98; Dietz 2000:200). Second, compared with other Euro-parties such as the EPP, the PES and the ELDR, it is unique in several aspects. The EGP is a small, ideology-oriented, and originally anti-system political party (Dietz 2000:204-5).

On the basis of these observations and the theoretical assumptions discussed earlier, we can draw up a research framework for the EGP by addressing the inter-related questions: How to evaluate the EGP's performance as a Euro-party in terms of its political programme, organisational structure and political participation? What are the roles and limitations of the EGP from a perspective of pressing the EU towards a democracy? And consequently, to what an extent, the EGP as well as the other Euro-parties is an independent player in creating a EU democracy? Concretely speaking, a Europe-oriented political perspective is to measure whether the EGP has offered a convincing systematic explanation to the challenges which confront Europe today as well as the solutions to them from a Green perspective, especially that why should and how to make the current European integration as well as the EU structure more democratic; while a Europe-wide organisation structure and a EU-centred political participation to measure whether the EGP has the political will and capacity to successfully translate its political ideas into realisable political initiatives and public policy. Thus in the next two sections, part one will make a detailed examination of the EGP's evolution or Europeanisation of green parties in the EU countries, and part two will go further to pose a theoretical analysis of why the EGP can only play certain political functions and in certain ways—its roles and limitations.

Hypothesis 1: Considering its ideology-inclined and initial anti-system features, the process of the EGP's transforming itself into a Euro-party would be both an ideological and a strategic one. The Greens' essentially outward or global thinking probably make it easier than others to develop into a European-style party (Eckersley 1992; EFGP 1993a; Kelly 1994; Dobson 2000), while disagreements among its member parties over theoretical interpretation on and practical strategy in adapting to the speeding-up European integration since the mid-1980s, as many scholars have demonstrated from the evidence at the national level (Frankland 1992; Poguntke 1993; O`Neill 1997; Müller-Rommel and Poguntke 2002), would play a significant counteracting part.

Hypothesis 2: As a small party on the EU stage, in order to improve its participation records, the EGP very possibly has to increasingly adapts to the rules of European politics instead of to challenge its direction. If this holds true, a predictable tendency for the EGP is that it will evolve into a more cooperative, but less distinctive, player in the EU politics. In other words, the EGP's potential as a small but imagitive political party in advocating and promoting an alternative EU will decline as the time goes.

Hypothesis 3: A reasonable explanation to the EGP's performances as a actor in promoting the EU's transformation towards a true democracy more likely lies in the power configuration of European institutional framework as well as the structural features of the EP politics than in its internal aspects. To put in another way, in terms of fostering both a European democracy and a EU party system, the EGP is primarily a system-adapter than a system-maker.

4.   Evaluating the EGP as a European Party

As having been prescribed in the foregoing section, a fully-fledged European party should have its Europe-relevant political perspective, organisation structure and political participation. There is no exception for the Greens. Thus this part will concentrate upon the three dimensions of the EGP to measure whether or to what an extent it has developed into a Euro-party.

4.1   Programmatic dimension

One key requirement for a European party is a set of Europe-oriented political perspectives. As for the EGP, four variables will be examined in the next analysis of its programmatic documents—the five common manifestos for European elections (1984-2004) and the *Guiding Principles of European Federation of Green Parties* (EFGP 1993a). They include a distinctive Green vision of Europe, a clear and unitary policy on European integration, a systematic criticism on and reform suggestions to the EU, and a realistic and constructive political strategy.

Attempts to draw up a common statement of 'Green Europe' started with the Coordination of European Green and Radical Parties which was set up around the EP election of 1979. Yet there were insurmountable disagreements among the Greens, especially between the radical-leftist and the purist ones (Bomberg 1998:72). As a result, the EGP had no official pan-European platform in the first European election.

In the *Joint Declaration of the European Green Parties* and the *Paris Declaration* issued before the 1984 EP election, the EGP—the reconstructed 'European Green Coordination' or 'European Greens'—for the first time conceptualised its basic percepts and policy positions in common on Europe (see Parkin 1989:327-30). In these short documents the Greens criticised the unecological reality and centralised power structure in economy as well as in society, and demanded for a

reconstruction of the relationship between the human race and the rest of nature, and between the rich and the poor, by highlighting the policies such as peace and defense, agriculture, anti-nuclear energy, sustainable economy, women and human rights, and Third World. Rather than supporting for European integration, it advocated a federal structure consisting of regions, instead of nation states, within which diversity will be taken into account and highly respected. In its own words, Europe is 'a new Europe, neutral and decentralised, with autonomous regions' (EGP 1984:1). By doing so, the EGP presented a contending model of Europe—'Europe of regions' based on the principles of ecologism and regionalism (Dietz 2000: 205; Ruzza 2004:119). And unsurprisingly, both the EU and European integration were even not mentioned, though there was a strong anti-EU flavour in them.

Around the 1989 EP election, some of the EGP's member parties started shifting towards a position of more pro-parliamentary participation and pro-European integration, yet the majority of them like the French Greens maintained an attitude which was criticised by Brice Lalonde, Environmental Minister at that time, as anti-Europeanism. Besides the obvious themes of environmental protection, energy resources, the quality of life and anti-nuclearism, it urged solidarity with the Third World, the regions, the unemployed, the young and the old, and expressed strong reservations about the Single European Market (SEM), fearing that free-market profiteering would outweigh the social and environmental dimensions. These rhetorics can be easily found from the EGP's second common manifesto. In a 8-page long text, the Greens addressed its main policy positions on sustainable economy, international solidarity, environment protection, renewable energy, public transport, anti-biotechnology, organic agriculture, women and men equality, shared and flexible work, human rights, disarmament and dismilitarisation. This manifesto to a large degree is a mixture of the two declarations issued in 1984. Its vision on sustainable development is a very green version. 'Greens are committed to a radical sharing of wealth—between continents and between generations, not only between classes. This means shifting economic priorities from consumption to conservation; away from the self-defeating economic growth of the Single Market and towards sustainable regional economies' (EGP 1989:3). At the same time, a regionalist view of Europe still features it. 'We European Greens ultimately envisage a new concept for Europe: a Europe of autonomous regions without any borders' (EGP 1989:1). With a strong belief that 'the small is beautiful', the Common Agriculture Policy (CAP), the SEM, the EEC, the EU, the EU enlargement, and the EP were mentioned for several times, but all that in a negative sense. Furthermore, this platform claimed that the Greens 'acutely aware that the EEC institutions are deeply undemocratic', and one of its major missions 'is to promote the democratisation of all institutions with our Green vision of Europe' (EGP 1989:1). In terms of this, there is no substantial difference between this document and that of 1984.

The *Guiding Principles of European Federation of Green Parties* adopted at the founding congress of the EFGP in 1993 has been thus far functioning as the EGP's basic programme. This document consists of three parts: ecological development, common security and new citizenship. Under section one, it explained the EGP' major policies on ecological economy, world economy and European economy, advocating a smooth conversion of current economic structure and world economic system. In part two, it generalised the Greens' new understanding of peace maintaining and creation in a post-

Cold War era, stressing that 'peace is indivisible and should be organised', and that these goals could be achieved through creating a new European security system, disarming, and reforming the United Nations. In the third section, it emphasised that human rights should be expanded and better protected, especially for women, the minorities and other societal groups in a weak social position. With having always claimed to be a European rather than a EU political party (Lippelt 2004), there was no discussion in this document regarding the newly established EU as well as the speeding-up European integration. Nevertheless, a clear sign for the EGP's reorientation is it only mentioned 'a Europe of regions' one time, indicating that this theme was being marginalised within the Greens.

The 1994 electoral manifesto titled *Electoral Platform of the Green Parties of the European Union* reflected both the EGP's progress and limitation of green conceptualisation. This document differs significantly from the Greens' earlier common statements. It was more comprehensive and detailed with a text as long as 37 pages, and much less ideology-inclined. This platform placed greater emphasis on pragmatic alternatives to the EU's policies of agriculture, transportation, environment, energy, industry, research and development, economic and social cohesion, internal market, international trade, production and consumption, cooperation with Third World countries, eliminating social exclusion, monetary policy, European citizenship, gender equality, and common security. Furthermore, it demonstrated that the EGP has dramatically reoriented its policy attitude towards the EU in general and the role of the EP within it in particular. For instance it openly declared that 'the Greens are in favour of European integration. The European Union—despite all the well-deserved criticism, and even if it cannot accomplish pan-European integration on its own—will be an important factor in this process. The four key concepts of the needed reform are: a pan-European approach, democracy, social ecology and decentralisation' (EGP 1994:29). In addition, to change the EU's structures, objectives, policies and tools with a green perspective, it insisted that 'the European Parliament constitutes with the council the legislative and budgetary authority of the European Union. The Parliament must have power to initiate legislation, as well as the power of political control over the Commission' (EGP 1994:30). It is quite evident that the EGP has adopted a realistic political approach of 'reforming the EU from inside' which puts the EP as the major legitimate channel of institutional participation. As a result, this document appeared more like a 'guidebook' for the next EGP group in the EP than a reiteration of the Greens' political precepts and policy views (Bomberg 1998:78). Consequently, the vision of 'Europe of regions' was virtually absent, receiving only a brief paragraph near the end of the text. In short, it seems that the EGP has shifted its focus from constructing and promoting an alternative vision of Europe to formulating some achievable policy initiatives on the EU political stage.

Green Strategy for the 1999 European Elections adopted by the second congress of the EFGP is a relative short document, with more clearly-defined or professional policy emphasis and generalization (EGP 1999). In this platform, it stressed that the Greens is devoted to challenge the current direction of the EU—reflecting the hegemony of transnational capital, maintaining the undemocratic structure and damaging the environment and social cohesion, and demands political changes in order to achieve environmentally and socially sustainable development. For this, the Greens is committed to

working for minimum environmental and social regulations at all levels of economic decision-making to ensure reconciliation between the economy, the environment and the European social model, realising a series of environment protection goals such as reducing the CO2 emission and the replacement of nuclear power by safe and renewable energy sources, promoting institutional reform of the EU to allow for a more efficient and transparent policy process, advocating an expanded European citizenship to better protect the fundamental human rights who live in the EU, and extending the EP's powers of co-decision to increase the democracy of the EU. To cite its own words, the *Green project* is to 'build a society respectful of fundamental rights and environmental justice', to 'increase freedom within the world of work', and to 'deepen democracy by decentralisation and direct participation of people in decision-making that concerns them'; the *Green method* is 'radical, realistic and reformist'; the *Green values* are 'solidarity, innovation, independence and openness' (EGP 1999:3). All these statements suggest that the EGP has evolved from a protest-motivated, movement-style party into a parliament-oriented, professional one.

The EGP's common manifesto for the 2004 European election is in fact only a 'Common Preamble' (EGP 2004a). This brief platform includes two parts. In part one it summarised the Greens' major positions towards the EU and European integration. As it said, the Greens supports 'a more tolerant, social, ecological and democratic Union' and a reuniting Europe in which the EU plays a leading part. To achieve these, the EGP is in favour of the EU's fair enlargement, an independent and cohesive European foreign policy, and the new EU constitutional treaty. Environmental protection as well as other green policies were also addressed, but its emphasis was obviously put on the EU's expanding and extending responsibilities. Thus, a clear message from this document is no longer a Green vision on Europe, rather a green vision of the EU. Part two briefly discussed the Greens' key policy goals such as safeguarding the environment (safe, healthy and tasty food, shift in energy policy), greening the social dimension (strong communities and livable cities with social and economic security for all European citizens), developing democracy (strong citizen empowerment, equal civil and political rights for all citizens), strengthening the peace policy (multilateralism and disarmament, international solidarity and cooperation, conflict prevention and mediation), and promoting grass roots globalisation (Tobin tax for the developed countries, corporate responsibility). These policy suggestions reflected the EGP's continuous efforts in broadening its political image from a single-issued environmental party to a more comprehensive leftist party. Nevertheless, it seems that not all the EGP's member parties could accept such a generally pro-EU and leftist position in their electoral campaigns without difficulty, and this is probably the reason why the EGP did not formulate another unitary common manifesto.

In terms of the EGP's programmatic development, as table 1 shows, there has undergone a process of transition during the past two decades from stressing an alternative vision of Europe—a Green Europe or Europe of regions—to the greening of an ever integrating or reuniting Europe. Accordingly, the EGP is gradually giving up its radical, often vague and inconsistent, Green thinking on Europe and taking an increasingly pro-EU or constructive policy attitude towards European integration and the EU. Of the major turning points, the EFGP issued a statement for the first time in 1994 calling on the European Council to reform the EU in the interests of 'democracy' and 'peace', and to protect the

environment and reduce unemployment. Therefore, similar with what have occurred to the Greens in domestic politics, the EGP is getting to be an ideologically distinctive but normal political party at the European level.

Table 1: Programmatic dimension of the EGP in the European parliamentary terms (1979-2004)

	1984	1989	1993	1994	1999	2004
Green vision on Europe*	+	+	+	+/-	+/-	-/+
Policy on European integration**	-	-	-	+/-	+/-	+
EU-reform suggestion***	-	-/+	--	+/-	+/-	+/-
Realistic political strategy****	-	-	-/+	+/-	+/-	+/-

*	+ indicating an alternative vision of Europe such as 'Green Europe' or 'Europe of Regions'
**	+ indicating a supportive attitude towards European integration
***	+ indicating a constructive position towards the EU
****	+ indicating an accepting attitude towards parliamentary participation

4.2   Organisational structure dimension

Another key aspect for a European political party is a Europe-wide organisation structure. For the EGP, a four-variable-framework is applied in the following investigation which will focus upon its organisational development surrounding the European elections and the EP participations. They include a well-organised party federation organisation, a strengthening EP parliamentary group, a streamlined relationship between the federation and its members parties, a close-cooperative relationship between the EGP's party office and parliamentary branch.

The earliest attempts to form a Europe-wide organisation of green parties were made in 1979 around the European election (Dietz 2000:200). The Greens from Belgium, France, Germany, the UK, together with two radical parties of the Netherlands and Italy, set up a network-style organisation: the Coordination of European Green and Radical Parties with a secretariat provided by the Dutch radicals who had members of parliament. On 31 March-1 April 1984, a first European congress of Green parties was held in Liege, Belgium. At that congress, the Green group renamed itself to be 'European Green Coordination' or 'the European Greens' and formally created a secretariat of four co-secretaries (Janssens 2004). Of its major achievements, it issued the *Joint Declaration of the European Green*

Parties in January and the *Paris Declaration* in April 1984, and the latter document was accepted as the EGP's first common manifesto for the 1984 European election. Thus, during the EP's first term, the EGP was at best a cooperation network for its member parties, serving them to exchange their green ideas and policy demands as well as campaign skills. And unsurprisingly, any decision made by the Green Coordination had no binding power to its member parties at the national level. By contrast, most of the Green leaders including the German Greens concentrated on the task of building up national parties or attempting to resolve internal disputes, thus having neglected the issue of Europe or 'Europolitics' (Gahrton 2004).

In preparation for the 1984 European election, the Green Coordination decided to draft a joint declaration as a common manifesto. The primary motivation to do so, as it recognised, was to 'conform with the regulations of the European Parliament for the purpose of the funds destined for reimbursement of the expense of political groups' (EGP 1984). In other words, its primary aim was confined to be 'a technical alliance'. With entry into the EP of 11 elected MEPs, however, the EGP formed a green faction named 'Green Alternative European Link' (GRAEL) within a larger 'Rainbow Group'. In the EP's second term, the 'European Coordination of Green Parties' (ECGP) —a formal name for the European Green Coordination after the 1984 EP election—remained to be a loosely connected transnational collection. The ECGP had only one decision-making organ: the twice-yearly Meeting of Green Coordination, and a biannual congress was held. At the same time, the GRAEL was an ideologically and strategically diverse party group plagued with numerous internal disputes over the desirability, aims and means of parliamentary participation. Furthermore, to promote internal democracy and grassroots control, the GRAEL's organisational structure was purposefully kept loose and non-conformist, and several specific measures were taken to encourage wide and equal participation (Bomberg 1998:105). Nevertheless, the EGP's first triangular power configuration of 'the ECGP-the GRAEL-member parties' was formed and the parliamentary branch rose immediately to be the most powerful representative at the EU level, though it did take the *Paris Declaration* as its political guideline.

Dramatic change of the composition of Green MEPs after the 1989 European election as well as political differences within the Rainbow Group resulted in the Green Coordination to form its own party group in the new EP, the Green Group in European Parliament (GGEP I). Being an independent group, the GGEP improved very rapidly its ideological homogeneity and strategic cohesion in parliamentary participation. By the mid-term, the GGEP members have been deeply entrenched in the EP's parliamentary committee structure and held the chair or vice-chairs of five committees. About the same time, the ECGP reorganised itself into the EFGP in 1993, enhancing the EGP from a party confederation to a party federation. According to its statutes, the EFGP is to 'ensure a close and permanent co-operation among member parties in order to accomplish the common policy, laid out by the Congress', to 'stimulate and organise initiatives and activities on a European level under the supervision of the Council and the Committee', to 'ensure a close cooperation and organise initiatives between the Federation and the Green group in the European Parliament' (EFGP 1993b). Thus, the third EP term was a significant period of transition for the EGP. Both internal organisation structure of

parliamentary branch and party federation and the relationship between them have changed dramatically. On the one hand, the EGP federation has established a streamlined organisation structure composed of the Congress, the Council, and the Federation Committee (Executive Board). On the other hand, the Green parliamentary group has been incorporated into the EP's institutional structure. As far as the internal power structure is concerned, the first triangle was replaced by a new one, 'the EFGP-the GGEP-member parties'. Under the new power configuration, according to the EGP's statutes, 'the Federation gives (Green Group) the power to represent it politically in the European parliament', while 'the member parties shall maintain their name, identity and autonomy of acting within the scope of their national and regional responsibilities'. Thus the EGP appears very close to a Euro-party, with the EFGP as the major representative of green parties at European level and holding a politically supervisory status over the GGEP.

The EGP's this organisational structure remained unchanged and was consolidated after the 1994 EP election. The GGEP was renewed with only a minor change of size, being the GGEP II. Compared with its predecessors, the GGEP II continued with the process of softening its radical grassroots structure in order to streamline its operations. Most of the Green MEPs have implicitly accepted the basic parliamentary 'rules of the game' and tried hard to exploit the opportunities provided by the EP membership, though there were still some important exceptions (Bomberg 1998:119). For the EFGP, it held its first two congresses in 1996 and in 1999. At the second congress in Paris, it adopted a common manifesto for the run-up European election.

Several profound changes occurred with the EGP following the European election in 1999. The EGP formed a new party group with the European Free Alliance (EFA)—a political alliance of regional parties, the European Greens/EFA. In fact, they have worked together in the Rainbow Group and partly in the GGEP I. Thus, this political formula was not really new for both sides. It needs to point out, though, this new group can not be simplistically regarded as a revival of the Rainbow Group, a backward development. The EGP enjoyed a dominant position in this group, numerically and politically. Moreover, the Greens has become a mature or professional parliamentary party, familiarising with all the working procedures of the EP and having a cooperative mentality, to play such a leading role. On the other side, the EFGP held its third congress in May 2002, on which the author has observed, a very well-organised event. More significantly, reconstructing the EFGP into a Euro-party was successfully realised at its fourth and the last congress held in February 2004. Among the other effects, this brought about the EGP's third and the current triangle of power structure—'the EGP-the European Greens-member parties'. Theoretically, this would lead to a better-organised party federation body, a more equal relationship between the EGP and its party members, and a stronger party control over the parliamentary group. According to its annual reports, there was more mutual collaborations or commonly hosted activities among the EGP, the GGEP and the national green parties during 2004-5 (EGP 2004b). And my observation on the 2006 *Länderrat* of the German Greens in Mainz also confirmed, to some degree at least, these expectations. 'EGP-Council in Helsinki' is one of the five main issues scheduled for that convention, and two of its 13 MEPs participated in it.

Table 2: Organisational dimension of the EGP in the European election terms(1979-2004)

	1979	1984	1989	1994	1999	2004
Party federation organs*	-	-	-/+	+/-	+/-	+
Parliamentary group**	-	-	-/+	+/-	+	+
EGP and member parties***	-	-	-	-	-	-/+
Party office and GGEP****	-	-	-	-/+	-/+	+/-

*   + indicating a better-organised organisational structure of the EGP federation

**   + indicating a stronger Green group in terms of its professionalisation and cooperative strategy

***   + indicating a close to equal relation between the EGP and member parties

****   + indicating a strong control of the party office over the Green group

As table 2 shows, the EGP has developed into a Euro-party with increasingly better-organised federation organisation and ever more professional parliamentary group during the previous five EP terms. It is also obvious, though, that the EGP is an organisationally weak party. Most significantly, the EGP federation lacks both the necessary political authority over its component parts and the supervisory capacity over its parliamentary branch. In this sense, the EGP is still a transnational party federation rather than a supranational unitary party (Dietz 2000:208; 2002:130).

4.3   Political participation dimension

Although one may claim that Euro-parties play a powerful part in all the major EU institutions such as the EP, the EC, Council of Ministers and European Council (Hix and Lord 1997:1-7; Hix 2006), the EGP is mainly an EP-centred European party for two reasons. First, the EGP is a small party both at the national and European levels. That means, only in exceptional cases, its member parties can join the national governments and consequently have a voice in the Councils and the EC. Yet it did have occurred when the Finnish, Italian, French, German and Belgian Greens were in national governments during 1995-2005 (Müller-Rommel and Poguntke 2002; Bomberg 2002:39). Second, the EGP is an ideology-inclined party. Most of its political leaders and MEPs believe in the principle of parliamentary democracy and put their political trust in increasing the power of the EP instead of the other EU institutions. Therefore, my investigation into the EGP's political participation here will concentrate upon that in the EP politics. On a basis of this, three variables including electoral political participation (common manifesto, EU-wide campaign, prestigious EP candidates), parliamentary representation

participation (votes, seats, committee members) and parliamentary policy-making participation (average voting rate, party group cohesion, impacts on the significant EU-decisions) will be examined.

Member parties of the EGP at their founding stage participated in the first European election in 1979 (Reif 1985). They run some unprofessional and inexpensive campaigns, and received 2.42% of the vote, 3.02% of the EU-wide (Reif 1985:197), but without seat. The breakdown of national votes was as follows: Belgium (3.4%), France (4.4%), Germany (3.2%), Luxembourg (1.0%) and the UK (0.1%). There has been accordingly no formal parliamentary participation for the EGP during the EP's first term. Yet the French Greens did introduce three cases in the European Court in relation with the EP's arrangements for the 1984 European election to fund the Euro-parties' information campaign and to reimburse their election expenses (Corbett 1995:24).

In 1984, with its three constituent members (the Belgian, German and Finnish Greens) entry into national parliaments, the EGP organised a more unified and professional European campaign under a common manifesto (Lodge 1986; Bomberg 1998:87-91). The Belgian Greens went to the polls with pro-European programmes. They said, Europe is needed to tackle environmental problems, but the current Europe of merchants has to be transformed into a Europe of people. They also advocated treating problems on a smaller scale, more democracy, a dramatic cut in working week, redistribution of wealth, peace and a new conception of development aid. Their posters did not show their candidates but the tree of life stifling a missile (AGALEV) and a globe with the words 'there is only one' (Ecolo). The German Greens selected their candidates at the Karlsruhe convention of 1984. The incumbent MEP Friedrich Wilhelm Graefe zu Baringdorf, not a member of the Green Party at that time, was nominated as the top candidate. At the same conference, the principle of rotation was adopted by a vote of 437 to 347. During the campaign, the German Greens introduced a rather more critical perspective on the EU. They criticised the CAP and opposed the EU's development into a superpower. Like other green parties it also stressed the need for equal opportunities for women and committed the party to defending the consumer in the CAP. Its strategy was encapsulated in the title of the campaign booklet: 'Think globally, act locally!'. More noteworthily, while the French Greens had to seek the help of a solidarity contribution provided by the Belgian and German Greens for their election, the German Green Party 'earned' 16.8 million DM by running a cheap campaign (costing only 1 million DM). As the result, the EGP received 4.25% of the vote and 11 seats. The breakdown of national votes and seats was as follows: Belgium (8.2% 2 seats), France (3.4%), Germany (8.2% 7 seats), Ireland (0.5%), Luxembourg (6.1%), the Netherlands (6.9% 2 seats), Spain (0.6%), and the UK (0.1%).

In the wake of election, the EGP formed a Rainbow Group together with the EFA and the Danish Anti-EC Movement. With 20 members it was the second smallest of the eight EP groups. Within the Rainbow Group, the GRAEL as a sub-group was set up to represent green issues, and took the *Paris Declaration* as its common platform. An organisationally heterogeneous party group as such, along with internal conflicts within the GRAEL caused by national, ideological and strategic differences, made the Green MEPs were either unwilling or unable to agree on a coherent set of Euro-political

goals and strategy or policy initiatives before the EP, let alone to change the EU politics. For instance, the GRAEL had no unitary position on EU enlargement in 1986 (accession of Spain and Portugal), put in contradictory votes on resolutions concerning increased competence for the EC, and disagreed on a common position towards the Single European Act (Bomburg 1998:107-9).

In several senses the 1989 election to the EP was a *Green* one, if not a European one (Lodge 1990:1; van der Eijk and Franklin 1994:275; Bomburg 1998:91-5). All the EGP's constituent parts benefited from the arising saliency of environmental issue in electoral politics and run successful campaigns, increasing their share of votes and/or the seats. The united French Greens presented itself in the campaign as both an environmentally-oriented and a well-institutionalised party, attacking the 'productivist' logic of left and right and espousing the values of 'cultural liberalism'. By so doing, it attracted a lot of switching voters and became one of the biggest winners. Meanwhile, the UK Greens fully exploited the favourabe political situation during the campaign, to some degree even promoted by the Conservative Mrs Thatcher, and created a historical record for the Greens in supranational elections by winning 14.9% of the vote, though it failed to receive any seat in the EP mainly because of the discriminating electoral system. In addition, if the Greens in Luxembourg, Greece and Spain were united rather than dividing into 2, 3 and 4 separate lists, they would win at least one seat in the EP respectively with the total votes of 10.4%, 2.6% and 2.7%. In the end, the EGP received 7.39% of the vote, excluding the Danish and Portuguese Greens who formed alliances with other larger parties, and 26 seats. The breakdown of national votes and seats was as follows: Belgium (13.9% 3 seats), France (10.6% 9 seats but one MEP left after the election), Germany (8.4% 8 seats), Greece (1.1%), Ireland (3.7%), Italy (3.8% 3 seats), Luxembourg (10.4%), the Netherlands (7.0% 2 seats), Spain (1.1%), and the UK (14.9%).

Following with the defunct of the GRAEL shortly after the election, the GGEP as an independent group in the EP was formed on 25 July 1989. At its conception, the GGEP consisted of 30 MEPs and was the fifth largest of ten EP political groups. Other than the 25 elected EGP members, it also included two Rainbow Greens from Italy, three 'Non-green' members from Italy (2) and Spain (1). Unlike the GRAEL, first, the GGEP was much more 'a political rather than technical group'. The principles laid out in the 'Common Statement of the European Greens' were its political guideline. That implies, the GGEP was a more politically homogeneous group than the GRAEL. Second, the GGEP was a party group on its own in the EP. Moreover, both parliamentary participation experience and the logic of parliamentary politics made the GGEP MEPs learn quickly, recognising the necessity of adapting Green ideas to the reality and shifting to a more accepting attitude towards the EP. Nevertheless, internal conflicts in relation to national, ideological and strategic differences were not resolved with the electoral victory (Bomberg 1998:111-7). This is partly because, compared with the German-dominated GRAEL, the GGEP was clearly a 'Mediterranean-led' group. Some Green MEPs from this region maintained a distinctive understanding of their missions in the EP, such as practising 'a constant pedagogy of political ecology'. In short, the EGP's increased popular support and parliamentary representation improved the general image of the GGEP and made the Green voice louder than before in the EP's certain committees such as Energy, Research and Technology (5), Environment,

Public Health and Consumer Protection (4), and Agriculture, Fishery and Rural Development (3), but this did not bring about much progress towards the 'greening' of the EU.

The 1994 European election took place under a dramatically changed circumstances in which employment, competitiveness and institutional change were the top issues (Lodge 1996:189; Bomberg 1998:95). Confronting with this new situation, the EGP issued a common manifesto indicating that it would play a more constructive role in EP politics, but proved to be unable to formulate an appropriate electoral strategy and keep the attractiveness of its green ideas. The Dutch Greens chose to heavily attack the market-oriented approach of the EU, the concepts of Monetary Union and a European Central Bank—seen as exponents of 'big finance'—and the secrecy of European decision-making, while the French Greens—in part owing to the different attitudes towards cooperation with the government—decided to draw up two separate lists, not united as that in 1989. Therefore, most of the EGP's component parts did not fare well. The only exception was the German and the Irish Greens. For the former, strategic adjustments since the defeat in 1990 federal election, the context of a 'super-electionyear' (*Superwahljahr*), and more politicised nature of the Greens' supporters, all these factors were conducive to achieve an unprecedented success at the national level. For the latter, environmental issue played a major part in mobilising the voters of the Greens. In eastern side of the country, there was a broadly based concern about the deteriorating quality of life in urban areas and a specific concern over nuclear waste being dumped in the Irish Sea off the British coast. During the campaign, how to use the EU institution and legislation to tackle the problem of nuclear pollution became a hot topic, and the Greens benefited from it most. As the result, the EGP received 5.67% of the vote, excluding the Danish and Portuguese Greens who once again joined alliances with other larger parties, and 21 seats. The breakdown of national votes and seats was as follows: Belgium (11.5% 2 seats), France (3.0%), Germany (10.1% 12 seats), Greece (0.3%) Ireland (7.9% 2 seats), Italy (3.2% 3 seats) Luxembourg (10.9% 1 seat), the Netherlands (6.2% 1 seat), Spain (0.68%), and the UK (3.2%).

After this election, the 21 elected EGP MEPs together with one regionalist from Italy and one left Greens from Denmark formed the GGEP II, which ranked as the sixth of nine groups in the EP. Similar with the GGEP I, the GGEP II was a very politically homogeneous group, and obviously, a German-led one. But, unlike the GGEP I, it had a much weaker position in the EP. Quite interestingly, however, the GGEP II still took part in 18 committees and received 4 chair or vice chairs, reflecting the increased influence of Green MEPs in the EP. With the EU's enlargement on 1 January 1995, it got three new MEPs from Austria, Finland and Sweden, and another three additional MEPs after the Swedish election to the EP in September 1995. By the end of this EP term, the GGEP II had 27 members and maintained its status as the sixth largest group. During this term, the GGEP speeded up its process of transition to a parliamentary party. Green MEPs have officially reconciled themselves to working within the EP and have actively sought participation in it. This made the GGEP II pay more attention to conceptual and institutional issues regarding the EU than either previous group. However, strategic differences over the attitudes towards the EP participation and the EU institutions did not eliminate, and on the contrary these were exacerbated following the joining of the Swedish Greens. This defect

thus has to a great degree affected the implementation of the EGP's new strategy—to reform the EU 'from within' (Bomberg 1998:101). For example, discussions concerning the Economic and Monetary Union (EMU) and the Common and Foreign Security Policy (CFSP) uncovered major schisms in the group regarding the desirability of a federal Europe. A clear divide emerged between the EGP MEPs led by the Italians and some Germans, and those by the Swedish.

The 1999 election to the EP was a spectacular success for the EGP as far as the electoral result is concerned (Lodge 2001). Of the four member parties in national governments, the Finnish, the Italian and the French Greens survived the challenges as a junior coalition partner, especially the Kosovo crisis, and maintained their popular support. The German Greens was an exception. Many of its pacifist grassroots members actually refused to campaign in protest against Germany's participation in the conflict. As a result, the German Greens paid dearly for its failure to deliver in government and for its support for the war in Kosovo, losing over half of its voters compared with the last European election. As for the three new comers—the Austrian, the Finnish and the Swedish Greens, all of them organised an effective campaign through pursuing different electoral strategies. For the Austrian Greens, its programme focused upon environmental issues and social policy. It campaigned against the use of automatic energy, genetic engineering of food and the use of genetically manipulated products in agriculture. It favoured public over private transport and demanded the democratisation and constitutionalisation of the EU treaties. During the campaign, the Finnish Greens emphasised that environmental and social policies should become central areas of the EU. Its leading candidate, Heidi Hautala, constantly spoken against the financial malpractices of the EP, and the secrecy surrounding the Council. The Swedish Greens maintained its attitude against the EU membership by arguing for holding another referendum to decide whether Sweden should quit from the EU. In addition, both the Belgian and the Dutch Greens made great gains. The former benefited from the dioxin crisis broken just before the election, while the latter from its clear role in opposition in the national parliament, strong party leadership and relatively critical attitude towards Europe. In the end, the EGP received 7.72% of the vote, excluding the Danish and Portuguese Greens by the same token as mentioned earlier, and 38 seats. The breakdown of national votes and seats was as follows: Austria (9.3% 2 seats), Belgium (15.8% 5 seats), Finland (13.4% 2 seats), France (9.8% 9 seats), Germany (6.4% 7 seats), Greece (0.5%) Ireland (6.7% 2 seats), Italy (1.8% 2 seats) Luxembourg (10.7% 1 seat), the Netherlands (11.9% 4 seat), Spain (1.4%), Sweden (9.5% 2 seats), and the UK (5.5% 2 seats).

In the wake of this election, the Green MEPs managed to form a new group 'the European Greens/EFA' with 10 MEPs from Basque, Flemish, Scottish, Welsh, and Spanish regionalist parties. As such, 'the Greens/EFA' was the fourth largest of seven groups in the EP's fifth term. There is no doubt that the Greens played a dominant role within this group, which took its common manifesto as the guideline. Nevertheless, this group to some degree was a revival of the Rainbow Group and the GGEP I which also included several regionalist MEPs, and the new title for the group implied that the regionalist MEPs would have a stronger role within it. At the beginning, the EGP MEPs participated 17 committees and received 4 chair or vice chairs, without substantive change compared with that in 1994. The Green MEPs disproportionally concentrated in the committees such as Industry and Extern

Trade (5), Environment and Public Health (5), Foreign Affairs and Human Rights (5). In theory the Greens would play an more influential role in those policy areas, for example regarding the EU-China relation, while in practice it is very difficult to differentiate its own impacts from the big party groups (Hix 2006).

In terms of electoral issues and campaign organisation, the 2004 EP election for the EGP was the most European one, though the result obtained by it can not be considered as satisfactory overall (Lodge 2005; EGP 2004b). The common manifesto was widely accepted by its member parties, and several Green leaders campaigned across national borders. Daniel Cohn-Bendit, the EGP's co-chair of the EP group, visited about two thirds of the EU countries in less than two months. In Belgium, the Groen!—a new name of reconstructed Flemish Greens—concentrated upon its EP list leader Bart Staes, who had excellent work records in the EP, with a single slogan for both the European and the regional elections: 'Groen! is searching for 280,000 votes', while the Ecolo—its francophone counterpart—also placed its relatively unknown MEP Pierre Jonckheer in charge of its European list, followed by the party heavyweight Isabelle Durant. The Finnish Greens, other than placing its former party leader and minister for environment as the top candidate, used the EGP's manifesto in its campaign and mainly campaigned in favour of putting the Constitution to a referendum, which were different from the other political parties. The French Greens supported the draft EU Constitution and democratic representation organised on an EU-wide level. Its campaign was run in close conjunction with the EGP by using its logo as well as the slogan common to the green parties throughout the member states. The German Greens chose a dual leadership for the election consisting of the generally invisible Rebecca Harms and the somewhat better-known former Franco-German revolutionary Daniel Cohn-Bendit, and unlike other parties, run its campaign under the banner of the supranational EGP. The Irish Greens drew attention to the environmental and social objectives of the EU's Lisbon Strategy, argued that 'issues like social justice and environmental protection go hand in hand and must not take second place to the single pursuit of competitiveness', and supported the Constitution in principle but deplored the 'militarisation' of the EU. For the Luxembourg Greens, it was the only party to get financial and technical support from a Euro-party, the EGP. Its TV spots were similar to those of the Austrian and the German Greens, and were devised by its German advertising agency. In the newcomer states, the Cyprus Greens' web page exhibited technical sophistication and even preoccupation with European concerns. 'How we see Europe and what we will claim in the European Parliament' emphasised almost exclusively the Green Agenda and the European Greens' values and worldview, to the point that 'the Cyprus content' seemed suppressed. The Maltese Greens focused much of its attention on the personal credentials of the candidate—Arnold Cassola—as a long-serving member of the EGP. With the slogan 'For the country, not for the party', the Greens hoped to capture the votes of all those dissatisfied with both major parties, repeatedly calling for a break with Malta's traditional two-party system. While emphasising the European Greens' environmental record, the Maltese Greens downplayed the EGP's general manifesto and its own commitment to divorce. As the result, the EGP received 7.28% of the vote, excluding the Danish and the Portuguese Greens as well as their counterparts in the ten new EU members, and 33 seats. The breakdown of national votes and seats was as follows: Austria (12.9% 2 seats), Belgium (8.6% 2

seats), Finland (10.4% 1 seat), France (8.4% 6 seats), Germany (11.9% 13 seats), Greece (0.7%) Ireland (4.3%), Italy (2.5% 2 seats) Luxembourg (15.02% 1 seat), the Netherlands (7.4% 2 seats), Spain (1.7% 1 seat), Sweden (5.9% 1 seat), and the UK (6.06% 2 seats).

'The Greens/EFA' as an EP party group was renewed without change after the election. With 42 MEPs in total, of it 35 Greens, this group is a little smaller in size than that between 1999 and 2004, but maintaining its status as the fourth largest of seven EP groups. For the EGP MEPs, they participated 20 committees and received 5 chair or vice chairs, concentrating on those committees such as Environment and Public Health (4), Foreign Affairs and Human Rights (3), Industry and Research (3), and Employment and Social Affairs (3).

To summarise, as table 3 demonstrates, the EGP is a very active and to a large extent Europeanised party in the EP politics. It has drafted common manifestos for all but the 1979 European elections, run increasingly EU-wide campaigns from 1984 to 2004, and sent more and more prestigious figures into the EP political stage. And with the rising electoral support and parliamentary representation, its political influence within an ever powerful EP has been strengthened and expanded, especially in certain committees or policy areas. As far as the policy-making participation is concerned, the EGP behaves increasingly like other Euro-parties with a low voting rate and a high party group cohesion, whereas there is rare cases indicating that it has independently determined the EP's key decision (Hix 1997:179). For instance, the Green MEPs did play an active role in disapproving and eventually censuring the Santer-led Commission, but it is hard to say that it is the Greens, or any other party, who has led to this result (Ruzza 2004:128; Hix 2006:chapter 10).

The main finding from the foregoing analysis is that, by the end of the EP's fifth term, the EGP has developed into a European party with a distinctive but normal ideology, a relatively well-organised organisation structure, and a quite professional and cooperative parliamentary participation. And as a result, it has reshaped itself dramatically and comprehensively compared with its early years in the EU politics. To this general conclusion, three points need to be added. First, the EGP's realistic or pragmatic reorientation is neither a finished process ending with a unitary European Green ideology, nor one without having received any resistance from inside (Bomberg 2002:40). In fact, this process has posed a couple of crucial challenges for the EGP, putting it in an awkward predicament on many occasions, and the EGP still has to work hard to keep a subtle balance between policy achievements and green principles. Second, the EGP federation's official position as the highest authority in politically guiding its constituent parts and supervising the Green group in the EP is weakened or vaporised by its lack of policy instruments and action capacities. In essence, the EGP federation has neither political power to determine the selection of candidates for the European election, nor binding means over the elected MEPs' activities in the EP politics, thus starkly contrasting with the power structure of its member parties. A typical example in this aspect was provided by the Luxembourg Greens. It made a hotly controversial decision in the wake of 1999 European election to order all of its first six EP candidates to opt for the Chamber, while leaving the party's sole EP seat to its seventh most popular candidate, Claude Turmes (Hearl 2001:51). This fact is a clear indication that how

relatively unimportant the Europolitics and the EP participation remain to be in the eyes of Green leaders at the national level. Finally, the EGP's active participation in the EP politics does not imply that it can deliver many discernible policy achievements. As a small party, the EGP's any realisable success very much depends upon its cooperation with the bigger Euro-parties and the compromises it can make.

Table 3: Political participation of the EGP in the European Parliament (1979-2004)

	1979	1984	1989	1994	1999	2004
Electoral participation*						
Common manifestos	-	+	+	+	+	+/-
EU-wide campaign	-	-/+	-/+	-/+	-/+	+/-
Prestigious EP candidates	-	0	23.8 (51.3)	38.1 (42.5)	31.6 (41.4)	45.7 (39.0)
Representation participation**						
Votes(%)	2.42 (5)	4.25 (8)	7.39 (10)	5.67 (10)	7.72 (13)	7.28 (13)
Seats	0	11	27	21	38	33
Committee numbers	0	12 (3)	18 (6)	18 (4)	17 (4)	20 (5)
Policy-making participation***						
Voting rate(%)	-	27 (38)	50 (48)	44 (48)	n/a	-
Internal cohesion I (%)	-	91 (92)	95 (92)	99 (95)	n/a	-
Internal cohesion II (%)	-	75 (79)	76 (75)	86 (80)	97 (89)	-
Impacts on EU-decisions	-	-	-	-/+	-	-

* prestigious candidates refer to the percentage of re-elected Green MEPs, and the bracketed is that in the EP.

** votes refer to the average figures of the constituent members participating in elections have independently received, and the figures in bracket following committee members indicates the chair or vice chairs the EGP held at the beginning of the EP term.

*** voting rate and internal cohesion I from Kreppel (2002), chapter 6, while internal cohesion II from Hix (2006), and the figures which follow in bracket indicate the averages for all the party groups in the EP.

5.   Roles and Limitations: Theoretical Explanations

The previous analysis demonstrated that the EGP has evolved into a *European* political party in terms of programmatic development, organisational structure and political participation, though it is still a *politically* weak or distinct one, especially compared with the green parties at the national or regional level. This judgement to a large extent is a qualitative rather than quantitative one. And even in a

qualitative sense, one may draw a different conclusion about the EGP's nature today from a different perspective. Both of Elizabeth Bomberg and Thomas Dietz have identified a process of 'Europeanisation' of green parties at the European level, but denied that there has been a unitary or real European green party (Bomberg 2002:44-5; Dietz 2002:127-30). Furthermore, while Simon Hix and Christopher Lord argued that the transition from 'nascent Euro-parties' to 'parties at the European level' by the middle of the 1990s has not taken place (Hix and Lord 1997:197), Julie Smith stressed that the introduction of direct elections has not fostered a demonstrably transnational European party system by 1994 (Smith 1999:142). The real distinction between these scholars' negative generalisation and the author' positive one on the EGP's characteristics lies in a methodological variance in explaining the developmental trajectory of a *European* green party. In the author's understanding, the 'Europeanisation' of green parties and the formation of a European green party are two interwoven aspects of a progressive process. As a basis of this, the author argues that substantial changes with the EGP occurred since the mid-1990s have rendered it approaching a European party. Anyhow, with such a conceptualisation of the EGP, we can go further to discuss the questions as well as hypothesis 3 raised at the beginning of this article: what are the roles which the EGP as a weak Euro-party can play in an evolving European democracy? And are these roles improvable if certain conditions change with time?

A logical inference is that a weak Euro-party will play some weak roles for a EU democracy. In the first place, the EGP can offer democracy and legitimacy in general for the EP as well as the EU polity, through participating in the European election and its presence at the EP. As a Euro-party, the EGP has developed its EU-relevant political programme, organisational structure and political participation, thus reflecting the forging political dimension of 'materialism versus post-materialism' at the European level. Owing in part to the EGP's active involvement in the past two decades, the EU has dramatically expanded its jurisdiction and competence as well as democratic legitimacy to deal with the Green issues including environment protection and sustainable development.

Secondly, the EGP can foster the formation and evolution of a European party system by strengthening the party competition in European electoral politics and parliamentary politics. On the one hand, great efforts have been made to increase the EGP's ideological homogeneity and strategic harmony among its member parties and its MEPS in the EP to speed up the transition to a real Euro-party. In many senses, the EGP has rapidly caught up with the other mainstream Euro-parties, shifting from a movement-style anti-system party to a professional parliamentary party. On the other hand, the EGP's several pioneering measures in Europeanising its organisation structure, electoral manifesto and campaign strategy press for the other Euro-parties to follow. All these efforts are conducive to the development and consolidation of a European party system, a reliable basis for a EU democracy.

Thirdly, the EGP can promote to shape a parliamentary democracy at the European level through its active though small-sized party group in the EP. On the one hand, most of the Green MEPs are adept in exploiting the opportunities offered by the EP membership to realise those achievable green policy goals, especially via active involvement in the parliamentary committees. On the other hand, for the

EGP including the Green group in the EP, propagating green percepts or educating the mainstream party politicians and the public is still regarded as one of its key missions, to promote the development of a public European space (Cohn-Bendit 2004). In the latter case, the EGP plays a classic function for political party, being a linkage of the people and the EU. And undoubtedly, this function of political parties is of crucial significance for a EU democracy in particular, given that it is still plagued with the serious problem of 'democratic deficits' (Pogge 1998:160-1).

It is also clear that the EGP's contribution for a EU democracy is extremely limited. While applying the general understandings to democracy into the continuum of 'Euro-party—European election—EU polity', one can easily find that there still lacks of a strong or even clear connection between them such as that at the national level. The EGP pursuing a common electoral manifesto, concerted campaign strategy and organisation has to adapt to the European election contesting around national issues, national party competition and nation-wide campaigns (EGP 2004b). It has almost no influence on the selection of candidates for the EP, and consequently has no substantive control over those who are elected (Kreppel 2002:206). In other words, the Green candidates or MEPs are essentially responsible for the EGP's constituent parts rather than for itself. In fact, other than drafting and approving a common manifesto, the EGP has little to do with the European election—'second-order national contests' (Hix 1999:180). And as a result, similar with the other Euro-parties, the EGP's campaign for the EP election to a great degree remains to be a collection of several national events.

On the other side, within the EU institutional framework, the EP was historically disposed as a 'supplementary actor' in European legislation and decision-making. Under such a structure, the major mission for the EP appeared to summon democracy or legitimacy for the legislation and decision-making made by the other EU institutions, the Council and the EC especially, rather than to make the EU's legislation and decision-making democratically. It is true that the increasingly powerful EP has mitigated the intension caused by this uneven power structure. However, the EP is still the weak partner in the legislative triumvirate of the EU (Kreppel 2002:89). Until the EP become an independent or sole legislator and capable supervisor for the EU governance, this indirectly democratic structure will arguably not be replaced by a directly democratic one, namely, from a regional integration organisation to a EU democracy (Smith 1999:149). One of the main victims for a weak EP is the slow development of Euro-parties and a European party system, and the small parties like the Greens suffers from it most. For the European election, the Euro-parties confront huge difficulties in persuading their powerful member parties to take it seriously and the lukewarm public to pay more attention to it. As has shown earlier, the EGP performs in a much more 'Europeanised' manner than the other Euro-parties, but its Europe-oriented electoral strategy is not always successful. In the EP, in order to vie with the political rivals for more powers, the Euro-parties are encouraged to reach a consensus or absolute majority decision on the issues in question, institutionally and procedurally. Two outcomes are then predictable. One is that the EP will inproportionally prefer and focus on those issues without disputes among the big Euro-parties. That means, many controversial but significant issues and/or radical but realisable solutions to them will be marginalised in the EP politics. The other one is that there will be actually a hegemony of the big two Euro-parties over the EP's major powers,

and consequently there is only a small space left for the small parties (Kreppel 2002:216-7). For many years, it has been a custom for the 'big-two' to make a deal through exchanging their mutual support to determine who will be the president of the EP. Such a pattern of political practice and culture discriminating against political debate and party competition in the EP constricts strongly the functions which the small parties like the EGP otherwise can play.

In application the institutional development theory into explaining the Euro-parties' political performance, as Amie Kreppel has emphasised (Kreppel 2002:50-1), both macro and micro factors are relevant. As far as the EGP is concerned, it confronts both the internal and external constraints. Relatively radical ideology and loose organisation structure were, and still are, the primary constricting factors from inside, while the European electoral system and the EP's status within a larger EU polity are the ones from outside, and it is obvious that the latter play a more influential part than the former in determining the EGP's political functions as a Euro-party. In other words, 'Europeanisation' of the EGP thus far appears more like a process of adapting to the current rules of the EU, rather than a process of reorienting the EU polity to a democracy (Bomberg 2002). The EGP has done a lot to adjust itself to the requirements as a Euro-party, strategically and organisationally, but could do little to redefine the nature of the EP and the EU polity as a whole.

This is by no means to say that the EGP as well as the other Euro-parties is demonstrably impotent in promoting the EU's democratic transformation or the future of a EU democracy is doomed to be a failure (Schmitter 1998:13). First, reforming the EU' institutional framework is still moving on, though slowly and sometimes with setbacks. Granting the EP more powers remains the dominant thinking among the European political elites to resolve the problem of 'democratic deficits' (van der Eijk and Franklin 1994:377). That implies, there is still a huge 'political space' in the EU for the Euro-parties to exploit. Moreover, for a EU democracy, what the EP needs is not only more powers to make legislation independently and counterbalance the other EU institutions, but a better role to play in linking the people and the EU (Smith 1999:153). The fact that the French and Dutch voters rejected the constitution treaty in 2005, in the author's opinion, is a clear message from the public for more and *real* democracy in the EU rather than less and *pseudo*. This means, the EP should pay more attention to act as a guarantee for the European citizens' voices to be heard and deliberated instead of just as an aggressive power seeker. The Euro-parties, especially the EGP, can contribute a lot in this respect through electoral and parliamentary participation.

Second, with the big Euro-parties' attitude towards the EU and behaviour in the EP change, the EGP can play a better role in a more benign environment. Positive signs for such shifts include that a new 'left-right' dimension is emerging in the EU policy process (Hix 1999:361), and a more competitive decision-making mechanism and political culture is also developing within the EP (Kreppel 2002:102). All these elements contribute to an evolutionary but far-reaching change with the EP party politics, and they can be stimulated further by introducing institutional reforms such as a EU-funded European election (van der Eijk and Franklin 1994:382), direct election of the EC president by the public and a simple majority of those in attendance in the EP votes (Hix and Lord 1997:216), a concerted media

campaign actively supported by politicians (Smith 1999:153), and granting the EP substantial power in selecting candidates for European election or nominating candidate for the EC president (EGP 2004b), etc. Undoubtedly, the big Euro-parties are the dominant actors in this process, and can do much more than they did, if they will. Because of this, one of the major functions for the EGP is to attract or press for the big Euro-parties to initiate these reforms quickly through its creative participation in the EP, a seemingly second-order but absolutely necessary role for a EU democracy.

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