

## The Red-Green Alliance – red or green?

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**Abstract.** Since its foundation in the early 1990s, the Red-Green Alliance (Enhedslisten) has been almost continuously growing in electoral support and even became kingmaker of Denmark’s centre-left government between 2011-2015. Despite this remarkable breakthrough, we know surprisingly little about the Red-Green Alliance. How “red” and how “green” is the party really? And to what extent has the combination of the two contributed to the party’s breakthrough? In this chapter, we analyse the party and its development over time alongside two primary dimensions – ideology and organization. We argue that both dimensions reflect political parties’ goals and competitive advantage in the electoral market and they are thus crucial for a party’s electoral success. Drawing on a multitude of data sources, such as election manifestoes, election surveys, press releases, membership surveys, and the party’s organization, we investigate to what extent the party’s “redness”, “greenness” or the combination of the two has played a decisive role for its success on the ideological left-end of the Danish party system.

First draft to the Oxford Handbook of Danish Politics

To be presented at the DPSA annual Meeting, 2 November 2018

*A short note to the reader and the editors: As a next step in this chapter, we plan to use existing literature to discuss more what a green or red party organization looks like (also in other countries) to use this also as a reference point for analysis. We will provide a little more background on Alternativet as a reference point for analysis. Moreover, we will compare Enhedslisten's party organization to the green and left parties in Sweden and Germany. Finally, our conclusion will touch on what to expect down the road based on the assumption that Alternativet is there to stay and might be a growing party in contrast to SF.*

The Red-Green Alliance (*Enhedslisten*) is a far-left party in the Danish parliament, which has become a considerable force in the Danish parliament in recent years with its fourteen seats in parliament (eight percent of the 179 seats). This makes it the fourth largest party among the nine parties in parliament only surpassed by the radical right Danish People's Party and the two mainstream parties, the Social democrats and the Liberals. Despite this legislative importance, the party rarely attracts much scholarly on its own in comparison to the three higher ranked parties – especially the Danish People's Party draws much attention (Bale *et al.* 2010; Arndt 2014). Hence, the Danish party system is often associated only with the populist, xenophobic influential party on the far right, the Danish People's Party, although the Danish parliament in fact harbor two such parties of great importance on both flanks of the ideological spectrum. Hence, it is time to bring the much-underestimated Red-Green Alliance out of the shadow of the Danish People's Party. We are only aware of one recent contribution on the party made by Bischoff and Kosiari-Pedersen (2018). Our chapter will be the second, and our aim is to provide much needed insight on this party and discussion of who this party is.

As its name reveals, the Red-Green Alliance runs on a socialist-green platform and usually takes a position on these matters to the left of the other leftwing parties in parliament, the Socialist People's Party and the Social Democrats. In the absence of a true green party and a proper socialist party in the Danish parliament – the Socialist People's Party currently only has seven seats in parliament – the Alliance has ample room to be both red and green. Yet, this also brings up the question: What is the Red-Green Alliance – is it red or green? This is the questions, which we will focus on in this chapter. We provide an analysis of the Red-Green Alliance as predominantly “red” or predominantly “green”. We do that along two analytical dimensions – the party's program and issues and the party's organizational structure.

For both dimensions, we will investigate and determine the Alliance's “redness” and “greenness”. Of course, these are arbitrary absolute landmarks: what does it really mean to be a “red” or a “green” party in terms of party program and issue or in terms of its organizational structure? And, so we employ a slightly different method and compare the Alliance with a more distinctly or at least self-proclaimed “red” party in the Danish system of similar size – the Socialist People's Party. Comparisons with SF will show how similar

the Alliance is in its program and in its organization to a socialist or “red” party. This serves as our relative standard for “redness”. If we observe that the Alliance resembles SF in our analytical dimensions, we can infer that the Alliance is “redder” than what its name would suggest. Our relative standard for evaluating the party’s “greenness” comes via the newly founded party of the Alternative (*Alternativet*; A). The party presents itself as a champion for environmental issues and is also seen as such by the wider public. It means that if we observe that the Alliance resembles A in our analytical dimensions, we can then infer that the Alliance is “greener” than what its name would suggest. Moreover, to judge its “greenness” we will compare to other, more clear-cut or self-proclaimed green parties in Europe, the Swedish Green Ecology Party (*Miljöpartiet de gröna*) and the German Greens (*die Grünen*). Before taking up this discussion, we will briefly introduce to the party.

### *Introducing the Red Green-Alliance*

The Red-Green Alliance was formed as a merger of three parties in 1989 – the Left Socialist Party (*Venstresocialisterne*), the Communist Party of Denmark, and the Socialist Workers’ Party (*Socialistisk Arbejderparti*), which were each struggling to pass the electoral threshold and therefore formed a common list for election – a unity list as *Enhedslisten* refers to – to make it. With this heritage, the Red-Green Alliance runs on a long-term goal to end capitalism by realizing a classless society with collective ownership of the means of production. Only recently, the Alliance abandoned its call for revolution. Today, it emphasizes its commitment to peaceful democratic transition (Bischoff and Kosiari 2018).

Despite a natural fragmentation among the three wings of the parties, the Alliance gained access to the Danish parliament in the 1994 national election with six seats. Since then, it has gradually increased its vote share (see Figure 1). In the most recent 2015 election, Enhedslisten won fourteen seats. Whereas other, and even smaller parties, has used such representation to enter a government coalition, Enhedslisten has never held office. Instead, it has been a support party of every Social democratic-led government since its birth and it has never called a no-confidence vote against such government (Bischoff and Kosiari 2018).

[Figure 1]

Part of its recent success can probably be ascribed to the quite remarkable shift of both of its main competitors on the leftwing, the Socialist People's Party (SPP) and the Social democrats (SD), to the right before and after the 2011 election (Hansen et al., 2011). In order to form government with the very reform-minded, center-party, the Social Liberals (SL), SPP and SD ran on a platform in 2011 to maintain the tough economic policy of the rightwing incumbents in the aftermath of the financial crisis. This implied to uphold retrenchment to the early retirement scheme, which was very popular among core leftwing voters. After entering office in 2011, SPP and SD together with SL cut back on entitlements to unemployment protection in order to cut back on corporate taxes. Moreover, the government sold the Danish energy company, *DONG*, to the American investment bank, Goldman Sachs, at a time where voters were still raging against the role of banks in the financial crisis. These decisions received a lot of media coverage and the Red-Green Alliance was very vocal in its opposition to these policy changes (Bille 2011, 2012, 2013). Voters responded promptly (Seeberg *et al.* 2017), and the Alliance picked up many of the disgruntled voters. The Alliance was suddenly the only 'real' welfare-protecting, party on the leftwing.

In terms of its party organization, the Alliance is member-based. The representatives in parliament are required to stay in line with the national committee, which is elected at the annual party conference, and promote the political platform it agrees on. The national committee is the highest authority between the annual meetings. Moreover, the party has a flat hierarchy. The party does not have a formal party leader or party leadership, and it has only been a recent invention to have a political spokesperson. As a further expression of its member-based organization, its candidate nomination is highly centralized and takes place at the annual meeting. The Alliance uses closed party lists at elections which ensures an opportunity to influence who gets elected. A final expression of its empowerment of the party organization and structures to avoid a concentration of power among the representatives is the strict rotation principle for the representatives in parliament. Representatives can only remain in office for seven years which typically translate into two parliamentary terms. After seven years, they need to step down. This is happening even with Johanne Schmidt Nielsen, who has been a very popular political spokesperson and therefore at least in reality its frontrunner during the years steep vote share improvements in the aftermath of the financial crisis when SPP and SD moved to the right (Bischoff and Kosiari 2018).

The drastic move to the right by SPP and SD left a vacuum on the political left, which has paved the way for the entry of a new party, *Alternativet*, which formed one year prior to the 2015 election as a splinter from the Social Liberals and won nine seats (Bille 2015). *Alternativet* runs on a predominantly green platform but also aims to get away with inequality and the concentration in wealth, as well as maintain the welfare state. Hence, it is an obvious rival to the Red-Green Alliance and it remains to be seen if *Alternativet* will come in the way of the Red-Green Alliance.

## **Ideology**

### *Voters of the Red-Green Alliance*

Demographics and attitudes of the voters of the Red-Green Alliance are as summarized in Table 1 more likely to be young, single, renting a place in the city, be publicly employed, and politically interested compared to the rest of the electorate. Moreover, they earn less than the remaining electorate. Hence, these voters are part of the progressive, cosmopolitan elite that value material interests such as home ownership and high income less. This is also reflected in the maps in Figure 1, which shows the vote share across constituencies in the 1994 and 2015 national elections. The maps show a trend that has only become more outspoken over the years, namely that the Alliance primarily draw its voters from the center of the larger Danish cities – Aalborg, Odense, Esbjerg, and Aarhus – and Copenhagen in particular. Hence, the Alliance mobilize voters on the urban side of a re-emerging rural-urban cleavage in Danish politics (Hansen and Stubager 2015).

In terms of attitudes, they place themselves on the far left of the left-right ideological continuum, dislike inequality much more than the average voter and prefer welfare to tax cuts far more. They are somewhat EU-skeptical, pro-environmental, and pro foreign aid, but not much more than the average voter (see Table 1). Hence, in terms of opinions, they are more red than green. This is also the impressions from looking at the issues about which their voters are concerned. They distinguish themselves from the rest of the electorate on their much greater concern with welfare and social protection. In contrast, like the electorate at large, the environment is of no concern to the Alliance's voters, whereas the EU is mentioned

by two-thirds. Hence, judging from the positions and issue priorities of the voters, the Red-Green Alliance represent red more than green voters and the EU is of particular importance.

[Figure 1, Table 1]

#### *The issue positions of the Red-Green Alliance*

The Red-Green Alliance is judged by experts in the Chapel Hill data to be extremely leftwing on redistributive questions and strongly pro-environmental. On a 0-10 scale with 10 most rightwing, the Alliance is a 0.8 on redistribution and environment, as visible in Table 2, and hence further to the left/pro-environmental than the Socialist People's Party (SPP). This makes the Alliance as environmental as the German Greens and even considerable more green than the Swedish Greens. Moreover, on a 0-10 salience scale in Table 2, the experts judge these positions to be 6.5 and 8.4, respectively, and hence of very high importance to the party. On redistribution, the Alliance is more socialist than the Greens in Germany and Sweden as well as SPP and almost as far-left as the left parties in Sweden and Germany. This suggests that the Alliance is thoroughly green as well as red and equally so. Finally, the Alliance takes a strong stance against the EU scoring 1.2 on a 0-10 scale (10 most pro-EU), and this is a quite important issue to the party. This makes the Alliance much more EU-skeptical than SPP who scores 4.5 on the 0-10 position scale. This position is shared with the Greens in Sweden but sets it apart from the Greens in Germany, who is in great favor of the EU.

[Table 2]

#### *The issue priorities of the Red-Green Alliance in elections*

In their election manifesto, the Red-Green Alliance is primarily concerned with the environment, welfare issues, and workers according to the numbers in Table 3 from the Comparative Manifesto Project data. The Alliance hardly mentions the EU, but spends 8-10 percent of its election manifesto on the environment, welfare issues, and workers. Hence, these issues are not only important to the Alliance but equally important. This focus on the environment resembles that of the Green party in Germany, but is only a fraction of the focus from the Green party in Sweden. In contrast to the Alliance, these Green parties have a

singular focus on the environment compared to welfare and workers and pays more than a double amount on environment compared to these issues. Hence, based on these data, the Alliance is certainly green but not as uniformly green as the ‘true’ green parties in Sweden and Germany. In terms of the Alliance’s focus on welfare and workers, this is on a par with the socialist, left parties in Sweden and Germany. However, in contrast to the German socialists, the Alliance has equal attention to environment, welfare and workers whereas the German socialist are much more concerned with the latter two issues than the former. From this perspective, the Alliance want to present itself to the electorate as a mixed red-green party, which is neither clearly red nor unambiguously green, and certainly not as an anti-EU party.

[Table 3]

#### *The issue priorities of the Red-Green Alliance outside elections*

Figure 2 reports the issue priorities of the Red-Green Alliance outside election times, and hence its every-day issue focus on the floor of the parliament. The top subgraph displays the issues on which the party published press releases<sup>i</sup> 2004-2017.<sup>ii</sup> For comparison, the issue attention of the Socialist People’s Party (SPP) and the Social democrats (SD) is in the subgraphs below. Figure 3 shows how the attention of the Alliance to the top issues has changed over time, 2004-2017. Starting with Figure 2, the markers form a rather steep diagonal line, which reveals that the Alliance’s allocation of attention is very unequal across issues. It spends little time on typical rightwing issues such as transport, business, defense, and agriculture and focuses primarily on EU and international affairs and labor market issues. Intermediary issues include immigration, the economy, the environment, education, and crime. Hence, there are several important observations. The environment is not a defining issue for the party and it is only rated seventh in its issue portfolio at less than five percent of its attention. This is considerably less than the SPP and SD, to whom the environment is the first and third most emphasized issue, respectively. The environment is no more important to the Alliance than crime or immigration. Figure 3 indicates that its attention to the environment may even be on the decline. The average attention is 1.3 percent point lower after 2010 than before (but only  $p < .19$ ). From this perspective, green is a very weak, and probably increasingly weak, color of the Alliance. In contrast, labor market issues such as trade unions, seasonal workers, active labor market policy, and the

social security scheme feature prominently in its press releases and takes up about seven percent of its press releases. Although labor market issues are also a top priority of SPP and SD, the Alliance puts greater emphasis on this issue. As Figure 3 shows, this is an issue to which the Alliance has focused massively in the aftermath of the financial crisis when unemployment rose sharply in Denmark. It emphasized this issue 1.6 percent point more after the crisis (but only  $p > .18$ ). In this sense, the Alliance is thoroughly and probably increasingly painted in red. However, the Alliance is no traditional socialist party because its by far most emphasized issue is the EU and foreign aid. Together, these two issues make up on average more than ten percent of its issue attention with the issue of EU more important than foreign aid. This puts the Alliance at distance from the SPP and SD, who spend about five percent of its attention on the EU and international affairs (see also Green-Pedersen 2012). The Alliance's attention to EU and international affairs seems even on the increase in Figure 3. A regression analysis (not reported) confirm that its attention to this issue has increased systematically by .66 percent point each year 2004-2017. Hence, EU and foreign aid might become even more defining issues for the party.

[Figures 2-3]

A final point of importance is the Alliance's attention to government operations, which is a topic more generally concerned with governance such as scandals, how a minister handles their resorts, or the hierarchical coordination between local and national level and therefore typically cuts across substantial issues such as crime and the environment. Together with the Alliance's focus on the EU, which predominantly will be critical (cf. below), this portrays the party is an anti-elite, anti-establishment party which is critical of governing bodies. This point is underlined in Figure 4, which shows the number of questions to the minister per year posed by the Alliance (solid line) as well as the average for all other parties (dashed line). Parties use these questions to hold the resort minister to account, to raise the attention to, e.g., an increasing crime rate (which the minister has addressed insufficiently) as well as to reveal otherwise hidden information about how the government tackles an issue. Hence, research uses these questions as an indicator of parties' criticism of the government (Seeberg 2013; Walgrave and Vliethart 2011).

[Figure 4]

In Figure 4, the solid line for the Alliance reaches levels multiple times larger than the average for other parties. Despite its relatively limited size compared to the large mainstream parties (cf. above), it is responsible for on average xx percent of all questions to the minister in the Danish parliament. This is an impressive number, and hence a key characteristic of the party. Importantly, the number is high in Figure 4 in the entire period, and the Alliance therefore ask questions to rightwing governments as well as leftwing governments. That is, it is highly critical of even its 'own' government to which it provides parliamentary support. Based on this data, the Alliance might be characterized as anti-elite, anti-establishment more than environmental or socialist.

These issue priorities – EU before socialist issues and socialist issues before the environment – is in stark contrast to its issue in its election manifestos where it completely ignores the EU but pays and equally high attention to environment, welfare, and workers. Hence, the Alliance may be saying one thing to the electorate at elections, but actually do something very different in between elections. When voters elect the Alliance to parliament, they misguidedly may think that they elect a red-green party, but in reality, they elect a predominantly anti-EU, anti-elite party. The Alliance's high and skeptical focus on the EU is a sign of poor representation because the voters are not particularly EU-skeptics compared to the rest of the electorate. Hence, the EU-issue does not appear to be the reason why these voters support the Alliance. That said, when it comes to red vs green, the representational link between voters and the party is good: Just like the Alliance, its voters deviate the most from the rest on redistribution and equality compared to the environment.

In terms of assessing the color of the Red-Green Alliance, the bottom line of the analysis of the party's positions and issue priorities is that it is quite thoroughly red – and surely more red than green.

## **Party organization**

In this second part, we analyse the Red-Green Alliance's party organization and its structure. We do so by studying their (1) party finances, (2) party membership, and (3) intra-party democracy. All three aspects pertain to the wider concept of the party organization (see for example Katz and Mair, 1995; Kölln, 2016; Poguntke et al., 2016).

We operationalize party finances through the party's income, sources of income, expenses, and share of staff costs. While the first three variables clearly directly measure the concept of party finances, the share of staff costs is a less obvious indicator. It is only a direct consequence of party finances but in most cases one of the biggest amounts on a party's bill at the end of the year. All data come from the party's statements of account officially reported to and published by Danish Parliament. In this analysis, we can even draw on a time series going back all the way to the Red-Green Alliance's emergence in the Danish Party System. Our time period thus covers 1990-2016. Specifically, we measure all four variables at the central party office (headquarter) as opposed to the entire, nation-wide party. For our variable of sources of income, we simply distinguish between the four most common categories: membership dues, state subsidies, private donations, and other.

Our party membership measure comes in two different ways. First, we will be comparing the party's membership size as a share of the electorate (M/E ratio) to SF and A. This provides information about "the extent to which parties provide outlets for citizen political participation" (Scarrow, 2000: 87). However, this may not be the only measure of interest when assessing the relative success of the Red-Green Alliance compared SF or A. As Scarrow (2000: 87) argues, for those instances, the membership size as a share of the party's voter (M/V ratio) may be more appropriate because it allows "to compare particular parties' success in providing supporters with an organization home".

Finally, we assess how satisfied these party members are with the party's level of intra-party democracy. According to information from the statutes, the Red-Green Alliance has the highest level of intra-party democracy, followed closely, however, by SF (von dem Berge et al., 2017; see also Bischoff and Kosiara-Pedersen, forthcoming). A closer view at how party members see it themselves is instructive here too in order to assess how satisfied members are with the party's rules on intra-party democracy. For that,

we draw on the last Danish party membership survey that is publicly available, which was conducted in 2012 (Kosiara-Pedersen and Hansen, 2012). The survey contains a number of questions asking members of all Danish parliamentary parties at the time (so not A) on their levels of satisfaction with various features of intra-party democracy.

### *Party finance*

We begin with the Red-Green Alliance's (EL) annual income, which are depicted in comparison across time and for the three other left-wing parties. As can be seen – and rather unexpectedly – the Social Democrats stand out as the party with the highest annual income throughout the entire period time. This is a pattern that we will also observe in other indicators further below, clearly the result of being the largest party. More apt is therefore the comparison of EL with SF and A. Here we see that EL's income has almost steadily grown at a slow rate until about 2010. After that, the party's income increased substantially, which might have to do with its electoral success in the last two decades. From the graph it is also evident that the party's annual income trend runs parallel to that of SF, albeit at a slightly lower level, up until about 2007, which is when SF's income increased steeply. From then onwards, the two trends seem to have little resemblance. When it comes to the Alternative (A), it has in very recent years even overtaken SF's in its annual level of income but it still remains distinctively lower than EL's income. In 2016, EL reported an annual income of 18,529,464 kr. while SF and A's income was only 7,060,083 kr. and 11,343,175 kr., respectively.

For our assessment of EL these patterns mean that it used to resemble SF rather closely in its overall level of income until about 2007. Moreover, it appears that in the years ahead EL might have more in common in this respect with A.

**Figure 1.** Annual party income (central office), 1990-2016.

Source: Danish Parliament.

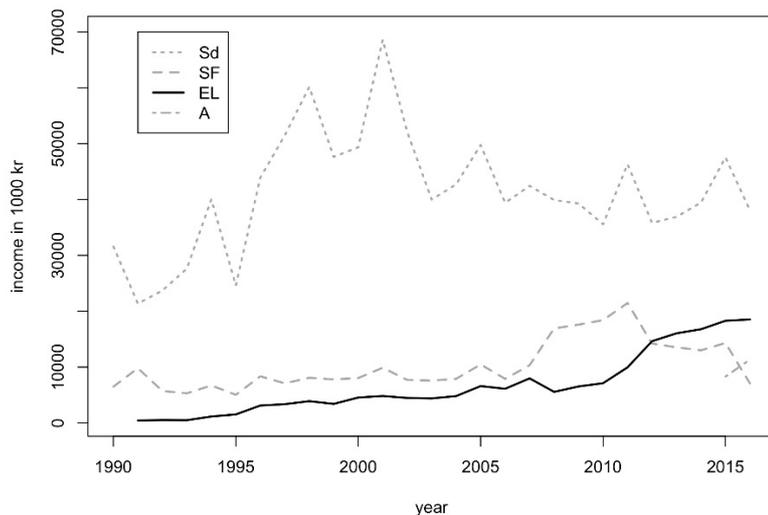
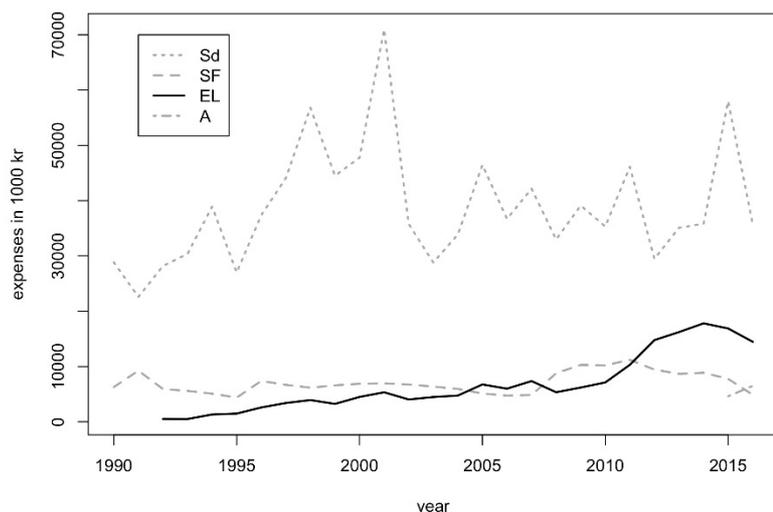


Figure 2 reports a similar pattern when it comes to the parties' annual expenses. Just like with income, the Social Democrats (SD) are evidently playing in a different league and seem to be spending a lot more money. It is also interesting to note that for both income and expenses election years are clearly visible in SD's trend, yet not in the other parties' trends. However, and again mirroring the results above about income, EL's expenses seem to be closely following, just at a slightly lower level those of SF up until about 2007. And again, in recent years EL has also overtaking SF in terms of its expenses but A's spending trend line is steep and suggests further increases in the future. In 2016, EL spent 14,464,969 kr., SF 4,883,573 kr., and A 6,487,634 kr. Yet, none of this compares to SD's expenses in that year, a total of 35,779,000 kr – more than twice as much as EL. Overall, we can conclude the same for expense as we did for income: EL's total expenses looked a lot like those of SF until about the mid-2000s, and it might be that they will have more in common with A's expenses in the future.

**Figure 2.** Annual party expenses (central office), 1990-2016.

Source: Danish Parliament.



Total income and total expenses are just one part of the story, as these conceal where the money is coming from and where exactly it is going. In order to get a better understanding of commonalities between EL and its “red” and “green” neighbour, SF and A, respectively, the next two figures show the parties’ distribution across sources of income (Figure 3) and the share of expenses for staff costs (Figure 4).

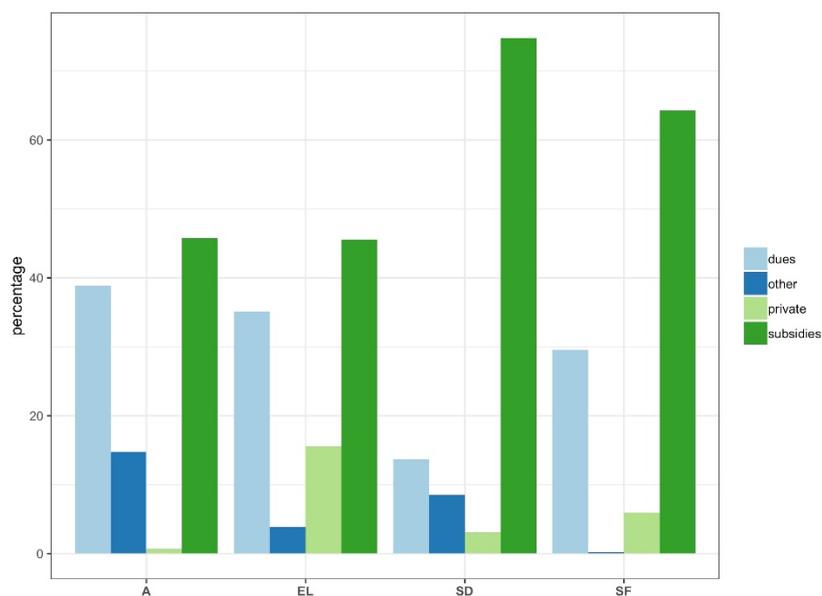
First turning to Figure 3, which only reports the most recent data from 2016. What we can see is that state subsidies provide the largest source of party income for all four parties, where the Social Democrats’ obtains the largest share of its income from the state, approximately 75 per cent. But also the Socialist People’s Party (SF) received about 65 per cent of its income from the state, while both the Red-Green Alliance (EL) and the Alternative (A) reported to have received each about 45 per cent of its income from the state. This highly suggests that EL is more “green” than “red” in its income structure. Further support for this conclusion comes via the second more frequent source of income: membership dues. Here, the two parties again resemble each other highly because EL’s share of income coming from membership dues is 35 per cent and A’s is only somewhat higher at about 39 per cent. In comparison, and as can be seen, for the Socialist People’s Party membership dues only make up 30 per cent of the party’s income in 2016. It is only with respect to the final two income categories, private donations and other, where EL and A show little resemblance. Enhedslisten seems to be the recipient of a lot more private donations, relatively speaking, while the Alternative has a higher share of other sources of income. Overall, this means still that EL appears today as a lot “greener” in its sources of income than “red”, given the similarities with the Alternative.

Similar conclusions can be drawn for the indicator of the share of expenses paid on staff salaries, as shown in Figure 4. While from the early-2000s until about 2014-2015, Enhedslisten’s relative expenses on staff salary had more in common with those of the Socialist People’s Party, the most recent figures speak again for a closer resemblance with the Alternative. In 2016, Enhedslisten spent about 50 per cent of its expenses on salaries, the Alternative a bit more with around 55 per cent. In contrast, the Socialist People’s Party only spent about 32 per cent of its expenses on salaries. Clearly, this reiterates the pattern from about on the sources of income in that EL is more “green” than “red” today in its priorities on staff costs.

Taken together this means for party finances that Endhedslisten used to appear more “red” than “green” when it comes to its total income and expenses but this might be changing very soon. And this is already different with respect to the party’s income and expense structure, in which it highly resembles the green party the Alternative.

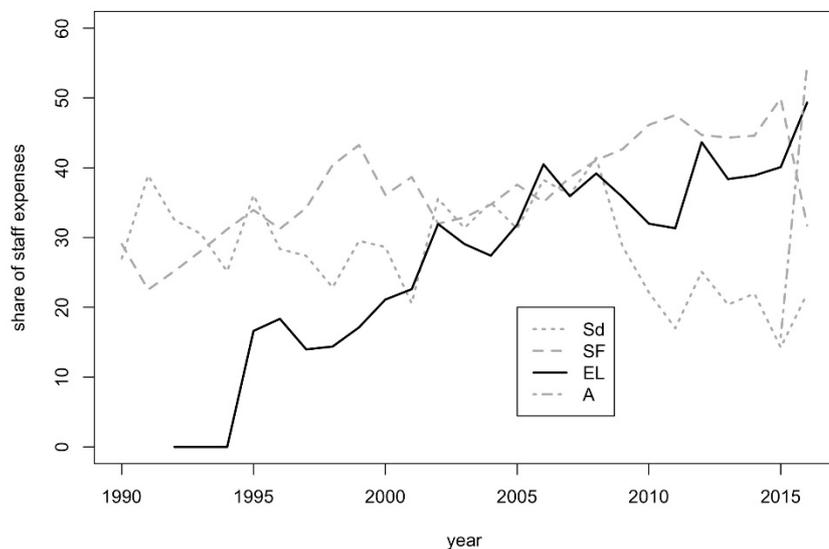
**Figure 3.** Distribution of sources of party income in 2016.

Source: Danish Parliament.



**Figure 4.** Staff costs as a share of party's central office expenses, 1990-2016.

Source: Danish Parliament.



#### *Party membership*

The next set of indicators to assess are those of party membership size, as shown in Figure 5 and 6. While Figure 5 shows the size of a party's membership base relative to the entire electorate, Figure 6 shows it relative to the number of voters. It is evident from the Figure 5, that the Social Democrats are the most popular party as an outlet for party membership amongst the four parties. The three other parties are all grouped very closely together and there is very little difference in the share of the electorate that is enrolled in them. All three have between 0.18 and 0.24 per cent of the electorate as members, and so no discernible differences can be observed.

This changes, however, when turning to Figure 6. Here, it seems that the Alternative has been lately extremely successful in binding electoral supporters more permanently through party membership. In 2016, more than 6 per cent of their voters were members. A comparable figure can be found for the Socialist People's Party (5.5 per cent), whereas the share of EL's voters that were in party members is decidedly lower at about 3.3 per cent. It suggests that EL does not resemble any of its two programmatic neighbours today when it comes to this indicator. But this used to be different, as the figure also clearly shows: between

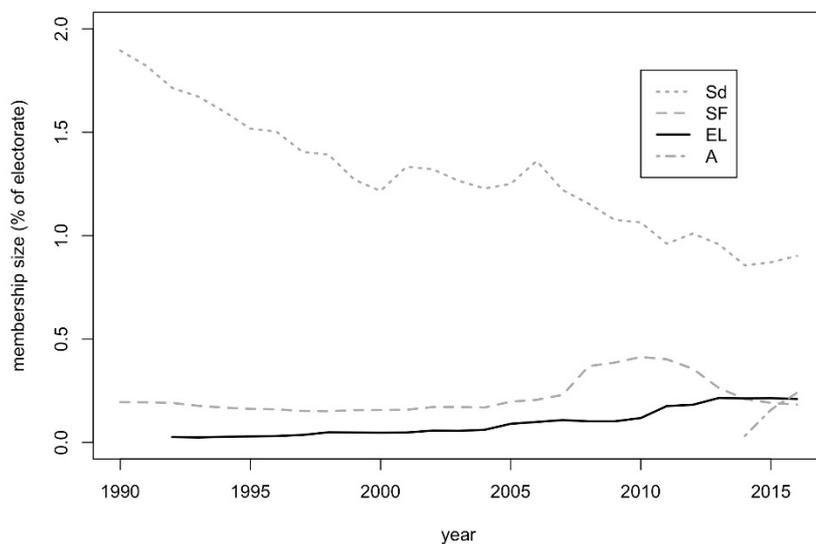
the late-1990s and about 2006 the percentages of the Socialist People's Party and those of Enhedslisten are rather similar.

In summary, this means that EL's membership size as a party organizational feature provides us with little information on the question whether the party has a "redder" or a "greener" profile.

**Figure 5.** Membership size as share of entire electorate, 1990-2016.

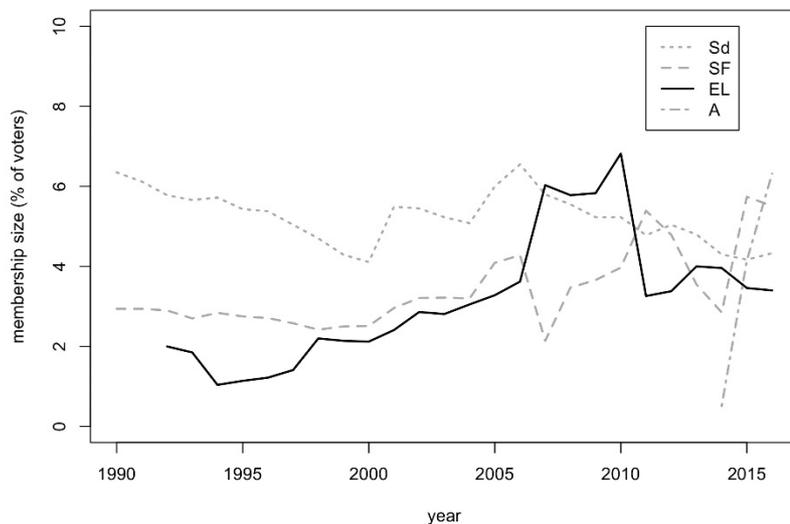
Source: Danish Parliament / International IDEA.

Note: size of electorate in non-election years is interpolated.



**Figure 6.** Membership size as share of voter base, 1990-2016.

Source: Danish Parliament / ParlGov.



### *Intra-party democracy*

Finally, we turn to intra-party democracy as an organisational feature of political parties. Table 1 summarises responses from party members of SD, SF and EL on their ideas and preferences about intra-party democracy. Unfortunately, this 2012-survey does not cover the Alternative and so our comparison across parties rests on finding out how “red” the EL really is. According to the summary scores below, the Red-Green Alliance’s party members have rather strong ideas the current status and ideals about their own party’s intra-party democracy. The average member disagrees with the statements that “The party leadership takes too little account of what the members think”, “It is a problem for the party that the leadership is too strong, and “The most important role of party members is to support the leadership”. What is more, the average member agrees with the statements “The party's national conference should have the final say” and “‘Urafstemning’ is necessary to strengthen party democracy”. And while in four out of five statements the average member of the SF is not very far off similar assessments and ideals, the results for EL are still the strongest out of all three parties. This result is similar to the findings by von dem Berge et al. (2017) who find similar scores for both parties, based on the official intra-party rules and statues. Yet, EL still has a higher score than SF. All of this suggests that EL and SF are not fundamentally different in their intra-party democracy but that EL places still decidedly more emphasis on it, which may be similar to A – but that remains a speculation in the absence of new survey data from party members.

**Table 1.** Party members’ views on intra-party democracy.

Source: Kosiara-Pedersen (2017: 256).

Note: the number of respondents varies per question. Values are averages per party where each member had a choice between “fully agree” (100), “agree” (50), “disagree” (-50), “fully disagree” (-100).

	<b>SD</b>	<b>SF</b>	<b>EL</b>
The party leadership takes too little account of what the members think	-6	-9	-53
It is a problem for the party that the leadership is too strong	-29	-21	-47
The most important role of party members is to support the leadership	-3	-21	-40
The party's national conference should have the final say	22	36	56
‘Urafstemning’ is necessary to strengthen party democracy	33	36	52
<i>N (min)</i>	2826	3497	2510
<i>N (max)</i>	2877	3605	2629

In conclusion, above we have reviewed several indicators of EL's party organization and placed it in comparison to SF's and A's organization as the "red" and "green" relative standard, respectively. The results show that when it comes to party finances, Endhedslisten used to appear more "red" than "green" in its total income and expenses but this might be changing very soon. And this is already different with respect to the party's income and expense structure, in which it highly resembles the green party, the Alternative. For the party's membership size as an organizational feature, our analysis provides us with little information on the question whether the party has a "redder" or a "greener" profile. Here, the results show according to one indicator (membership size as the share of the electorate) high levels of similarity and according to the other indicator (membership size as the share of voters) only high similarity between SF and A with EL being very different. Finally, the party's intra-party democracy is very much based on direct democratic elements and diffused power structures. While the average EL party member is not inherently different from the average SF party member in his/her views and preferences on intra-party democracy, EL's members are still more pronounced in their emphasis.

### **Conclusion** (*preliminary*)

One of the major advantages of the Red-Green Alliance is in its name – like a chameleon, it can change color to fit into its environment. This allows the party to darken its shades of red whenever its rival party's vacates this space on the political spectrum (like they did in 2011), but also to tone more green to the extent that Alternative becomes its main rival on the left wing. Based on our analysis, we conclude from the party's positions and issue priorities that it is properly red – and more red than green. The party organization do not allow us to make any firm conclusions although the Red-Green Alliance appears to be looking more like the environmental-based Alternativet than the socialist Socialist People's Party (SPP).

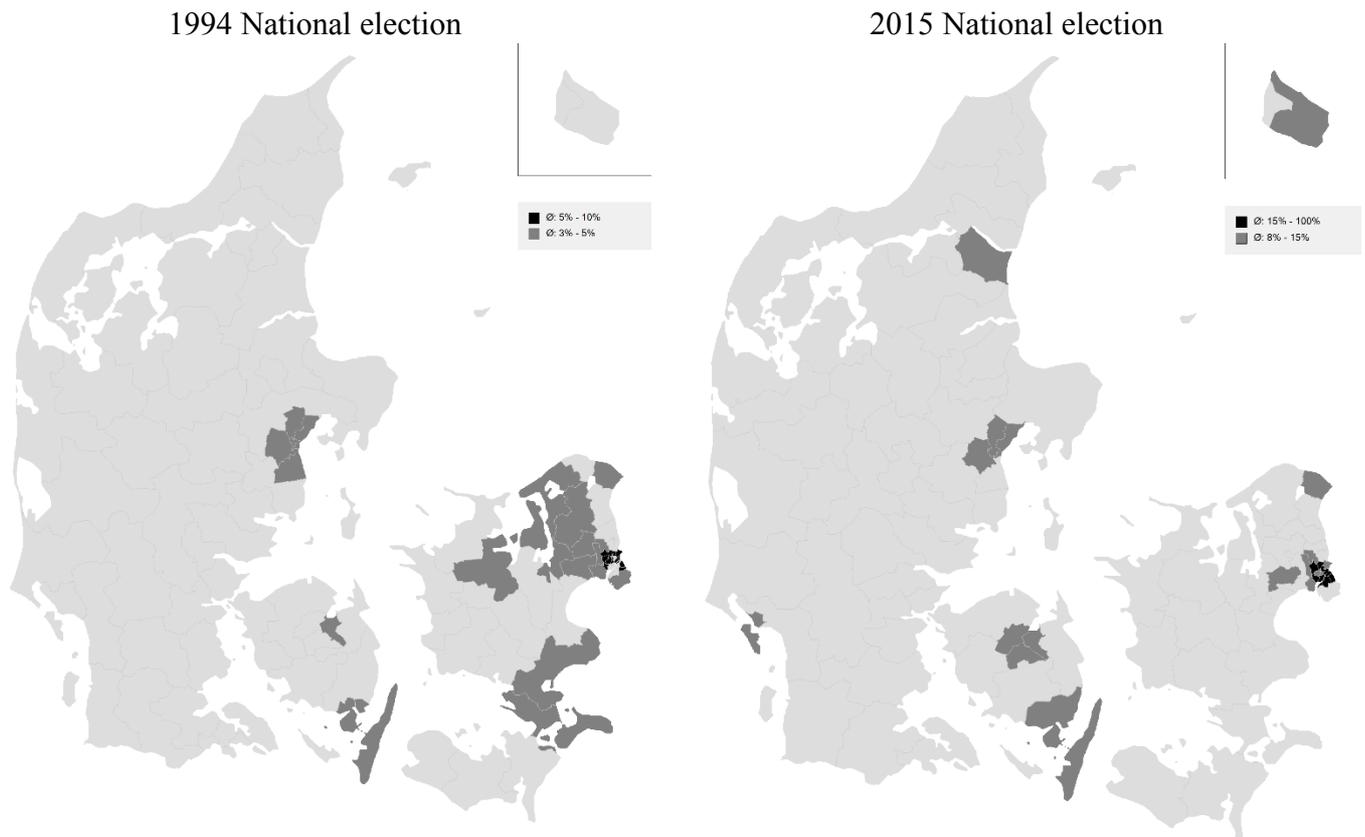
Insofar as Alternativet is there to stay and might not have reached its full potential on the leftwing, it is likely that the Red-Green Alliance will come to look more like Alternative in terms of its party organization. Despite its current color – red more than green – the competition from Alternativet probably will push the

Red-Green Alliance to become greener and less red. This is especially the case if SPP has finished its venture to the right and will return to its more historic position solidly place on the left wing.

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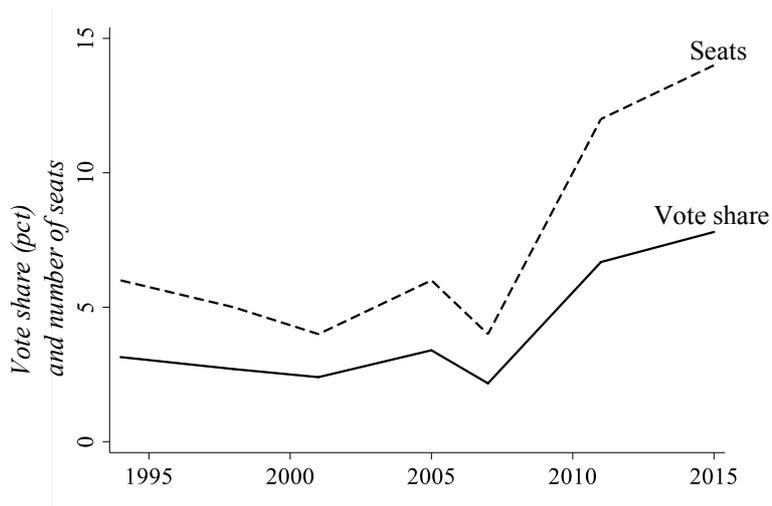
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Figure 1. Vote share to the Red-Green Alliance across constituencies in the Danish 1994 and 2015 national elections.



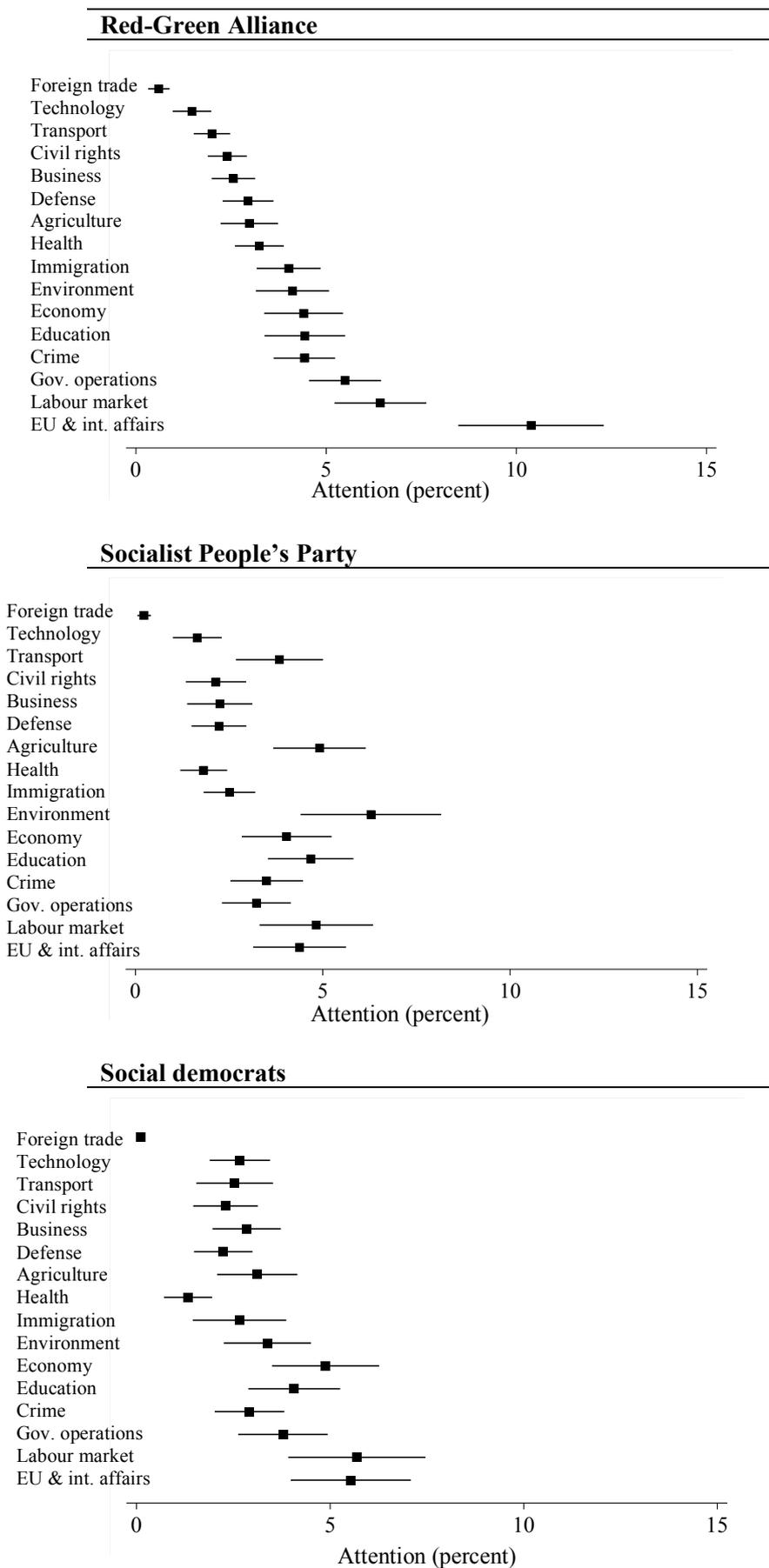
Source: Dansk Valgdata (2018).

Figure 1. Vote share and seats for the Red-Green Alliance 2012.



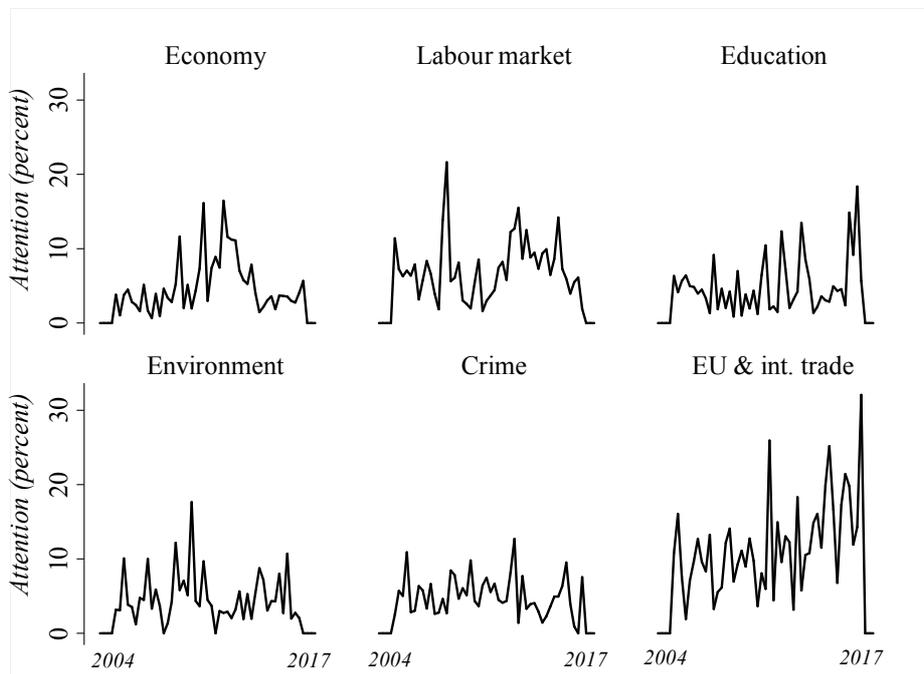
Note. Solid line is vote share at national elections to the Danish parliament. Dashed line is seat share in the Danish parliament. Source: Comparative Manifesto Project (Volkens et al. 2013).

Figure 2. Average attention to issue areas in press releases for the Red-Green Alliance, Socialist People's Party and the Social democrats in Denmark, 2004-2017.



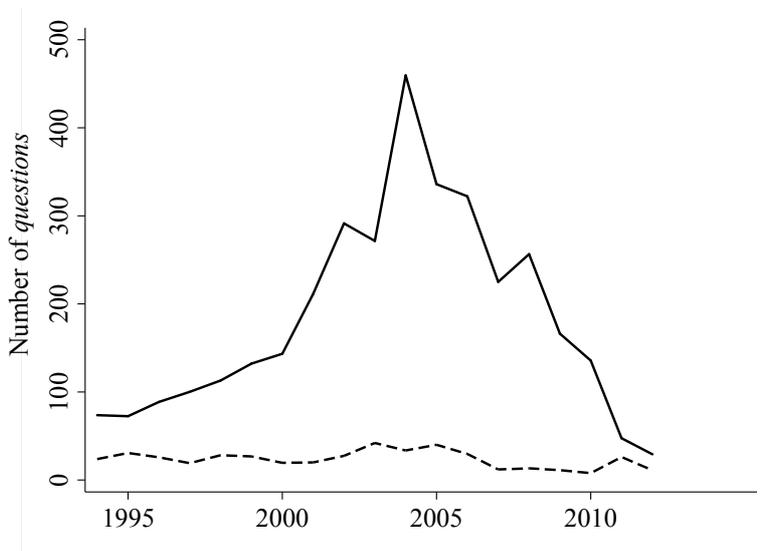
Note. Source: Seeberg (2017).

Figure 3. The Red-Green Alliance's attention to six issues in their press releases, 2004-2017.



Note. Source: Seeberg (2017).

Figure 4. Number of questions to the minister per year by parties in the Danish Parliament, 1994-2012.



Note. Solid line is the Red-Green Alliance. Dotted line is the average number among the Socialist People's Party, the Social democrats, the Social Liberals, the Liberals, the Conservatives, the Danish People's Party and the Progress Party. Source: Comparative Agendas dataset.

Table 1. Voter demographic and voter opinions of the Red-Green Alliance compared to the other parties in the Danish Parliament.

	Red-Green Alliance	Average for other parties <sup>1</sup>
<i>Demographics</i>		
Age (average)	39.7 (16.1)	45.5 (17.1)
Single (pct.)	44.8	32.9
Live in city 40.000+	59.6	44.5
Political interest (0 large, 4 small)	1.92 (.73)	2.2 (.86)
Income (0 low, 15 high)	4.2 (2.7)	5.4 (3.4)
House owner	37.4	58.8
Public employee	51.1	33.7
<i>Most important problem</i>		
Unemployment & labor market policy	13.3	13.1
Social security & redistribution	18.8	12.7
EU	66.7	72.8
Environment	1.2	1.4
<i>Attitudes</i>		
EU (1 pro, 5 con)	3.2 (1.2)	2.9 (1.4)
Environment (1 con, 5 pro)	4.2 (.9)	3.5 (1.0)
Foreign aid (1 less, 3 more)	2.1 (.7)	1.7 (.7)
Inequality (1 good, 5 bad)	4.3 (1.0)	3.4 (1.2)
More welfare rather than tax cuts (pct.)	89.9	61.3
EU identity (1 a lot, 5 little)	3.3 (1.4)	3.4 (1.3)
Left-right self-placement (1 left, 11 right)	2.6 (2.6)	5.4 (2.5)
Left-right placement of the Alliance	2.2 (3.0)	1.7 (2.4)

Note. Standard deviations in brackets. <sup>1</sup>Excluding Red-Green Alliance. Source: Danish Election Study 2015.

Table 2. The position on EU, redistribution, and the environment and the issue importance for six parties in Denmark, Sweden and Germany.

<b>Country</b>	<b>Party</b>	<i>EU position</i>	<i>Salience</i>	<i>Redistribution</i>	<i>Salience</i>	<i>Environment</i>	<i>Salience</i>
Sweden	Green Ecology Party	8.4	6.2	3.1	6.3	1.9	9.3
	Left Party	3.9	4.2	.6	9.2	4.5	5.4
Denmark	Red-Green Unity List	1.2	6	1	8.5	.8	8.4
	Socialist People's Party	4.5	5.1	2.4	7.5	2	7.5
Germany	Greens	2.7	5.8	3.1	6.5	.7	8.9
	Die Linke	1.5	6	.8	8.4	1.9	7

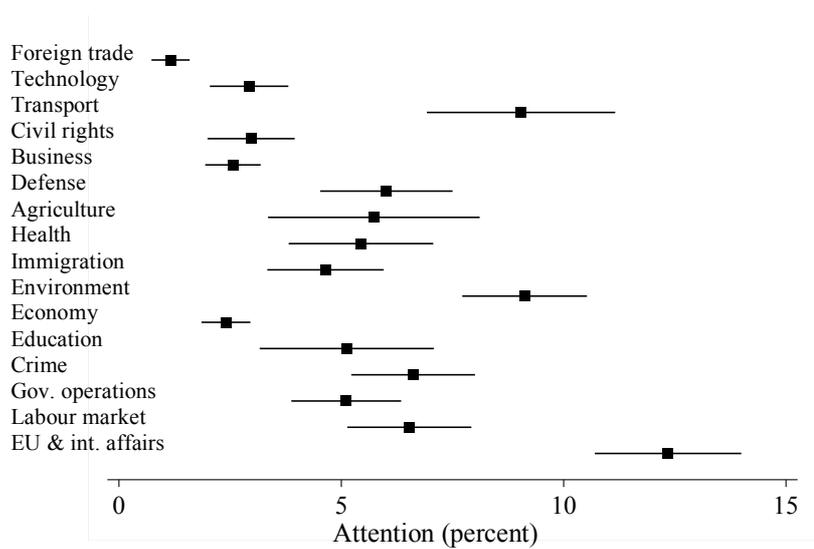
Note: The variables are measured 0-10: EU position (0 con, 10 pro), Spend vs tax (0 spend, 10 cut tax), Redistribution (pro, 10 con), Left-right (0 left, 10 right), Environment (0 pro, 10 con). Each saliency variable report the expert assessment of how important each of the issues are to the party. Average scores for 1999-2014. Source: Chapel Hill expert data.

Table 3. Parties' issue emphasis in election manifestos.

<b>Country</b>	<b>Party</b>	<i>EU</i>	<i>Environment</i>	<i>Welfare</i>	<i>Workers</i>
Sweden	Green Party	0	26.39	9.44	2.28
	Left Party	0.21	11.46	11.90	8.18
Denmark	Red-Green Alliance	0	9.81	8.98	8.17
	Socialist People's Party	0.33	12.26	12.86	7.99
Germany	Greens	2.41	10.23	5.70	4.30
	Left Party	1.08	4.12	8.35	8.00

Note. Average scores for 1999-2015. Source: Comparative Manifesto Project (Volkens et al. 2013).

Figure A1. Average attention to issue areas in questions to the minister for the Red-Green Alliance, 1994-2017.



Note. Source: Comparative Agendas data.

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<sup>i</sup> The issue content of each press release has been categorized based on its title. The categorization uses the Comparative Agendas codebook (Baumgartner et al., 2011; see also Seeberg 2018).

<sup>ii</sup> Unlike, e.g., news reports or parliamentary activities, press releases are unconstrained and unfiltered by journalistic norms of institutional rules and therefore provide a rather clean indicator on a party's issue attention. Press releases are increasingly used in research (see Sagarzazu and Klüver 2017; Hänggli 2012). Yet, to rule out that the results reported in Figure 2 are a product of the source, Figure A1 in the appendix shows the allocation of attention across issues using questions to the minister as the source. Here, EU also feature prominently whereas labor market issues are less outstanding but attention to the environment is higher.