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The Greens of Finland in social media: Facebook as a communication forum

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Abstract

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The Greens of Finland is a Finnish political party which is actively involved in social media in general, and on Facebook in particular. The objectives of this thesis were to assess Facebook as a communication tool for the Greens and to improve the party's social media strategy. The research was made during the period from February 2011 till January 2012. The research methods used were mainly qualitative – content analysis was made on all data. Furthermore, typology and quantification were used in the analysis conducted on Facebook discussions.

The primary data come from discussions on Facebook during the government negotiations in spring 2011, when the Greens actively communicated on their Facebook page. Different comment types were created, based on the tone of discussion and the complexity of comments. The level of interactivity between people and the influence of communication means were also assessed. Discussion topics were not in the main focus of this research.

The findings from Facebook were compared to the secondary data, interviews with the Greens' Communication Team on their experiences with Facebook as a communication tool and discussions of a web communication network based on the Green discussion forum regarding their own presence in the social media. Based on my findings and the relevant theory on social media and social media strategies, I have made developmental suggestions regarding the usage of Facebook vis-à-vis the Greens' social media strategy.

The results indicate that the Greens' Communication Team knows the contents of their Facebook page quite well and that they use it in various ways. They benefit substantially from social media's two-way communicational nature, but they could be somewhat more interactive. The discussion on the Greens' Facebook page is equally analytical and critical; people tend to justify their opinions and not just express a feeling, for instance. Crowdsourcing – asking people to participate – creates the most discussion. As for social media strategy, volunteers' help could be exploited more efficiently, the discussion online could be directed to a certain forum and different forums could be made more open to the public.

Keywords

The Greens of Finland, social media, Facebook, citizen journalism, crowdsourcing

Table of contents

1 Introduction

This thesis is written for the Greens of Finland, one of Finland's political parties. The Greens of Finland may also be referred to as the Green League, the Green Parliamentary Group or the Greens. The research's focus is on the party's presence in and usage of social media, especially concentrating on Facebook. The Greens utilise Facebook very actively and appreciate it strongly as a communication tool. Recent political events have raised the interest in social media, as the Greens also noticed. The most recent Parliamentary elections were held on 17 April 2011 and a right-wing party, the Finns Party gained a substantial amount of votes, which came as a surprise for many. The result was that social media, the Internet in general and naturally the traditional media were bursting of discussions, citizens' and professionals' analyses and articles on politics.

The empirical data is collected during the post-election period of 2 May and 27 June 2011 when the government negotiator, the current Prime Minister Jyrki Katainen (the National Coalition Party, KOK) was negotiating with ten different parliamentary groups in order to form a functioning government. The Greens support in the elections dropped by 1.2 % points and they lost five seats in the Parliament. Therefore, during the first round of negotiations the Greens were not planning to enter the Government. Nevertheless, after a couple of weeks of complicated negotiations the Government was formed of six parties, the Greens included. The Greens were discussing all these changes and decisions on the party's Facebook page in order to keep their supporters up-to-date and talking. The party's Communication Team and party leaders wanted to hear the field's opinions. In my thesis I analyse these discussions in order to assess Facebook as a communication tool and a communication forum for the Greens. Based on my findings, the Greens own experience and their active supporters' comments in the Green discussion forum, I make developmental suggestions in order to improve the party's social media strategy. The Greens currently do not have a social media strategy in a written form even though they actively are present in different fora. This thesis and its results therefore serve as a basic package for writing down a strategy, developing current actions and improving the usage of Facebook.

1.1 Background information

Two months before the Parliamentary Elections I decided to find a thesis topic that teaches me of politics, communication and social media. As I consider myself a green-ish person, I was willing to know more of the green point of view. I had also noticed that the Greens are very active on the Internet and in social media compared to some other political parties in Finland. In March 2011 I met, separately, with my thesis supervisor and the Greens' previous Communication Manager to discuss the topic of my thesis. From the very beginning I knew I wanted to see what Facebook has to offer, which was also an interesting topic for the Greens. Little by little during the spring 2011 and with the Elections aside the topic took its form when I was following the discussions on the Greens' Facebook page.

At first I was supposed to analyse the discussions right before the Elections. After all in summer 2011 when I met again with the Greens' previous Communication Manager, she mentioned that the Greens' are very curious about the communication on Facebook after the elections, during the government negotiations. That was because the Greens Communication Team had noticed that during that time people were really discussing and reacting to the Greens' posts. The party had also actively encouraged people to talk, for instance, by asking people directly to share their opinions in order to have them participate in decision making. Finally then and having discussed with the Greens' current Communication Planner, I decided to outline the research to the period of Government Negotiations. That time is politically important to the Greens and also to their supporters, which is why the contents of Facebook discussions require further analysis and attention also from an outsider's point of view.

1.2 Objectives of the thesis

The objectives of my thesis are to assess Facebook as a communication tool and improve social media strategy for the Greens of Finland. I do it by analysing three different data; Facebook discussions, e-mail interviews and discussions with the Greens' Communication Team and the Web Development Network's discussion on the party's official discussion forum. The Greens do not currently have a formal social media

strategy in a written form, which is why this thesis will help the Communication Team plan, assess and develop the strategy.

The main goal in the assessment part of my thesis is to analyse what the discussion is like on Facebook and how different communication means influence it. I analyse what different kind of comment types occur in Facebook discussions, how interactive people are and do certain communication means result in more discussion or more comments of certain type, for instance. I am also interested in how the Communication Team knows their Facebook page, that is, do the results correspond the expectations and experience of the Team who was in charge of web communication during the electoral period.

To gain an outsider's view, in addition to my own, I refer to the Web Communication Network's (Verkkoviestintäverkosto) comments on the Greens web and social media presence. The Network consists of professionals and laymen interested in communication, social media and the Green politics. It was founded by the Greens' former Web Communication Planner. Based on my findings on these data and theory of social media, social media strategies and related phenomena, I assess Facebook during an important political and communicational period and provide the Greens with developmental suggestions and a draft plan for their social media strategy.

1.3 Research questions

In my thesis I analyse three different data having three different research questions. The data gathered from Facebook is my primary data and therefore its analysis is conducted in a more detailed manner than the analyses on interviews and the discussion forum data. With the data from Facebook and the interviews I assess the Greens' usage of Facebook and communication there. With the discussion forum data I reflect and complete my findings having as an objective to develop the Greens' communication strategy in social media. The questions and the data are described below.

By analysing 29 Facebook discussions on the Greens' Facebook page during the Government Negotiations in spring 2011, I reply to following research questions:

1. What different comment types occur: Is the tone of discussion on the Greens' Facebook page analytical or critical?

In order to analyse the tone of discussion on the Greens' Facebook page, I have categorised the comments by comment types. The discussions' comments have been clustered into two main types by their tone: analytical and critical. Comments written in a positive or neutral tone toward the Greens and their political agenda fall into the analytical type whereas negative comments belong to the critical type. The words and expressions define the tone of a comment. The first research question is shared into three sub-questions as follows:

a. Level of involvement in the Greens' politics: Do the followers of the Greens' Facebook page rather ponder and ground their opinions or do they simply suggest something or express their opinion briefly?
b. How does the means of communication from the Greens' side influence the discussion (eg posting a link to a blog versus posting a direct question)?
c. Level of interactivity: Do the followers of the Greens' Facebook page discuss with each other or rather express their separate opinions?

By comparing the Facebook data and two interviews and five other discussions with the Greens' communication team, I assess the following:

2. Do the findings correspond with the Greens' communication team's expectations and experience of Facebook as a tool for political discussion?

By combining my findings from the Facebook data, interviews and discussions and the comments on the Greens' discussion forum, I conclude my thesis by replying to the question below:

3. What to develop to improve the Greens' social media strategy on Facebook in particular and in other social media tools in general?

1.4 Outlining the research and determining concepts

The Greens' communication team has made their own analysis of the political contents of the discussions. Consequently, this thesis focuses mainly on how people discuss not on what they actually say on different topics. Even though the Greens are well presented in different social media and they also have a website and a discussion forum online, in the empirical part of the thesis I focus mainly on Facebook. Nevertheless, other communication tools in social media and on the Internet are referred to because the Greens already are there and therefore are part of the social media strategy. When describing different social media, similar services are mentioned in order to show the development and various possibilities of social media.

Important concepts to be used in this thesis are the terms I utilize in my Facebook and discussion forum analysis – participant, discussion, posting and comment. A participant refers to a person participating in a discussion online. A participant leaves a comment, which may be text or a link to something on the web. A posting is what the Greens post on Facebook as a starter for discussion. A posting and comment(s) form a discussion. Moreover, when I speak about the Communication Team or the Web Communication Network, I often refer to the Team or the Network, respectively. Other relevant concepts are explained as they occur in the text.

1.5 Structure of the thesis

In the second chapter of the thesis the Greens as a political party is discussed. The Finnish parliamentary system and the national elections of April 2011 are briefly covered in order to help the reader understand the political circumstances that may have affected the discussions on Facebook and elsewhere. Furthermore, the Greens current presence on the Internet is described.

In the third chapter social media and its different communication tools the Greens' presently use are discussed. The tools are Facebook, discussion forum, Twitter, YouTube, Flickr and blogs. In the chapter also the behaviour of Finns online is discussed. In chapter four, since the aim of my thesis is to help the Greens to develop their social media strategy, I combine different theory of such strategies to introduce

the main elements of them. As I am assessing Facebook as a communication tool, I discuss different methods of assessing and monitoring social media as well. Other important phenomenon is citizen journalism and citizen media as they are related to discussion in social media. Besides, I cover crowdsourcing as a method because the Greens are interested in it and have applied it on Facebook to communicate more actively and profoundly with their supporters. In the fifth chapter I describe how the empirical analysis was completed and how the data was collected and analysed. The sixth chapter consists of presenting the findings data by data. In the end of the thesis the conclusions are made, further research topics are suggested, reliability and validity are discussed and the thesis and the learning process are assessed.

2   The Greens of Finland

The Greens of Finland (Vihreät, De gröna) is a Finnish political party founded in 1987 and registered as a political party the year after. Founders of the party were "- - environmental activists, feminists and other active groups - -" who already in the early 1980s started campaigning on Green issues. The Greens was "- - the first European Green party to be part of a state-level Cabinet" in 1995. (The Greens of Finland a)

The Greens speak up for fairness, choice and climate responsibility. The main themes of their national election campaign in April 2011 were environment, tolerance and Green economy. (The Greens of Finland a, Vihreät a) The Greens' political values include taking responsibility of the future, respecting the nature, social fairness, education, global responsibility, multiculturalism, feminism, participation and good life (Vihreät b). The majority of the Greens is against nuclear power and has always voted against it in the government (Vihreät c).

The Greens entered the Finnish Parliament the first time in 1983 before the party's registration with two independent representatives. Henceforth, they gained four seats in the elections of 1987, ten in 1991 and nine in 1995 when they entered the government the first time Mr Pekka Haavisto becoming the minister of Environment and Development Aid. Thus, Mr Haavisto become Europe's first Green minister. In 2003 the Greens gained fourteen seats and in 2007 already fifteen seats. However, in Parliamentary elections in 2011 they lost five seats, that leaving them with ten seats. (The Greens of Finland a, Official Statistics of Finland 2011)

The first time in 2009 two Green representatives, Ms Satu Hassi and Ms Heidi Hautala were voted to the European Parliament among the total of thirteen Finnish representatives. So far in municipal elections the Greens have succeeded well and in Helsinki, the Finnish capital in 2000 they gained the second largest share of the votes, which was 23.5 %. In addition, in many other cities they became the third largest party. (The Greens of Finland a)

2.1 Finnish Parliament and Parliamentary Elections 2011

The 200 Members of the Finnish Parliament exercise the supreme decision-making authority in Finland. Parliament's main tasks are to enact legislation, approve the state budget, ratify international treaties and oversee the Government. The Members of Parliament, also referred to as MPs, are elected every four years by a direct secret ballot vote using a proportional system. Each Finnish citizen has one vote and is entitled to vote having reached the age of eighteen years. (Parliament of Finland a)

In the parliamentary elections in April 2011 the Finns vote more actively than in 2007. In 2011 the voting percentage reached 70.5, which is 2.6 percentage points more than in the elections of 2007. In 2011 the 200 seats were shared between ten parliamentary groups. Every other party except for the Finns Party faced a decrease in their support in 2011 compared to the elections in 2007. (Parliament of Finland b, Official Statistics of Finland 2011 & 29.4.2011) Mr Jyrki Katainen from the National Coalition Party – the largest party after the elections – was appointed Prime Minister on 22 June 2011. He leads the Government of 19 ministers representing six different parties. Two of the Ministers are Green. Mr Ville Niinistö, the Greens' chairperson since 2011 became the Minister of the Environment and Ms Heidi Hautala, a former Member of the European Parliament was appointed the Minister for International Development. (Parliament of Finland 22.6.2011b & a)

The government negotiations started after the elections on 18 April 2011 and lasted until 17 June 2011 when a consensus on the new government programme was reached (Parliament of Finland 17.6.2011). At the beginning the Greens did not aim to enter the government since their support had decreased substantially. They were not willing to form a government with the populist right-wing party Finns Party whose political views are rather far from those of the Greens'. Neither did they want to negotiate with the National Coalition and the Centre Party, with whom they had been working during the last period of office. The Greens' former chairperson Anni Sinnemäki has claimed the co-operation with these two strong parties being more in the right than the Greens to be one of the reasons for the party's loss. However, during the negotiations the Finns Party decided to stay in the opposition since their view to the European Union

was too negative compared to other big parties. The second round of the negotiations started and the Greens decided to continue and see what they could reach. The Greens and five other parties were cooperating to create a government programme that would satisfy all negotiators. On 20 June the Green parliamentary group and the delegation voted on entering the government and the result 43 - 5 in favour was published on the party's Facebook page the same afternoon. (Vihreät 18.4.2011, Sinnemäki 19.4.2011, 13.5.2011 & 6.6.2011, Vihreät 20.6.2011)

2.2 The Greens on the Internet

The Greens are present online on their website www.vihreat.fi. The site is translated partly in Swedish, English and Russian. The website offers information, among others, on current political matters, Green politics, the party itself, Green politicians and how to support the party by, for instance, joining it or following them on social media. The Greens also have a discussion forum at vihreat.info/forum where the members of the Green league and anyone else may discuss Green politics, any other matters and give feedback and development ideas to the party. The discussion area for "Green political discussion" was opened recently after the election on 27 April 2011 when the Greens wanted to become more open as an online communicator and offer a platform for political discussion also for the ones who are not members of the Green league. Some discussion areas are closed and require membership.

The Greens' sites on different social media are linked to on their website. The Greens may be followed on Facebook, facebook.com/vihreat where the party has its own page and most members have their pages, too. Furthermore, the party and so far nine of its politicians are on Twitter at twitter.com/vihreat and each politician on his or her own page. The tweeting politicians at the moment are Ms Anni Sinnemäki, Mr Jyrki JJ Kasvi, Ms Outi Alanko, Mr Oras Tynkkynen, Ms Tuija Brax, Mr Pekka Haavisto, Ms Johanna Karimäki, Ms Johanna Sumuvuori and Ms Mari Puoskari. The most recent tweets and Facebook posts are linked to and shown also at the Greens' website, which well describes the interactive idea of social media.

The Greens have a channel on YouTube, youtube.com/vihreat where they share videos of their political statements and different events. Moreover, the newest videos are linked to on the website like Facebook postings and tweets as well. Besides, the party is sharing pictures and videos on Flick at flickr.com/groups/vihreat. The Greens are also active writers of political blogs and the official Green blog is published on the party's website. Other green blogs are listed on the website, too. In October 2010 a global provider of public relations software and media tools Cision's Finnish office Cision Finland listed the top ten of political blogs. The two most followed ones were written by Green politicians Mr Osmo Soininvaara and Mr Jyrki JJ Kasvi. (Cision International 2011, Cision Finland 2010)

3   Social media

Social media is a wide group of various web services and so far it is continuously developing and growing. In order to outline the focus of my thesis, I only discuss in detail those means of social media that the Greens already apply. Since the Greens is an active user of Facebook and my primary data is collected from there, the emphasis of this chapter is naturally on Facebook. Nevertheless, other similar services are mentioned to describe the lively characteristics of social media and to give possible development ideas to the Greens for the future when we see where the Finns locate themselves online. To help the reader to understand the character of social media and Web 2.0 those terms are equally covered. To ground the importance of the Internet and social media for a party acting in Finland, Finns' behaviour online is briefly discussed as well.

The Finnish Terminology Centre TSK (2010, 14) defines in its Social media vocabulary that social media is "a form of communication benefiting from information technology and networks where content produced interactively and by the users is handled and where relations between people and created and maintained [translated from the Finnish]". As a term 'social media' is also known as social web, social software or social technology as Otala and Pöysti (2008, in Juholin 2009, 173) argue. Social media can also be called Web 2.0 when it is connected to IT solutions. The term 'Web 2.0' was launched in 2004 by Timothy O'Reilly. The Finnish Terminology Centre defines it as "a unity of information technology solutions enabled by social media, which benefit from the Internet [translated from the Finnish]". Essential for Web 2.0 are applications allowing interactivity and user-contribution and the fact that the Internet provides both a place to save contents and a platform for applications. (The Finnish Terminology Centre TSK 2010, 14 - 15)

Typical examples of web services in social media are content sharing services such as Flickr or YouTube, social network services like Facebook and discussion forums such as the Greens' discussion forum. Social media also includes various means of collective content creation such as wikis and blogs. Collective content creation occurs, for instance, on Wikipedia where anyone, both professionals and laymen, may create con-

tent. People producing content or modifying it do not necessarily know each other but their common purpose is to create content together. Another term for collective or collaborative content creation is "produsage" which comes from "production" and "usage". It refers to the nature of social media, which enables people to participate in producing content instead of only using something ready-made as was the case in the pre-social media era. (The Finnish Terminology Centre TSK 2010, 14 - 15, 26 - 28)

3.1 Finns on the Internet and in social media

Official Statistics of Finland researched the Finns' use of information and communications technology in 2010. According to the research already 86 % of Finns use it and 50 % are online several times a day. Most frequently Finns use the e-mail, online banking and search information on products and services. 42 % of Finns are registered as a social network service user and 28 % follow some social network service at least daily. (Official Statistics of Finland 26.10.2010a)

Microsoft and TNS Gallup conducted a research on Finns online in spring 2011. The research indicates that already 78 % of Finns use the Internet daily whereas the TV gains only 66 % people watching it every day. E-mail is used by 98 % and 71 % of Finns are in social media. 93 % of women below 30 years' old utilize social media; 59 % of them, however, have deleted their profile. The research predicts that Finns would rather outline the use of social media to include only their closest friends. The 1006 respondents would also like to control the flow of inessential information. Moreover, the importance of taking into account a user's personal needs is emphasized. Finns seem to take contact actively to other people online, as TNS Gallup Digital's Research Manager Reeta Sutinen says in Helsingin Sanomat. She also claims the research to indicate that "-- in the future the services enabling individuality and upholding privacy will make most success, such as still favoured e-mail. [Translated from the Finnish]" (Auramo, H. 9.3.2011, Helsingin Sanomat 8.3.2011)

Statistics Finland's research in 2010 shows that up to age of 35 – 44 more than 40 % of Finns are registered into some social network service such as Facebook or Twitter. As TNS Gallup's results indicate as well, some more women than men participate in social media activities up to the age of 65 – 74, as Figure 1 demonstrates.
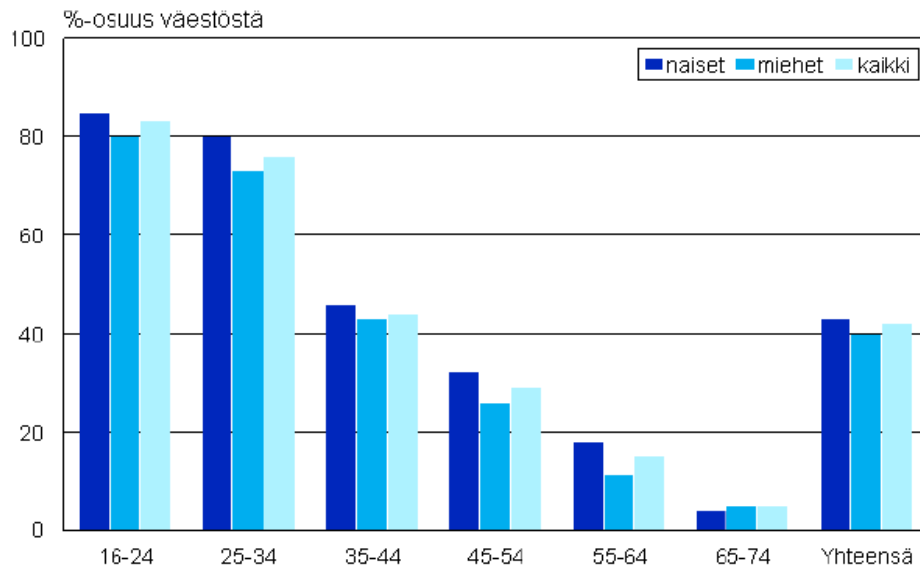

Figure 1. Registration into social network services in 26.10.2010b [women, men, all] (Official Statistics of Finland 2010, 15)

3.2 Facebook

Facebook is a social network service which enables creating interaction between people and maintaining relationships. The service may be used for sharing interesting facts and opinions, personal information or for communication for work and hobby related purposes, for instance. As social network services often, utilizing the tool and connecting to someone on Facebook requires creating a profile and sending and accepting a friend request. Other comparable services are, to mention a few, MySpace and a Finnish IRC-Galleria. LinkedIn is a similar service aimed to professionals. (The Finnish Terminology Centre TSK 2010, 26, 43) To mention the most relevant characteristics of Facebook to my research, people and organisations on Facebook may send messages, create Pages to be 'Liked', comment on each other's or corporate or organizational Pages' walls, share links, pictures, videos and so forth. Everything posted by oneself of someone else may be 'Liked' and commented on, if the page or profile owner has not disabled the functions. Same applies for posting to a wall – for example the Greens do not al-

low people to start a new discussion or post something to their wall but only as a comment under a posting sent by the Greens.

'Liking' on Facebook means that a profile owner has visited a page at least once and according to his or her settings receives notifications and news from the page. Page administrators may follow the activeness of users with the help of statistics that Facebook provides for each group. According to my own experience and behaviour on Facebook, 'a Liker' of a page is likely to be someone in favour of the page's owner or its purpose. Nevertheless, 'a Liker' may also be someone with a neutral or even negative attitude to the page's owner but who wants to gain information or just disturb. A person may 'Like' just a few pages or hundreds of them; therefore one's activeness in each page may vary strongly. That means, in my opinion, that the number of 'Likers' only gives an idea of the popularity of a cause or a group behind a Facebook page. An event or such may trigger growth in the number of 'Likers' as happened to the Greens after the Parliamentary Elections of 2011. Visiting the Finnish parties Facebook pages, it is shown that in November 2011 7,484 Facebook users 'Like' the Greens' Facebook page. Compared to other parliamentary parties' pages the Greens are rather popular since only the winner of the recent election, the Finns Party had gained more with their 15,436 Likes (in November 2011). The figures for other political parties were 1,562 for the Christian Democrats, 4,346 for the Finnish Social Democratic Party, 4,687 for the National Coalition Party and 5,574 for the Left-Wing Alliance. The Swedish People's Party is not currently on Facebook.

The Green party has its own Facebook page, where the Communication Team posts different messages usually several times a day. Moreover, some Greens politicians have their own Facebook page as well, where they may communicate with their supporters directly. Only the Greens can start a new discussion on their Facebook page by posting a status update which can be a phrase, a link, an image or a video, for example. Anyone "Liking" the page may comment under the postings. The Greens delete some comments at times, that is they moderate the page, which is a common practice on websites, discussion forums and such. This is done to avoid inappropriate comments ie trolls. Someone writing in a provocative style using rude or unkind expressions is called

a troll in web slang. A troll often sticks to a certain topic having as his or her goal to spend others' time and provoke them. (Aalto & Uusisaari 2009, 101)

Wikipedia estimates that approximately 58 million active users were globally on Facebook already back in 2007 when Facebook started to become known in Finland. There is no official confirmation from Facebook on its number of active users since last year when the milestone of 500 million users was reached. Facebook defines a user active if he has logged in within the last 30 days. Unofficial sources such as Socialbakers and Inside Facebook report frequently their estimates, which in May 2011 were around 700 million users. Goldman Sachs has reported for potential Facebook investors the user count to be at 600 million in January 2011. In order to gain a big picture of Facebook's usage in Finland, I have used the data from Socialbakers. It is unofficial but based on the estimates mentioned above seems guiding, however, maybe a little too positive.

In October 2007 Finns started creating profiles on Facebook. The site was fully translated into Finnish in spring 2008 with the help of Finnish speaking users. (Wikipedia) In January 2012, Socialbakers, a statistics portal specializing in Facebook statistics claims 39.54 % of the Finnish population to be on Facebook, which makes 2,078,140 Finns. The number represents 46.38 % of the population online. 53 % of them are female and 47 % are male. Having a profile on Facebook does not make one an active user. An estimated amount of active users is 17 % of all Finnish Facebook users, according to a recent study on interaction on Facebook where 1000 most popular Facebook pages were analysed during a month (Parviainen & Lähdevuori 2012, 2). Figure 2 below demonstrates how different age groups are represented on Facebook in January 2012. Currently the largest age group is 25 – 34 followed by 18 – 14 years old users. As young citizens represent a large and important target group for the Greens, according to the party's communication team, the Green are right to be active on Facebook. The team also believes that the meaning of Facebook as part of other possible chains of social media will grow. So far it looks good for Facebook in Finland. During the last 12 months, from January 2011 till January 2012 the number of Finns on Facebook grew from some 1,820,000 up to over 2,070,000 users. (Socialbakers)
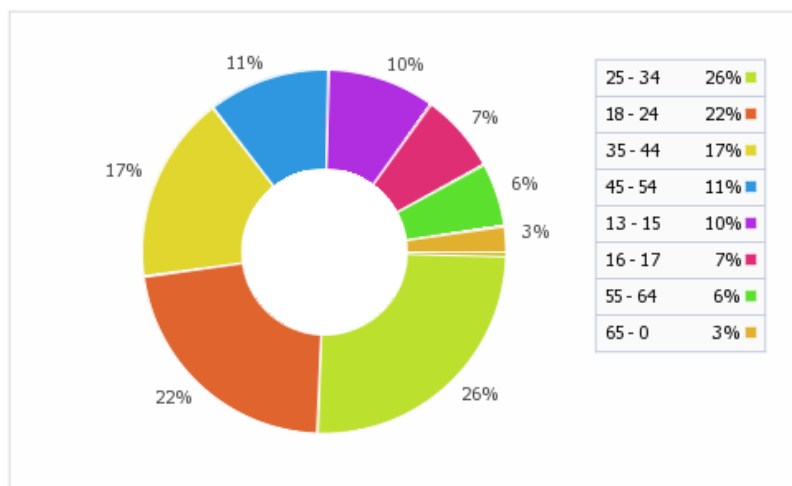
Figure 2. User age distribution on Facebook in Finland in January 2012 (Socialbakers)

Despite the growth in Facebook user amount, the social network service has been regularly criticised, for instance, for its security issues. IT-viikko in Taloussanomat [IT week, Economics News] writes about the "45 questions" that four Northern countries Finland, Sweden, Norway and Denmark sent to Facebook about how Facebook handles its users personal information. The project is led by Norway and its motivations come from the claims made by citizens. The article also argues that often the new characteristics Facebook has started to apply have been seen as weakening the privacy protection. On 13 June 2011 Business Insider reported about Facebook losing users in the countries where its story started. During May 2011 Facebook lost 6 million users in the US, which is rather dramatic for that is the first drop of user amount in more than a year. Also remarkable amounts of Canadians, UK citizens, Norwegians and Russians have left the social network service lately. The article argues that "-- there is a saturation point where people begin to burn out on the service" because the countries losing users are the ones where Facebook first took off. Inside Facebook, a source of news and analysis on the social network service analyses the drop to be caused perhaps by seasonal fluctuations such as school year's end but also by the phenomenon that "-- growth tends to halt once 50 % usage is reached in each country". (Rosoff 13.6.2011)

3.3 Other social media tools used by the Greens

A discussion forum or web forum is a service that enables discussion about one or several topics typically through a website. The discussion is not usually real time as it is in

chats. The messages sent to the forum are saved permanently to be read later on unless they are deleted. A web forum may consist of discussion areas focusing on pre-determined topics. Popular discussion fora in Finland are, for instance, Suomi24 and Tohtori.fi. (The Finnish Terminology Centre TSK 2010, 30) Many newspapers, magazines, political parties, associations and organizations also have their own discussion fora. It seems to be rather a rule than an exception for a website to include some kind of a web forum in order for people to communicate with the organization or such they are interested in. A discussion forum may be powered by purchased software such as vBulletin or free open source bulletin board software such as phpBB. The Greens use phpBB, a service which provides a database including styles and user-created modifications, based on which a user may customize their discussion forum or even an entire website as they wish. Also the an independent newspaper based on Green values, Vihreä lanka has its own discussion forum where Greens discussion online takes place, among other platforms.

Twitter is a webservice somewhere between a microblog and a social network service (The Finnish Terminology Centre TSK 2010, 43). As it is explained at twitter.com, the information is shared as 'Tweets', which are each maximum 140 characters long.

> Connected to each Tweet is a rich details pane that provides additional information, deeper context and embedded media. You can tell your story within your Tweet, or you can think of a Tweet as the headline, and use the details pane to tell the rest with photos, videos and other media content. (Twitter 2011)

As the company argues on its website, one does not have to 'tweet' to benefit from Twitter but could only follow 'the Tweets' on topics or by persons or organizations that interest him. A similar webservice is Jaiku, which was created by Finns but sold to Google in 2007 and renamed Qaiku in 2009. In comparison to Twitter, Jaiku also functioned as a web feed collector. Web feeds serve as announcements of new contents in web sites that a person has decided to follow. RSS and Atom are examples of web feed techniques. (The Finnish Terminology Centre TSK 2010, 37, 43 - 44).

YouTube is a content sharing service where users may publish and watch videos (The Finnish Terminology Centre TSK 2010, 29). The service was founded in 2005 to provide "-- a forum for people to connect, inform and inspire others across the globe --" and to act "-- as a distribution platform for original-content creators and advertisers, large and small." (YouTube) A user may have a channel on YouTube where he or she uploads own videos or shares videos published by others. For instance, a person, a country or a political party may have a channel. A similar service is Vimeo, which according to general discussion online provides higher quality videos but has less users and followers than YouTube. YouTube is completely free to register in to and Vimeo offers a basic creator account for free including limited services and a plus creator account for a certain price. (YouTube, Vimeo)

Yahoo's *Flickr*, likewise, is a content sharing service where photos can be published, looked at and commented on (The Finnish Terminology Centre TSK 2010, 43). Flickr's main goals are to "-- help people make their photos available to the people who matter to them" and "-- to enable new ways of organizing photos and video" (Flickr). Similar services are, for instance, Mediashare or Google's Picasa (Mediashare, Picasa).

Blogs or weblogs are websites where a writer publishes texts, videos or photos in a diary-like manner in chronological order, the newest entry being the first one up on the site. The entries include typically a personal point of view to the topic in question. Topics may include a writer's private life or his or her focus of interest. Usually a blog can be commented on. A blog post or posting means the content created and saved in a blog at once, which may be modified afterwards but the factual content is not normally changed. A blogger may determine whether the comments can be made anonymously or using real names and he or she may moderate the discussion by deleting comments. Blogs may also be collaborative, that is maintained by several persons at a time such as the Green blog on the party's website. (The Finnish Terminology Centre TSK 2010, 31 - 32)

4   Social media strategies

Reasons for being present in social media are various. Different tools help gather information, cooperate, create relationships and communication with interest groups, be findable and close to people, build reputation and direct traffic to a certain web address. The environment of an organisation may be monitored on the web and ideas, point of views and feedback gathered. Social media may also be beneficial in mapping the organization's social capital, cooperation within the organization, development, networking, creating and participating in conversation, recruiting as well as making experts and services findable. Interactivity in social media enhances credibility, helps in committing interest groups and may increase the influence of the organization's actions. Active presence online may serve as a channel for interest groups to tell an organization of their problems, therefore improve and even repair a poor relationship to a client or a member of an organisation. (Aalto 4.6.2010, 5, 7 – 8, 10, Golden 2011, 6 - 8)

In order for all efforts to be beneficial, it takes a strategic approach to enter the new media. A social media strategy should define which core tasks and goals an organisation's presence on the web supports (Aalto 4.6.2010, 5). While entering social media, Lietsala (in Siikamäki 9.4.2010) encourages organizations to set objectives, estimate own resources, choose suitable tools for reaching the predetermined goals and teach persons in charge to use them. Social media may be employed for time-limited projects only but it is recommended to make a long-term plan for resources and actions (Aalto 4.6.2010, 11).

Organisations should not fear conversation, since members of different interest groups discuss in any case. Therefore, a blog, for example, should always come with a possibility to comment in order not to ruin social media's basic idea of interactivity. (Lietsala in Siikamäki 9.4.2010) According to Golden (2011, 5), only content sharing is not enough to benefit from social media to the fullest – organizations could use the new media environment for developing relationships with interest groups by participating in the community, for instance by reading other blogs or such and commenting on them.

An organization should determine whether they are reactive, proactive or only followers and listeners in which situations and in which forum. Who has the right to act and to be in charge of different tools and tasks needs to be agreed on. While considering resources, the need for new work roles has to be estimated as well, if new tasks cannot be added to the existing job description of someone. (Aalto 4.6.2010, 9 - 12)

While choosing the social media tools, their functions and potential achievements should be understood. It is possible to set up own services but the possibilities of existing tools should be carefully considered at first. An own service would ensure the control on the register of users but in order to help people find a new social medium, special communication efforts are required. Moreover, the maintenance of applied social media tools and profiles should be planned. (Aalto 4.6.2010, 5 - 6, Golden 2011, 8)

For the sake of consistency, the instructions on how the organization is present in each forum ie what kind of profile picture is used and how the user ID is formed need to be determined. The style and mode of expression as well as how much time managing social media is allowed to take are to be considered. Naturally all situations cannot be forecast when persons in charge need to make individual decisions. Training and the management's support make such challenging situations easier. The role of individual members of the organization and how they are seen in connection to the organization and as private persons is to be considered as well. If several persons are in charge of maintaining an official profile in a social medium, they should communicate much in order to keep up a consistent web identity and mode of interaction. Choosing tools and methods for assessing and monitoring is also essential in order to know whether the objectives have been met. (Aalto 4.6.2010, 11 - 13) Assessing and monitoring is discussed in further detail in chapter 4.1.

According to Aalto (4.6.2010, 3) the instructions for communication on the web should also follow how relevant laws and regulations are to be applied, such as laws on freedom of speech, privacy protection in electronic communication and in the world of work. The terms of service of each social media service or application should be well studied in advance in order to know how to solve possible problems. The law of Finland applies to Finnish social media tools, however when applying foreign services, the

foreign law rules. (Aalto 4.6.2010, 5) Also, the management may forbid or allow using social media at work. In general, they should provide clear instructions on social media usage in order to reduce uncertainty within the work community. (Lietsala in Siikamäki 9.4.2010)

Finnish Facebook users, people and organizations, have been relatively little researched so far but Parviainen and Lähdevuori's recent study may give some guidelines that could be benefited in planning social media strategies in Finland. According to the study, Finnish organizations use Facebook mainly for communicating (92 %), brand building (81 %) and maintaining client relationships (71 %). The more messages an organization sends on their Facebook page, the more followers are activated. The biggest difference is between posting on Facebook daily and weekly. Having a plan for social media does not seem to affect the activity on a Facebook page, action by the organization matters more. On average, an organization may expect 4 % of page followers to be active, wherein 1 % leaves a comment and 3 % 'Likes'. Finnish Facebook users seem to be most active at 10 am and 8 pm, rather frequently every day but a little more on Fridays. Men are less active than women. The more goals an organization tries to reach on its Facebook page seems to affect men's activity negatively. One working hour to 1000 users generated one wall post, 14 'Likes' of a wall post, two comments and one 'Like' of a comment. (Parviainen & Lähdevuori 2012, 2, 7 – 8, 22).

4.1   Assessing and monitoring social media

Especially when entering social media the first time its usefulness and possible problems should be monitored (Juholin 2010, 91). Matters such as development of volumes, experiences of quality and usefulness, usability, technology and tools are to be monitored, as Otala and Pöysti (in Juholin 2010, 91) recommend. Volumes reflect the development of content and user number as well as which links are shared. Quality of content may be assessed by contacting users to reply to a questionnaires or interviews, opening a discussion forum or asking them to grade comments or blogs. Questionnaires and discussion fora help assess usability. Moreover, technology and tools may be monitored by asking feedback from users. (Juholin 2010, 91)

Juholin (2010, 135 - 136) notes that monitoring social media provides the organization or enterprise with qualitative and quantitative data on its brand and status compared to its competitors. Following matters, among others, may be monitored either continuously or during a determined period:

- amount of clicking
- amount of subscriptions
- time spent on the website
- optimizing keywords
- activity of discussion fora
- themes of discussions and their volumes
- profiles of participants on discussion fora
- blog entries or comments (text, image, video)
- traffic on website

Juholin (2010, 135 - 136) defines monitoring social media as a further developed version of brand tracking. The follow-up made online allows the management and persons in charge of communication, brand and marketing to react or not to react to possible wrong impressions, to hear about perceptions and experiences of competitors and the monitoring organization itself. Due to the constantly changing nature and the vast size of the Internet, the organization needs to choose which sites and fora are to be monitored and what sort of information is gathered and in which forum. The organization may choose to participate in discussion online but may also just monitor who discusses, on which topic and in which fora. The goal is to gain a profound view on the emotions and thoughts of consumers.

There are many commercial but also free tools to assess and monitor social media. Facebook and Twitter usage may be graded for free, for example, with Marketing Grader (former Facebook Grader, marketing.grader.com), Twitter Grader (tweet.grader.com), Tweet Effect (tweeteffect.com), Topsy.com and Tweetstats (tweetstats.com). These tools do not assess whether an organisation's objectives are met but how well one is

acting with respect to the way most people apply the tool in question. Also specific tips for improving the use are provided. (Golden 2011, 114)

4.2   Citizen journalism and citizen media

Citizen journalism or public journalism may be defined as professionally made journalism where journalists cooperate with citizens. The goal is to raise people's awareness of their possibilities to influence as well as to bring regular persons' experiences in public discussion, all in order to support a democratic mindset, states Ahva in her doctoral thesis (2010, in Mediaviikko 10.12.2010). The content fully created by laymen may be distinguished from public journalism by calling it citizen media. Content may include anything and be created by anyone, therefore it is prone to be subjective and published rapidly and usually it has not been checked. It is a process, where the previously passive receiver becomes a publisher. (Rinne 5.2.2009, Aalto 9.9.2006, 3) A politics related example of citizen media is Hommaforum.org, "an internet-born community of immigration-sceptic activists" founded in 2008 in Finland. Since then it has brought together over 7000 to discuss immigration, freedom of speech, legal affairs, politics and daily news. Hommaforum.org has gained publicity greatly thanks to one of its key actors, Jussi Halla-aho, a current Member of the Finnish Parliament from the Finns Party. The forum's members have been often interviewed in the major media to discuss pros and cons of immigration. The forum is not affiliated with any political group. (Homma 19.4.2010, Homma, Homma. 20.4.2010, Homma 22.8.2009) To compare the volumes, the Green discussion forum has currently some 1000 users. However, it is a political party's official forum, which may influence people's decision to join it.

The Internet has allowed regular people to express their opinions and produce content that the major media could or would not provide. Three major constituencies may be distinguished making the news and today inevitably cooperating – journalists, newsmakers and the former audience ie current citizen or grassroots journalists. The latter group is joining the process of journalism and helping to create a massive discussion, sometimes gaining better results than professionals. A person blogging or creating websites of personal interest may even become a professional journalist if he or she becomes a key source of news for others. Professionals should change ideas with citi-

zens, take a note from the feedback and criticism given and benefit from all possibilities social media provides by using same technologies as citizens adopt instead of trying to keep the grassroots at bay. (Gillmor 2006, XX, XXIV, XXV, 137)

Common tools of grassroots journalism are blogs, wikis and online forums, to mention a few. Bloggers may cover stories on topics which the major media is not interested in or cannot access. This may happen by having a view point of a local inhabitant of the nation or an inside member of a community in question, such as an Iraqi reporting voluntarily on the war in his or her country. Wikis are software which allows any user to edit any wiki. With proper editing and fair openness, wikis may become rather accurate as Wikipedia's, a globally known online reference site, founder explains in Gillmor (2006, 149): "The only way you can write something that survives is that someone who's your diametrical opposite can agree with it." (Gillmor 2006, 28, 136 - 137, 148 - 149) When the content is created collectively, the more users a service has, the better it is (Aalto 9.9.2006, 7). Different fora may function as background data and an early warning to professional journalists on up-coming news (Gillmor 2006, 28).

As for criticism toward citizen journalism in social media, Stites notes that realizing citizen journalism online in its state today is not yet possible for everyone since it requires certain technical skills, time and equipment that are not accessible to everyone. (in Gillmor 2006, XXIX). Gillmor also comments on ethical aspect of grassroots journalism by pointing out the new citizen journalists' possible lack of understanding and valuing the ethics keeping in mind the journalism's aim to serve the public trust. Accurate facts, fairness and editing text with an experienced editor as well as benefiting from the audience's feedback should still be appreciated by everyone no matter which tools and technologies are being used. (Gillmor 2006, 134 - 135)

4.3 Crowdsourcing

Crowdsourcing means inviting an undetermined group of people to solve a problem or complete a task. The group is reached through an open invitation published usually on the Internet. In addition to professionals, also laymen or anyone interested may participate in finding solutions. Participants may be paid for their contribution or they may

work for free. A task or a problem may be, for instance, taking photos, translating a computer application or a movie or participating in developing software or a product. If a participant is creating content, the process may be called collaborative content creating. (The Finnish Terminology Centre TSK 2010, 15 – 16) Crowdsourcing may be seen as part of web communication, when the dialogue is not only discussion but doing together. The method may also be useful in planning different forms of communication, gathering feedback on campaigns or such and in strengthening customers' or clients' commitment. (Juholin 2010, 128, 134).

Examples of crowdsourcing are a Finnish magazine Olivia and the Finnish Facebook. Olivia challenges its readers to influence in making the paper by inviting them to vote for a title for an article or recommending recipes or books. Facebook, likewise, was translated into Finnish with the help of Finns who were invited to suggest translations to terms and then to vote on best suggestions. Also the Greens have applied crowdsourcing, for instance, when they have wanted to know what their supporters on Facebook thought about entering the government or the government programme. (omaolivia, Wikipedia, Facebook) Another example is also the Greens' Web Communication Network which is formed by inviting interested members of the Green League to improve the Green's web communication together, the Green discussion forum serving as a platform.

Social media is said to have changed the way organizations engage with consumers, fans and followers, who no more want to be told but who want to discover. The discussion is no longer one-way but two-way or even more dimensional. Due to this change, the benefit of crowdsourcing is the possibility to make consumers or fans into brand advocates by involving and engaging them. (Spiegel 16.6.2011) Richard Spiegel at Social Media Examiner presents three principles of crowdsourcing that may be used in tandem with or on social media platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, YouTube and blogs:

– Ask for feedback (then do something with it)
– Create contests and giveaways
– Poll or survey your fans

The point of asking for feedback is to show customers (or fans or followers) that you listen to them and welcome their feedback. Without follow-up, however, fans might feel disappointed and the potential of feedback collected is lost when you could have learned valuable information on your constituencies. Contests and giveaways may be part of a campaign and enable collecting contact information for participants in order contact them afterwards. In many social media tools, messages such as contests are easily spread to several social networks, which make it possible to turn fans or followers into promoters by applying the crowdsourcing method. By creating polls and surveys to followers, they may be made feel that their ideas, thoughts and feedback are appreciated and that they are connecting with your brand. For instance, Facebook has an application called Facebook Questions which allows submitting an open-ended question and creating custom multiple-choice surveys and polls. (Spiegel 16.6.2011)

5   Completing the analysis

The empirical part of my thesis consists of analysing three different data: 29 Facebook discussions including 622 comments, 8 discussion chains on the Greens' discussions forum and two email interviews and four other discussions with the communication team. The Facebook data is my primary data and therefore it is analysed more thoroughly than the data consisting of interviews and discussions on the discussion forum, which are my secondary data selected to support completing the assessment and development process of the Greens' social media strategy. The research questions are different to each data but their common goal is to provide an assessment of the Greens' current actions in social media, particularly on Facebook and to improve social media strategy for the Communication Team. The methods I used during my research and in my analyses are different methods of content analysis, typology, quantification and memoing. Since my objective in the Facebook analysis was to distinguish different comment types but also analyse the discussions in general level by comparing amounts, my analysis is conducted using both quantitative and qualitative research methods.

On Facebook I analyse comments ie the content of discussion which consists of words mainly. I had to interpret the comments in order to find differences and similarities in tone, words and expressions to create categories for comment types. Most qualitative analysis is done with words. Words may be assembled and sub-clustered in order for the researcher to contrast, compare and bestow patterns upon them. Words may be obtained from observations, interviews or documents, which usually require further processing such as correcting or editing raw field notes. Since I was interested in the characteristics of language as a means of communication and the content of discussions, the suitable method for the qualitative part of my research was content analysis. (Miles & Huberman 1994, 7, 9)

According to Tuomi & Sarajärvi (2009, 91 - 93) several qualitative methods of analysis are actually based on content analysis. When beginning an analysis, a strong decision on the focus of interest should be made because qualitative data tends to include several interesting things which may confuse the researcher. The data should then be gone through in order to mark the matters in the scope of the research. Everything else

should be left out. The marked matters should be then gathered together to be separated from the rest of the data. This phase is also called coding. Eskola & Suoranta (1996) and Eskola (2001, in Tuomi & Sarajärvi 2009, 92 - 93) note that coding functions as notes within the data which help describe the text and structure the data. Coding may also be useful in searching for and checking different parts of the text. When the interesting data has been separated from the whole, it needs to be organised by a category, theme or type, for instance. My objective was to distinguish comment types from Facebook discussions, therefore the method I chose was typology. Typology is clustering the data into certain types. (Tuomi & Sarajärvi 2009, 93) Coding, quantification or clustering by themes may help in forming types (Saaranen-Kauppinen & Puusniekka 2006a).

The types in my Facebook analysis were not taken from a theory or model but created based on the data. However, the previous experience of the Greens communications team helped me in creating the types, which is why my content analysis is abductive; the data and previous models take turns in leading the analysis. (Tuomi & Sarajärvi 2009, 96 - 97) Moreover, I used coding and quantification in my analysis when I marked each discussion and comment by an ordinal number and created abbreviations to each comment type in order to track single comments more easily. The codes and calculating helped me also follow connections between discussions, types and the entirety of Facebook data. In order to obtain general conclusions on all discussions and likewise to compare types, I quantified the data ie calculated frequencies for comments and discussions, averages and so forth. Quantification is claimed to bring a different angle to interpreting the data, note Patton (1990) and Burns & Grove (1997, in Tuomi & Sarajärvi, 2009, 121). In my opinion, counting supported me in comparing different categories in my data since certain categories were of different size, therefore not to be directly compared as such. Miles & Huberman (1994, 253) consider that numbers help verify a hypothesis, protect against bias and see rapidly what a large batch of data includes.

My other data, the interviews, discussions and comments on the Green discussion forum were analysed by means of content analysis as well. The analysis was lighter than on the Facebook data since only relevant information was taken into account. The re-

sponses to the interviews and the notes of meetings and phone discussions with the Greens were read through to distinguish the parts related to my topic, then translated and quoted in my thesis. Same was done with the discussion forum data. All discussions in the Web Communication Network's discussion area were read through to find every relevant piece of information or opinion on the current state of the Greens in social media and on how the Greens could improve their actions.

In order to be able to follow the development of my thoughts, I wrote a memo all along the thesis project. The method of memoing is recommended to be used to not only report data but connect different pieces of data in recognizable clusters and to write down all new ideas and concepts (Miles & Huberman 1994, 73 -74). I noticed this method to be very helpful since reading through the memo in different phases of the project allowed me to continue the research after sometimes long pauses. I could also mark useful sources and citations as well as all my observations in the memo ensuring I would not forget them. Following Miles and Huberman's advice, I utilized the memo especially when creating types for Facebook comments. That process was not very simple or easy particularly in the beginning, so I utilized the memo to keep track of all changes I made to the types, such as deleting, modifying or adding something substantial. Moreover, I saved a new version of my thesis and Excel analysis every day I changed their contexts. This way I could refer back to my previous work and ensure I would not lose any information.

5.1   Making the analysis on Facebook data

The discussions on Facebook are analysed in three different levels from the sender's and the receivers' viewpoints. The first level is clustering all comments by type eg analyzing the receivers' reactions in general. The comments are analysed first as a whole group of 622 comments. They are then clustered by type and sub-type. The types are then analysed separately from each other in order to see the characteristics of each category. In this way it can be seen whether the discussion in general during the chosen period was rather analytical and positive or critical and negative.

The second level is analysing the sender's viewpoint. The 29 discussions are shared into five groups according to the communication means applied by the Greens when posting to their Facebook page. The communication means are as follows:

- Link to a blog entry
- Crowdsourcing
- Notification
- Link to an article
- Link to a long publication

Blog entries are maximum one page long, therefore rather quick to read. Crowd sourcing method is used in postings where a direct question has been asked to encourage people share their opinions. A notification means informing people about the current situation when it comes to the government negotiations, for instance. Postings can also be links to articles that are maximum one page long. All longer publications are in the last group, such as links to the 89 pages long government programme or parts of it, more than one page long blog entries or files. The summary of postings is in the end of the thesis as Attachment 1.

On the third level of analysis the comments are analysed as part of the communication means group. The groups are compared to each other to see whether certain means encourage more comments than others and whether certain comment categories dominate in certain communication means or not. As mentioned, the themes of the discussions are not in the focus of the thesis because the Greens' have completed their own analyses on them. However, as topics may influence the discussions, they are naturally taken into consideration when making conclusions.

5.1.1 Process of conducting the analysis on Facebook

In February 2011 I at first started following the Greens' Facebook page regularly to familiarise myself with potential data. In March 2011 I outlined the analysis to the period of parliamentary elections after having discussed it with the Greens' former Communications Manager. I started following Facebook discussions on the Greens'

page to gain an overall impression on their nature. Moreover, I started writing a memo to follow my thoughts and better understand the development of the process. In June 2011 I decided to outline of the analysis to the period of government negotiations, as the Greens' former Communications Manager recommended me to do so. She was very interested in that period because the discussion on Facebook was very active and the Greens had applied different communication means to cause varying reactions in people. This way the amount of data did not grew too large and I could outline my research in one political situation, which was especially interesting and important for the Greens in communicational and political sense.

I collected the final data by copying the discussions from Facebook to a Word-document since it was impossible to print directly out a Facebook page. Two weeks after my period of analysis was ended, I compared the Facebook page to the Word-document to confirm that all comments were included. I then printed out the document to read it through several times to understand what categories for comment types the discussions might form. I underlined parts of comments that were repeated in similar forms or tones and wrote down my ideas in the margins.

In July 2011 after having gained a general view on the data and formulated some thoughts on the categories, I continued the Facebook analysis with Excel to have the data in electronic form. It started first by grouping the discussions by communication means of the posting and summarising the main message of each posting. I coded the postings with colours by communication means in order to facilitate reading and organising of the documents. To have a correct number of comments, I combined the comments that clearly were meant to be one but had accidentally been posted in two parts. I calculated the total amount of comments and likes per discussion and in total. To keep track on which comment belongs to which posting, I gave an ordinal number to each posting and each comment and wrote it down in the printed discussions as well as in the Excel table (Attachment 3). Numbers were such as 7/34, 7 referring to the discussion and 34 referring to the comment. In order to measure the interactivity of people in the discussions, I marked comments reacting to each other's comments in red.

I started clustering the comments by commencing with main types created based on the discussions - opinion, analytical, critical and other - developing the sub-types by reading through the discussions little by little. To form sub-types that suit the data, I started over several times and made changes when I noticed certain sub-types were too similar to each other and needed to be reformed. In the beginning and in the end of comment type creation, I discussed the types with the Greens' Communications Team. They gave me ideas and confirmed me that according to their experience of Facebook discussions in general, I was on the right track. The idea for the sub-type Political resistance came from the Greens.

In October 2011 I conducted the following round of analysis on the Facebook data. I wrote down all the comments by their sub-types as a Word-document to see the entirety. Then I read through the comments several times to check the logic and consistency of the sub-types, updating the Excel-table according to necessary changes. Quite a few comments were moved to a different type category as I could better see the whole of comments and differences between types. In order to stay consistent, I set up criteria of 'points' in comments which is described in more detail in the following chapter. I then calculated the total amounts and percentages of comments per type and in total. To be able to explain the categories to myself and to others, I wrote down the common characteristics of comments in each type. This also showed me the consistency of types formed.

In November 2011 I started comparing the types by communication means, calculating amounts and shares of comments by each means. Since I had an uneven amount of postings as well as comments per communication means, I calculated the average amounts of comments per discussion and the percentages. I started making figures and tables with Excel to find the best ways to present the detailed information. In order to to present the Facebook data in a concise form to the readers of this thesis, I made a table of the postings including the posting date, ordinal number, summary of the main message, communication means, amount of comments and likes (Attachment 1). I also chose the example comments to describe each comment type. To describe in words the differences and common factors of communication means, I wrote down their characteristics. Since my data was in Finnish and I analyse the words and expressions,

the general tone of comments and discussion, the examples are left in Finnish. The translation of partly colloquial text may substantially change the comment. In order for English speakers to understand each comment type and examples, their style and characteristics are described before each example and in relevant contexts.

5.1.2   Comment types in the discussion on the Greens' Facebook page

As a framework for my analysis I constructed a tool for typology. In order to present it in a simplified form to the Greens and other readers of this thesis, I created the mind-map below (Figure 3). As the method of analysis used is abductive content analysis, all type categories are the created based on what types raised from the data and what the Greens' communication team's experience and expectations were like. The comments are shared under four main types which are opinion, analysis, criticism and other. The three latter ones have sub-types as described in the mind map below:
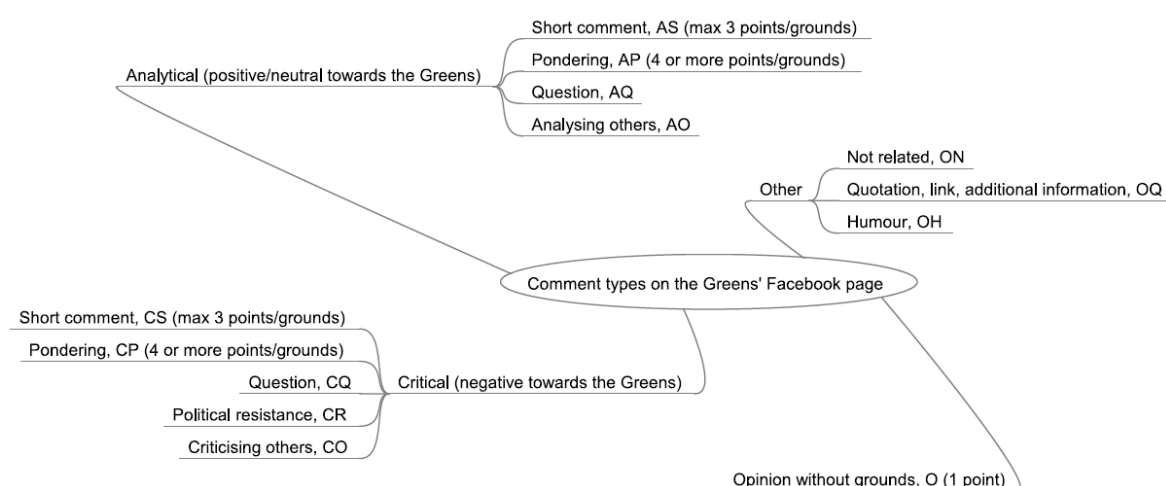
Figure 3. Comment types on the Greens' Facebook page

Short comments with no grounds belong to *Opinion without grounds. Analytical* comments' tone is positive or neutral towards the Greens, their political agenda and actions. *Critical* comments instead are negative of their tone towards the Greens. Both comment types are shared into four similar sub-types; *Short comment, Pondering, Question* and *Criticising* or *Analysing others.* Additionally, the type *Critical* has a sub-type called *Political resistance.* Comments not related to the postings or concerning technical issues as well as quotations, links, additional information and humoristic comments are under the type *Other* and its three sub-types as mentioned in Figure 3.

The tone of each comment is defined by the words and expressions being used. In addition to the tone, I also cluster comments by the amount of 'points' they include. The more points ie suggestions, opinions or feelings, for instance, the comment consists of, the more likely it is to belong to a sub-type 'pondering'. For instance, *Opinion without grounds* consist of short comments expressing only one point such as support, resistance, opinion, feeling or one suggestion. Comments of this category may be negative, neutral and positive of their tone.

Analytical/short comment include maximum 3 points that may be, for instance, 1 opinion, 1 ground and 1 suggestion or 2 opinions and 1 ground. The points may be personal opinions, suggestions, expressing acceptance or support, speculations and analyses of politics or clarifying points to the main idea of the comment. *Analytical/pondering* category covers comments of 4 or more points where one or more topics are discussed from several viewpoints including several grounds or suggestions, for instance. Points may be opinions, expressing acceptance or support, clarifications, presenting facts, giving examples, discussing causality, providing additional information or explaining, sharing development ideas and suggestions, analyzing or speculating politics in a detailed manner. *Analytical questions* are targeted to the Greens to gain more information. Rhetoric questions and questions targeted to other participants of the Facebook discussions are categorised under other analytical comment types. *Analysing others* refers to comments discussing someone or something else than the Greens, a Green politician or the party's agenda in a positive or neutral tone.

Critical/short comment type consists of 3 points or less. The sub-type represent comments such as personal opinions, suggestions, expressing disappointment or resistance, analyzing briefly the political situation and clarifying points to the main idea of the comment. *Critical/pondering* category covers comments of 4 or more points. One or more topics are discussed from several viewpoints including several grounds or suggestions, for example. Points may be personal opinions, expressing disappointment, development ideas and suggestions, clarifications, presenting facts, giving examples and discussing causality or analyzing or speculating politics in a detailed manner. *Critical questions* are targeted to the Greens. Rhetoric questions and questions to other partici-

pants are categorized under other critical comment types. *Criticising others* refers to comments having someone or something else as their target than the Greens, a Green politician or the party's agenda. Comments under the category of *Political resistance* are the most negative and radical comments that are not related to the discussion and can be seen as trolls' comments.

Other/not related includes technical questions and responses and irrelevant comments to the discussion in question. Humoristic comments ie jokes and sarcastic or ironic comments are categorised under *Other/humour. Other/quotation, link, additional information* category covers links to articles, blogs, Facebook pages, government programme, web discussions or to webpages as well as the Greens or participants' reactive comments to questions or pondering, quotations of articles or such, updates of the negotiations or opening a new discussion by presenting information not mentioned earlier in the discussion. If the comment includes more than a link or a quotation and a summarising comment on it, it is categorised under other comment types depending on its tone and amount of points.

5.2   Making the analysis on my secondary data

Interviews, discussions and discussion forum data are analysed in less detail than my Facebook data. In order to gain a better understanding of how the Communication team regards Facebook as a means of communication for a political party such as the Greens, I conducted the email interviews with the Greens current Communication Planner and former Web Communications Planner in July 2011. I also met once with the Communication Planner to discuss the interview to make sure the responses were comprehensive. The interviews were made in Finnish so I translated a summary of the responses into English in July and in November I rewrote the summary partly to be more logical. I also complemented it with the comments from the former Communications Manager that I had written down during our meeting in the spring when planning the thesis project. During the period from November 2011 till January 2012 I compared the responses with the finding from the Facebook and discussion forum data and wrote down my results and conclusions.

When analyzing the interviews and discussions, the memoranda and emails were read several times and then translated in English, summarized and quoted in relevant chapters. Discussions in the Greens' Web Communication Network's discussion area were read, relevant comments were copied in a Word-document, and then referred to in the thesis translated in English from Finnish. The Web Communication Network's discussion area was chosen because it is a recently created group of laymen and professionals involved in web communication and Green politics who discuss the Greens' web communication and how to develop it.

6   Findings of the analysis

The findings are discussed data by data, starting from the Facebook page followed by the interviews and discussions, the discussion forum's data discussed as the last one. The findings on Facebook are discussed in a general level, analysing all the discussions and interactivity of people during the research period. The comment types and communication means are then discussed in more detail, comparing them and pointing out characteristics of each type or means. A summary of findings on Facebook is presented in the end of the chapter in order to help the reader handle all information.

6.1   Discussion on the Greens' Facebook page

As indicated in Figure 4 below, the amount of comments in all discussions researched varies quite much. A posting may also generate a different amount of comments and gain a different amount of "Likes". According to my research, for instance the communication means and the topic affect that difference. Based on the experience gained during the research and on common sense, I assume other influencing matters may be the amount of postings per day, the weekday, the interest created by the political situation at the moment and other people's comments, to mention a few. However, not all factors could be analysed in this thesis since it is limited by time and size.

Some topics and communication means may be more likely to gain a simple positive reaction, a 'Like', whereas some may be prone to trigger a comment, be it positive, negative or neutral. The amounts seem to grow quite accordingly but the amount of likes is mostly bigger than that of comments except for discussions 7 and 23, which represent the method of crowd sourcing. That is when the Greens directly asked the crowd's opinion on entering the government and later on the Government programme. In general people seem to be more likely to just 'Like' a posting and not comment. Perhaps the effort is so much smaller in just liking than in actually writing a comment. Asking people directly to react seems to, however, make the effort small enough and people are more likely to express themselves with words, not only by clicking the 'Like' button.
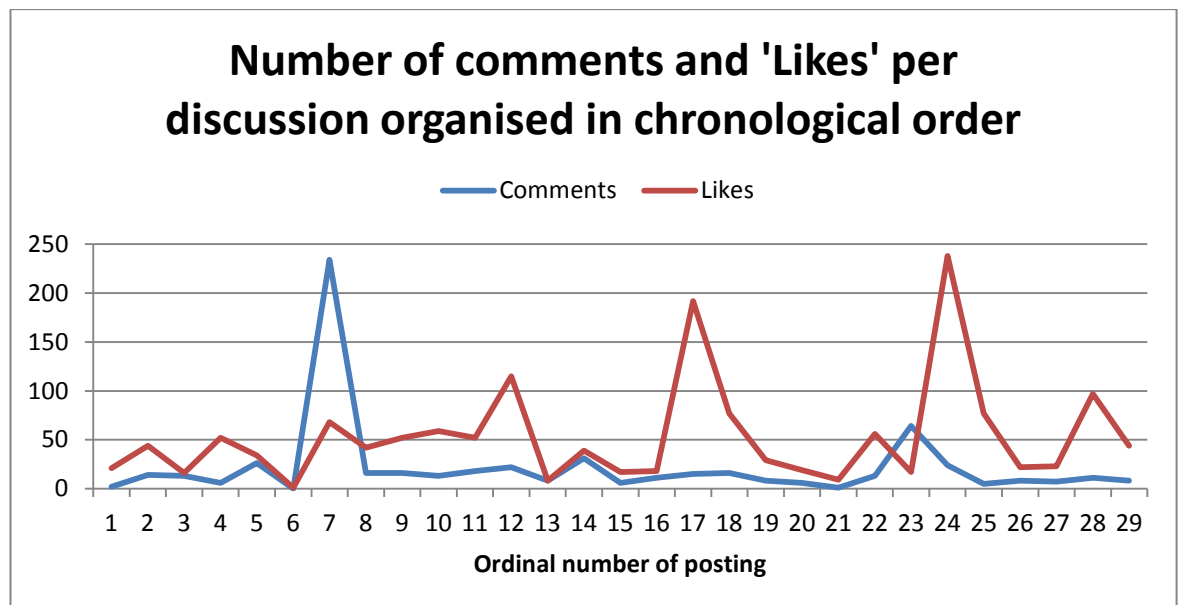
Figure 4. Comparing the number of comments and "Likes" in all discussions

Other moments, except for discussions 7 and 23, where the number of comments clearly peaked were discussions 5 and 14. Respectively, they were links to blog entries about the financial support to Portugal and about the moment when the Government negotiations faced a dead-end but the Greens thought it still would have been possible to reach a solution and a government decreasing income disparities. Otherwise the number of comments was rather stable. The number of 'Likes' instead seemed to peak more often, especially in discussions 12, 17, 24 and 28. Posting 12 was a blog entry about the Greens' strict conditions to enter the Government negotiations (no to new nuclear plants, climate law, increasing the basic social security). 17 was a link to an article where the Greens declared they will not take part in the government build on the bourgeois parties the National Coalition Party and the Centre Party. 24 was again an article concerning the sex neutral marriage law which could not be included in the Government programme but which the Greens promised to promote through a Parliament's initiative. 28 was a notification to announce the Greens will enter the Government.

To measure interactivity between people sharing an interest on Facebook, I was also willing to know how often people reacted to other people's comments. The result was that approximately 32 % of participants' comments during the whole period of followed discussions somehow referred to a comment posted by someone else. The refer-

ring could be done by directing a participant by name, commenting on a mentioned opinion, fact or idea or by replying to other person's question, asking for a clarification or correcting other person. Examples of interactivity are the following and the word or expression determining the connection to previous is marked in *italics*:

> Alan olla samaa mieltä *edellisen [previous]* kanssa. Nyt ulos sieltä [hallitusneuvotteluista]. (14/2)

> Ja hallituksessa tulee tietenkin toimia siten, että se kasvattaa vihreiden kannatusta = vihreiden arvojen mukaisesti. *Keskustelussa [discussion]* tuntuu näkyvän käsitystä, että vain oppositiossa voi kannatusta kasvattaa. (7/106)

> *Eli [so]*sukupuolineutraali avioliittolaki ei ollut Vihreillä kynnyskysymys tai kärkitavoite*? :D"* (24/20)

Comment types question were naturally included in interactive comments. The Greens were asked some questions but the Communication Team did not always reply to them. Often it was a Green politician or presumably an active member of the party who reacted, sometimes even spoke up for the Greens if the question or comment included criticism. In general, the Team did not post comments often and active politicians irregularly. The politicians, of course do have their own Facebook pages where they assumingly are more or less active.

6.1.1 Tone of discussion

As Figure 5 below indicates, the tone of discussion in general on the Greens' Facebook page is equally analytical and critical, that is almost equally positive or neutral and negative. 80 % of comments are more than just expressing an opinion without grounds, which shows the level of involvement of the Facebook page's followers to be quite high. They obviously care to write more than just a few words expressing a positive or negative opinion. Only 10 % of comments represent the category Other, and most of those comments contribute to the discussion by providing additional information or an update of the political situation.
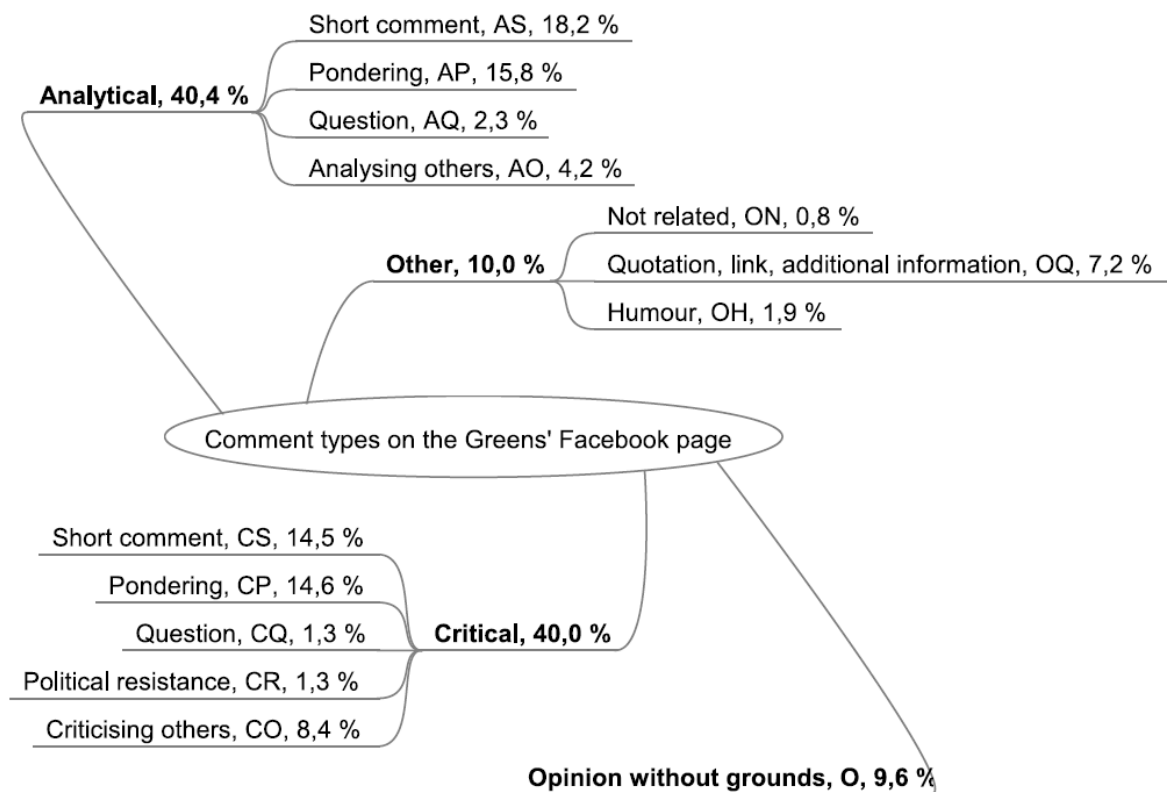
Figure 5. Percentages of comments per comment type
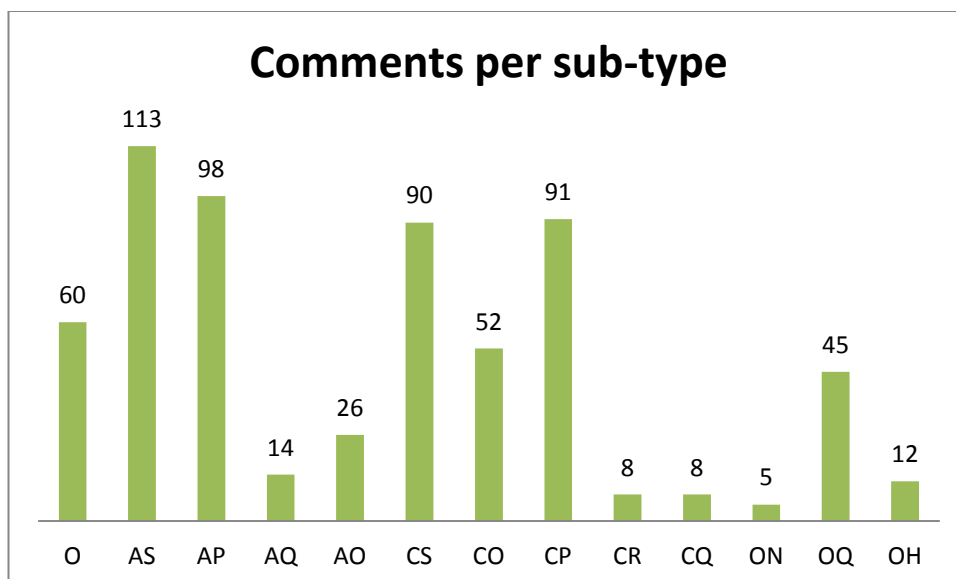
Figure 6. Number of comments per comment sub-type

Based on the numbers above in Figure 6, the Analytical/short comment type gained the most comments. Participants on Facebook were most likely to comment positively or neutrally with a few words or lines expressing an opinion, grounding it briefly or suggesting something with a short explanation. Positive or neutral pondering was almost as common as analytical and short comments were. People were rather likely to

also ground their opinions or suggestions well, analyse and speculate the politics and discuss different matters in a very detailed manner. Likewise, pondering and briefly commenting in a negative tone were almost as frequent as analytical commenting. Some more short comments were given compared to the total of pondering in both analytical and critical comment types. Although 80 % of comments were more complex than opinions without grounds as Figure 5 shows, people were still a little more prone to comment briefly than ponder, both critically and analytically (Table 1).

Altogether 3,5 % of comments were questions, a few more analytical than critical ones. It sounds a rather small number but it only includes direct questions having a question mark after them and comments which were visibly directed to the Greens to gain more information. Therefore, comments worth reacting for the Greens are surely more numerous. The majority of comments focusing on someone or something else than the Greens or their politics were critical, negative of their tone. Also some positive or neutral analysing occurred. Altogether 12,5 % of comments discussed other parties and their politics. The majority of discussion, nevertheless, was concentrated on the Greens.

Table 1. Totals of analytical and critical sub-types

Total analytical + critical	Number of comments	Pergentage of comments
Pondering	189	30,4 %
Short comment	203	32,6 %
Question	22	3,5 %
Others	78	12,5 %
Total	492	79,1 %

6.1.2 Example comments and topics discussed

Comments in the category *Opinion without grounds* can be both analytical (positive, neutral) and critical (negative). Example comments are as follows:

- expressing support or resistance with one or a few words

    Hyvä päätös!!! (18/1)

- expressing an opinion by identifying a person or a matter

> Vaalilain uusiminen, onkos se unohtunut jonnehi. (9/2)
>
> jäädään oppositioon (7/129)
>
> Sinnemäki ansaitsis [ministerin] salkun. (27/1)

Topics discussed were the Greens decisions to continue or stop negotiating for the government and finally enter it. Also some persons were mentioned by name when discussing possible minister's portfolios and the party's future leaders. Renewing the electoral law was mentioned as well, as it is a political matter the Greens promote rather actively.

Analytical/short comments are positive or neutral of their tone, include maximum 3 points and represent following comment types:

- expressing an opinion and a ground for it

> Päätös oikea, Kokoomuksen veropolitiikalle ei ole parlamenttaarisia edellytyksiä, hyvä. (18/3)

- expressing an opinion, a ground and an pointing out a specific matter

> Hyvät ehdot. Minusta nämä kolme ovat juuri vihreiden tämän hetken tavoitteiden kärki. Erityisesti ilmastolaki, kiitos. (9/5)

- expressing an opinion, a suggestion and a speculation

> Pysyä aiemmissa puheissa ja todeta, ettei vaalitulos anna aihetta osallistua hallitukseen. Tämä hyvin mahdollisesti kaataisi kokoomusjohtoisen hallituksen. Mukaan lähteminen saattaisi syödä kannatusta entisestään. (7/7)

Topics covered in the sub-category of Analytical/short comment were, for instance, other parties or politicians as well as the political situation in relation to the Greens,

nuclear power, the Greens' result in the parliamentary elections, basic income, municipalities' economy and fiscal policies.

Comments in the sub-category *Analytical/pondering* are positive or neutral of their tone, include minimum 4 points and represent following comment types:

- giving a suggestion and several grounds or clarifications for it

> Eläimiä ei saa unohtaa! Eläinsuojelulakia ja -valvontaa pitää tiukentaa tuntuvasti ja luomutuotanto nostaa kunnolla nousuun. Eikä suvaita hallitusohjelmaan sanaakaan turkistarhauksen jatkamisesta nykymalliin, tuesta puhumattakaan. (12/6)

- clarifying a matter under discussion, analyzing or speculating the situation, discussing causality

> Kollajan ja Vuotoksen altaiden merkitys valtakunnan energiatuotannossa on todella vähäinen. Samaa luokkaa kuin 10 tuulimyllyn tuulipuisto. Vesivoimakapasiteettia ne kasvattaisivat tasan 1% verran. Mutta Olkiluoto-3:n vaatimaa varavoimakapasiteetin puutetta paikattaessa vesivoimaloiden seisottaminen tyhjän panttina tulee välttämättömäksi, ja tässä tilanteessa Vuotos + Kollaja vastaavat 10% tarvittavasta tehosta. Uudella hallituksella olisi mahdollisuus vaikuttaa asiaan jättämällä Olkiluoto-3 ilman käynnistyslupaa. (12/20)

- expressing an opinion, a ground and analysing the situation

> mun mielestä nyt on ainulaatuinen tilaisuus taistella tuotantoeläinten oikeuksista, keskusta on poissa nurisemasta ja muut on vähemmän lahjottavissa, vihreillä on myös varaa laittaa ehtoja peliin! (10/8)

Topics discussed in the sub-category Analytical/pondering were such as sex neutral marriage law, nuclear power, result in the elections, social and health care, renewal of the elections law, animal rights, fur farming, the Greens' conditions to enter the government and the negotiations, the Greens' possibility to use the balance of power as a minor party, other parties or politicians as well as the political situation in relation to

the Greens, increasing the value added tax and personal opinions on the Greens and their actions.

Comments in the sub-category *Analytical/questions* are positive or neutral of their tone and include a question asked by or targeted to the Greens. An example is as follows:

> Hyviä ehtoja. Mitä kaikkea perusturva tarkoittaa? Sisältääkö se esim. toimeentulotukea tai opintotukea? (10/2)

Analytical questions were asked on topics such as the progress of the government negotiations, details of the government programme and results of polls made to the Green party's members.

Comments in the sub-category *Analysing others* are positive or neutral of their tone and the topic of discussion is someone or something else than the Greens, a Green politician or the party's agenda. Following examples describe the sub-category:

- expressing an opinion or providing additional information

> Kansanvalta toteutuu, kun ketkä tahansa 101 edustajaa tekevät päätöksen. Kaikkien asioiden ei ole pakko olla hallitus-oppositio-kysymyksiä. (5/2)

- analysing another party's or politician's actions

> Se kannattaako vasemmiston vaivautua, riippuu varmaan niistä itsestään. Luulisin että heillä on tärkeämpiäkin tavoitteita kuin EU-tukien vastustaminen. (7/56)

Analysing others sub-category concerned topics such as other politicians, parties, other participants' opinions and arguments as well as political situation and characteristics of politics in general.

Comments in the sub-category *Critical/short comment* are negative of their tone, include maximum 3 points and represent following comment types:

- expressing an opinion and a ground for it

> Ei missään nimessä hallitukseen…4 vuotta Kataisen ja Kokoomuksen hännystelyä riittää! Johan sen jo vaalitkin kertoi. (7/192)

- expressing an opinion, a ground and an pointing out a specific matter

> Samaa mieltä Markon kanssa. Edellistä hallitusta ei kannata enää kosiskella - siitä maksettiin kova hinta vaaleissa. Jos pyrimme tähän seuraavaan, pitäisi se sanoa selkeästi. (3/4)

- expressing an opinion, a suggestion and a speculation

> Vihreille menestystä ei tuo huutelu oppositiossa tai puurtaminen hallituksessa. Vihreiden tulee oppia puhumaan suoraan ja ymmärrettävästi. (16/10)

Discussed topics in the sub-category Critical/short comment were the Greens' actions in the former government and in the current negotiations, reputation, reliability, problems the party has in their communication, missing topics in the government programme, referring to negative comments about the Greens, threatening to end the party's membership and supporting Portugal.

Comments in the sub-category *Critical/pondering* are negative of their tone, include minimum 4 points and represent following comment types:

- giving a suggestion and several grounds or clarifications for it

> Olen Juhon kanssa ihan samaa mieltä siitä, että mikään ei ole nyt tärkeämpää kuin artikulointi selkeästi omasta arvomaailmasta. Miten voi esittää vaateita hallitukselle asiasta, josta ei itse pysty muodostamaan mielipidettä vaikka haluaa aivan välttämättä jäädä oppositioon? Vaikka miten kikkailee niin eihän siinä saakeli ole mitään järkeä. (5/18)

- clarifying a matter under discussion, analyzing or speculating the situation

> Perusturvan nosto 100e:lla on huomattavasti huonompi tavoite kuin perustulomalli, ei-
> kä käytännössä ole 'askel kohti perustuloa' vaan pikemminkin siitä poispäin. Perustulo-
> mallilla on laajaa kannatusta läpi puoluekentän koska se on käytännössä kustannusneut-
> raali, kun taas tämä nykyjärjestelmään perustuva 100 e korotus tuottaa lisää byrokratiaa
> ja tekee järjestelmästä entistä raskaamman. (12/13)

- expressing an opinion, a ground or grounds and analysing the situation

> Tämänkokoinen puolue ei lähde hallitukseen vaikuttamaan, minusta on naivia edes ku-
> vitella että meillä olisi nykytilassamme siellä todellista mahdollisuutta tehdä tuloksellista
> politiikkaa – ei ainakaan suhteutettuna siihen hintaan jonka joutuisimme maksamaan
> maineena takinkääntäjinä, opportunisteina tai epämääräisinä toheltajina. (7/132)

Discussion in the sub-category Critical/pondering handled topics such as previous failures, lack of clarity in communication, missing points in the government programme, election result and the small size of the party, behaviour and actions of the party and their effects on reputation and credibility, leaders of the party and co-operation with right-wing parties in the previous government.

Comments in the sub-category *Critical questions* are negative of their tone and include a question asked by or targeted to the Greens. An example is as follows:

> Saisiko analyysia tästä nettihesarin uutisesta, että nyt Vihreät ovat äänestämässä Portu-
> galin tukipakettia vastaan? (3/8)

Critical questions were asked on topics such as the support for Portugal and details of the government programme such as animal rights, immigration and income disparities.

Comments in the sub-category *Criticizing others* are negative of their tone and the topic of discussion is someone or something else than the Greens, a Green politician or the party's agenda. Following examples describe the sub-category:

- expressing an opinion or providing additional information

> Maahanmuuttovirastossa toteutetaan sitä mitä maan lainsäädäntö sanoo. Piste. Jos linjaa halutaan muuttaa radikaalisti (esim. niin että pakolaisen uskonta otetaan huomioon), on muutettava ensin lakia; mutta miten esimerkiksi Suomen perustuslaki ja ihmisoikeussopimukset suhtautuvat siihen että ihmiset asetetaan eriarvoiseen asemaan uskontonsa perusteella. (23/61)

- criticizing another party, politician or member of discussion

> Ei mielestäni ympäripyöreää lätinää vaan pientä trollailua ilmassa. (3/3)

Criticising others refers to comments discussing other politicians, parties, other participants' opinions, arguments and behaviour, progress of the government negotiations, speculations of the future of the government, as well as political situation and characteristics of politics in general.

Comments in the sub-category *Political resistance* are negative of their tone. Following examples describe the sub-category:

- criticizing the Greens radically

> Parasta politiikkaa Vihreiltä olisi nyt täydellinen hiljentyminen puoleksi vuodeksi. (2/3)

- pointing out a topic not related to the discussion or posting

> Mielenkiintoista, että tämä erittäin isoksi kasvanut epäkohtien kokonaisuus ei kiinnosta vihreitä. Olisi reilua sanoa se selvästi. "Hyviä uutisia – sarjan numerossa 13 käydään läpi Suomen todellista ihmisoikeustilannetta vuosien 2001 – 2011 välisenä aikana. Valotetaan nelikantaista toimintamallia ja nimetään sen toimijat" http://suomi2017. wordpress.com/2011/04/08/eduskuntavaalien-2011-rakettipaketti-on-valmis/ (2/8)

Comments in the sub-category *Other/not related* are comments on technical matters or topics not related to government negotiations such as voting for the party leaders and member polls. Sub-category *Other/humour* includes jokes as well as sarcastic and ironic

comments. *Other/quotation, link, additional information* sub-category consists of links and additional information handling topics such as updates of the government negotiations or details about political topics that are important to the Greens.

6.1.3   The communication means' influence on discussion

Table 2 indicates the amount of postings sent grouped by communication means as well as the amount of comments each communication mean generated in total and in average.

Table 2. Communication means

Communication means	Postings / total	Comments / posting	Comments / posting in average	Share of com- ments / posting
Blog entry	13	174	**13**	**28 %**
Crowd sourcing	2	298	**149**	**48 %**
Notification	5	48	**10**	**8 %**
Article	4	66	**17**	**11 %**
Long publication	5	36	**7**	**6 %**
Total	29	622	622	100 %

As Table 2 above indicates, asking direct questions by applying the method of crowdsourcing seems to be a very efficient means to create discussion. It is likely that the topic or topics referred to in the posting, such as nuclear energy or fur farms may have also influenced the discussions, as the Greens former Communication assumed.

Figure 7 below shows that crowdsourcing generated the largest amount of analytical comments and the second least of critical comments. The smallest amount of analytical comments arose from long publications which gained the most of critical comments. Additionally, long publications generated fewer opinions without grounds than other communication means whereas notifications gained more than other means. The crowdsourcing method resulted in the smallest amount of comments belonging to the category Other and long publications, articles and blog entries gained almost 14 % each of those comments.

Comment types per means of communication (%)

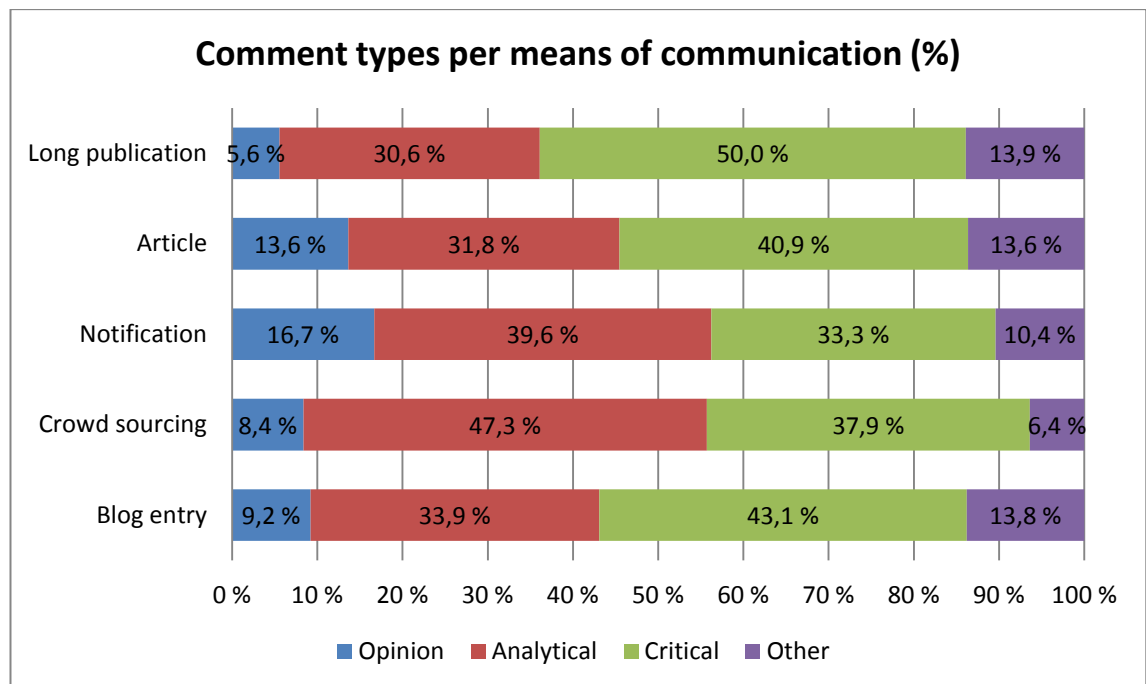|	Opinion	Analytical	Critical	Other
Long publication	5,6 %	30,6 %	50,0 %	13,9 %
Article	13,6 %	31,8 %	40,9 %	13,6 %
Notification	16,7 %	39,6 %	33,3 %	10,4 %
Crowd sourcing	8,4 %	47,3 %	37,9 %	6,4 %
Blog entry	9,2 %	33,9 %	43,1 %	13,8 %

Figure 7. Comparing communication means regarding main comment types

As indicated in Table 3 below, only crowdsourcing, notification and article faced political resistance, very negative comments. Blogs and long publications, normally longer texts received no comments of this sub-type. The number of comments in this sub-type in total was very small, so it might be only a coincidence and would require further research. The total of short comments was higher in crowdsourcing, blogs and long publications than in notifications and articles. Pondering instead was most common in notifications, crowdsourcing and long publications. Others were being criticized or analysed most often in blogs and articles, possibly because the topic of those postings often considered another party or politician in relation to the Greens. Articles and long publications raised most questions. Comments after blogs were clearly more often short than pondering and a little more often so in crowdsourcing and long publications. Pondering instead was clearly more frequent after notifications and more common after articles.

Table 3. Percentages of comment sub-types (analytical + critical)

	Political resistance (CR)	Short (AS + CS)	Pondering (AP + CP)	Others (AO + CO)	Question (AQ + CQ)
Blog	0,0 %	33,9 %	21,3 %	17,2 %	4,6 %
Crowdsourcing	1,0 %	36,6 %	35,2 %	11,1 %	1,3 %
Notification	4,2 %	20,8 %	39,6 %	8,3 %	0,0 %
Article	4,5 %	18,2 %	24,2 %	15,2 %	10,6 %
Long publication	0,0 %	36,1 %	33,3 %	2,8 %	8,3 %

6.1.4 Summary of findings on the Greens' Facebook page

To summarise the main findings on the Greens' Facebook page, I list them below:

- People tend to 'Like' not write a comment except for when crowdsourcing

- Measured by the amount of comments, crowdsourcing creates most discussion, then blogs, articles, notifications and long publications, respectively

- About 1/3 of participants of Facebook discussions clearly interact with each other

- People are rather involved in the Greens actions and politics on Facebook since 80 % of comments were more than just "Good job!" or "Bad job!"

- Discussion is equally analytical and critical

- Short comments are a little more common than longer pondering ones

- More than 80 % of discussion is concentrated on the Greens

- Other parties or politicians, or politics in general are more likely to be criticized than analysed positively or neutrally

- Crowdsourcing generates most analytical comments and second least critical comments

- Long publications gain most critical comments and least analytical comments

- Long publications generate least opinions without grounds and notifications gained most of them

- Articles and long publications raise most questions

- Pondering is most common in notifications, crowdsourcing and long publications

- Short comments are most common in crowdsourcing, blogs and long publications

6.2 The Greens' communication team's expectations of Facebook

I interviewed the current Communication Planner and the former Web Communication Planner by email in July 2011 in order to understand how the Greens value and estimate Facebook, what sort of messages they want to send there and, at first, why are they there. Also when planning my thesis with the former Communication Manager, the topic was naturally discussed. Hence, this chapter is compiled of the discussions and the emails I have had with the Greens' communication team. The interviews and meetings were held in Finnish; therefore the translation is my work. The translated questions of the email interview are in the end of the thesis as Attachment 2.

When asking what the Greens want to talk about on the party's Facebook page, the main topic mentioned is naturally politics. The Communication Team sees Facebook as a tool to express their opinions in current topics that create discussion in social media and a means for quick reacting for actual topics and also for obtaining feedback. It also occurs that in the last few years the Greens have had a clear strategy of three main points on the party's Facebook page: to share the Greens' messages, pose questions to and discuss with people and share interesting links such as news. The team thinks that same topics sparking off discussion elsewhere make people react also on Facebook. Such topics for the Greens lately have been, to mention a few, tolerance related topics such as the equal marriage law, decisions made on whether or not to enter the government, certain environmental topics such as the climate change and protecting the waters. In general it is the Greens' politics and for instance nuclear energy, animal and human rights that people tend to discuss most. According to the former Web Communication Planner's experience, discussions on Facebook are typically rather critical and matter-of-fact. The criticism occurring there is targeted to both the Greens and to other parties or politicians. Opinions are often a little better grounded than on web discussions in general.

The Green communicators expect Facebook communication to offer interactivity, interesting comments, feedback, quick reactions, up-to-date discussions of high quality and continuous presence since social media is "on" all the time. The Greens want to ask people's opinions in order to participate in social media, make use of the bidirec-

tional communication in information gathering, show they are interested in people's opinions and gain substance for themselves at work. The Communication Team utilizes the content of Facebook discussions in various ways. The team has compiled the feedback given on Facebook for instance during the government negotiations. The feedback has been reported to the team and also to the Greens' leaders as well as any other politician or other person relevant to the topic. According to the former Communications Manager, the Facebook discussions matter more to certain Green politicians, not all of them have the same interest. To the Communication Team following Facebook is very important in case some new topics worth reacting come up. In general, ideas and thoughts are picked up among the discussions to be used in Green politics and communication. Social media, especially Facebook is seen as an excellent means to reach a rather large segment of Green supporters and to follow up the topics that interest that group. The Communication Team reminds, however, that Facebook does not cover the whole target group and one cannot always predict people's reactions in online discussion beforehand.

The team is rather convinced that the communication means of a posting makes a difference - a direct question gathers more comments than a link to a blog or an article or other means to share information. The current Communication Planner argues that the writer and the style of a blog text also make a difference, as well as its topic. When the Greens asked direct questions by applying the crowd sourcing method, they received a lot of comments and were pleased to see so much discussion. Instead, when they post longer texts, they estimate having received fewer comments. What the team emphasizes is again that Facebook only represents a segment that is active online, not all members and potential supporters. Hence, Facebook page's discussions are not statistically exhaustive but may give guiding when making decisions. They consider it functional but limited due to possible exclusivity of Facebook.

The Greens are on Facebook and in social media in general because a large group of people can be reached. By reaching the "-- young, educated and city dwellers --" the Greens can interact with them in several ways, ie "-- discuss with them, gather information, find volunteers and spread their messages --". Facebook is one of the main channels of the Greens' communication and the former Web Communication Planner

supposes that the meaning of social media is likely to grow – be it Facebook or another social network. The current Communication Planner sums it up well: "Social media may at its best support the party and its supporters' relationship in a way that "the nation's" voice is not only heard during the election or at the party conference but also between them."

6.3 The Web Communication Network's discussions

The Web Communication Network (Verkkoviestintäverkosto) consists of laymen and professionals interested in communication, of Green politicians and people supporting the party who cooperate in order to improve the Greens' actions on the web. The Network so far has started sharing relevant information, opinions, experiences and suggestions on the Finns' behaviour on the Internet, where the Green discussion should and does take place and how to summarise the Greens' positive message. The network shares links to discussion chains, news and blogs where the Greens could discuss more actively and where a reaction is needed. A suggestion to form basic counter-arguments to criticism toward the Greens is also made. Instructions for how to react and to whom to report of expressions of anger are asked for. The Green discussion forum is criticized to be hard to find. A suggestion is that a link to it could be on the front page of the Greens' official website.

Facebook, the Green discussion forum and the Greens' official newspaper's (Vihreä lanka) discussion forum are analysed as a forum for public discussion since the Network sees the public Green discussion to be spread too widely. Facebook is primarily an important means of communication but not suitable for all sort of discussions. Since Facebook discussions are shown only to those belonging to each participant's friend circle, not the whole public reaches them. The Green discussion forum's open areas and Vihreä lanka's discussion forum can be used by anyone, which may result in trolls participating in the discussion. It is suggested that interesting discussions from the Green party's and politicians' Facebook pages could be directed to the chosen main forum or fora by linking the preferred discussion area to Facebook.

7 Results

The Greens are present in several social medium and Facebook is a very important one for the party. The Communication Team seems to know their Facebook page's nature well, they have a functioning strategy there and they use it in multiple ways. Nevertheless, its openness and the level of interaction on behalf of the Greens could be slightly improved in order to gain more from the two-way communication of social media. In the following sub-chapters I first compare the Team's expectations of Facebook to my findings and point out matters requiring attention. Secondly I introduce a checklist and draft plan for developing and improving the social media strategy for the Greens and make conclusions on the Web Communication Network's discussion.

7.1 Comparing the Greens' expectations to the findings of Facebook data

Objectives for social media usage are various, as stated in the theoretical part. The Greens have realized Facebook's possibilities very well – they communicate different messages in various ways, they gather feedback and look for matters worth reaction. They post there normally several times a day. Even though they do not have a written strategy, they have determined certain objectives for communication on Facebook and can identify how they use the content of discussions, for instance. In general, the Communication Team seems to estimate well what happens on their Facebook page during a politically meaningful period and how to use the tool efficiently. I discuss my findings and suggest some improvements below.

As the findings of my Facebook analysis indicate, the discussion on the Greens' Facebook page is very much matter-of-fact, as the Communication Team expected. Almost all comments are related to the postings sent by the Greens and concern politics which is exactly what the Greens want to discuss on Facebook. According to my research, the Greens communicate on Facebook by linking to blogs, articles and longer texts as well as asking direct questions and notifying people on the current state of matters, which shows that their strategy of sharing messages, posing questions, discussing with people and sharing interesting links is very well followed. However, my impression is that questions and similar comments requiring some sort of reaction do not always receive

a response neither from the Communication Team nor a Green politician. Sometimes other active members of the Green League luckily speak up. In my opinion this shows that the two-way communication of social media is not taken into account as well as it could and should be. As stated in the theoretical part, people expect interaction in social media.

The Team expects people to be rather critical, which is true. Equally the discussion is rather analytical – positive, neutral and negative discussion is well in balance, which logically provides the Greens with very interesting feedback and opinions from different points of views. The Team thinks the criticism is targeted not only to Greens but also to other parties and politicians, which my analysis confirmed true. 8,4 % of comments included criticizing others, which is a meaningful amount but still, in my opinion, does not disturb the quality discussion too much. Of course part of the criticism is constructive. Moreover, the Team's experience is that people ground their opinions a little better than on web discussions in general. I did not compare Facebook to other web fora but at least on the Facebook page people are likely to ground their opinions and include for examples suggestions and speculations in them. 80 % of comments were at least short comments and 30 % of comments were more complex, pondering ones. Political resistance was less common than I expected, only a few comments were of that type. Therefore I would say that the party's Facebook page is very neat and clean of trolls. Moderating may also influence this positively.

Since discussion on Facebook seems quite balanced between analytical and critical opinions and people ponder and ground their opinions rather often, I think the Greens Communication Team is right to appreciate Facebook as a communication tool, actively use it in different ways for political and communicational purposes and to aim at regularly follow it and gather feedback from people. The Team also acknowledges that not everyone is on Facebook, which I point out in my assessment – my results describe mainly the followers of the Greens' Facebook page who make the effort to comment. Naturally there may be only passive followers, who read or 'Like' but do not leave a comment. However, these people form their opinions and attitudes at least partly based on the discussion and the Greens' actions on Facebook. The potential influenc-

ing power of Facebook for observing followers may therefore be hard to estimate but should not be forgotten, in my opinion.

As the Team expects, crowdsourcing generates most comments and longer postings less. Crowdsourcing and long publications, even though the latter gained least comments seem to create much content in discussion, rather many short comments and pondering. Notifications seem to make people ponder and blogs generate at least plenty of short comments. Comments after articles and long publications may require more attention since they gained most questions. The interactivity of people is rather high, 30 % of comments were referring to someone or someone's comment. The majority of discussion, however, seems to consist of comments posted separately from others contribution. Referring to the example of Wikipedia and the idea that the more people create content together, the better the quality is can be applied here as well. If the people interacted more together, the more developed their ideas, suggestions and opinions on the Greens and related to them might become. The Greens participation in the discussion more actively may influence this and they could try to aim the discussion to a certain direction or would like to make people discuss and co-operate more.

As for the number of comments which is clearly less for any other communication means than crowdsourcing, interaction from the Greens may help. As I mention in the theoretical part, comments the organization makes seems to generate comments from people. Fuzz creates fuzz. In my opinion it could be the Communication Team who was in charge of that or then certain politicians. The politicians, however, are likely to have hands full with their own pages, blogs and such. As pointed out in my discussions with the Team, not all Green politicians value Facebook as much as others. Volunteers possibly could help, too, as they seem to be already doing on Facebook and in the discussion forum. However that does not necessarily give such a professional and official image if people on Facebook are not sure whether a person is expressing his or her personal opinion or speaking for the Greens.

As a conclusion, I would suggest the Greens to make sure to react as often as possible to people's questions and discussions in general. Most of the discussion is of high quality, people know much, assume much and participation from the Team and more im-

portantly Green politicians could make people feel more appreciated and willing to contribute even more than they already do voluntarily. Asking people to directly share their opinion and comment on current matters generated so many comments that there is potential especially in crowdsourcing on Facebook. Of course too much asking may turn against itself. Moreover, the Team tells that feedback from Facebook is gathered and analysed for different purposes and necessarily reported to politicians. Some of them put more emphasis on it than others. There could be a point of growing for those who do not listen to Facebook or social media that much. Not everyone, but many of the Greens' supporters are there and as the Team forecast, Facebook and other social media's importance will grow. As I state in the theoretical part of my thesis, Facebook is still growing in popularity in Finland, over 40 % of Finns below 44 years old are registered into some social network service and over 45 % of Finnish online population is on Facebook.

As the nature of social media is open and interactive, the Greens could also consider opening the wall of their Facebook page to for everyone to comment on. The Team understands that discussion in social media may be hard to predict and naturally opening the wall might at least in the beginning require moderating efforts. It could, however, send a positive message to the page followers, along other actions promoting the two-way communication in the new media. Interaction in social media enhances credibility, commits interest groups and may also increase the influence of the organisation's actions. Exactly what a political party needs.

7.2 Developmental suggestions to social media strategy

The Web Communication Network (Verkkoviestintäverkosto) seems like an excellent idea for developing communication and coordinating volunteers help. Basically through the Network, developing and improving actions in social media is crowdsourced. Nevertheless, the person who founded the Network does not work for the Greens anymore and the discussion area does not seem to be followed actively by the Greens. In my opinion, it shows a need for development in how volunteers help, feedback and contribution are used, reacted to and thanked to. As the Greens is a political party whose resources depend greatly on the result in elections, volunteers aid

supposedly is very important to the party. I think it should be better coordinated and benefited from. The Network has started so many useful and necessary projects - helping the Greens create a list of discussions in social media which need reacting, formulate positive arguments and counter-arguments to improve the Greens' communication, to mention some. The Network has also expressed a will to recruit more people in it, they only require instructions on how to do so. Perhaps a person or persons in charge among the Network could be named to focus on different challenges if it is not possible to coordinate the work by the Communication Team. This would naturally require some coordination from the Team and very clear instructions on communication and behaviour in different fora.

Since the Greens currently do not have a social media strategy, I created a checklist for quick readers and a draft strategy for long-term planning for them based on everything I have studied and analysed in this thesis. Since the focus of my research was on analysing Facebook, the social media strategy is a draft to be filled by the Greens. The checklist is directed more for a quick check-up and serves as a starting point for the Greens Communication Team to assess and develop their actions in social media. It may be used as a quick reminder of main points to be taken into account. The framework for social media strategy may be applied in long-term planning and developing. It helps maintain consistency in communication, share information from a person to another and link communication to the Greens' strategic needs and objectives. Both documents are personalised to the needs of the Greens, based on what I learned of their communication and social media behaviour during the thesis process. The checklist is developed with the help of my findings and the theory I refer to in my thesis. The framework for social media strategy is created combining the theory on social media strategies I discuss in the theoretical part and two traditional communication strategy frameworks published at Biblo.fi. The checklist and the draft strategy are presented below.

Checklist for quick readers may be used on a short-term basis for improving and developing communication in social media.

☐ All social media tools are utilised as they could and should be.

☐ Tools that are not used are left out or given more attention to.

☐ We post often enough on each forum. Fuzz creates fuzz and people are more likely to see our message.

☐ The quality of our postings is as good as our interest groups expect.

☐ Each tool has reached the objectives set for it.

☐ Objectives are measurable and realistic considering our resources.

☐ We act on each forum where our interest groups are active as we should – proactively, reactively or as listeners.

☐ There are enough resources for each tool (people, money, skills).

☐ Public discussion happens where it is public.

☐ The core messages sent in different social media are well determined and linked to our strategy.

☐ Different social media are well connected to each other and people may end up from Facebook to YouTube and from there to the Green discussion forum.

☐ Current research on social media is followed and necessary changes to our strategy and actions are made accordingly.

☐ Crowdsourcing is used in multiple ways and regularly.

☐ People's feedback is being gathered and they are shown it is used and appreciated.

☐ Communication in social media does not take too much time.

☐ People may comment freely and start discussion on each forum. Restrictions are for a reason and do not harm the two-way nature of communication.

☐ Volunteers are given enough instructions and their help and feedback is reacted to and used efficiently.

☐ All important forums, discussion chains and blogs are being followed.

☐ Tacit knowledge between former and new colleagues is shared.

☐ The Greens code of conduct in social media is clear to everyone in charge of communication.

The framework for social media strategy for the Greens of Finland may be used on a long-term basis when planning communication in social media.

1. Which strategic core tasks and goals communication in social media supports
2. Analysing the current state of communication in social media
    a. SWOT analysis (self-evaluation)
    b. Relevant researches and analyses
3. Principles and values
    a. What communication is like and should be like
        i. Style and mode of expression
        ii. Profile picture and user ID
    b. Regulations and laws
    c. How to distinguish private persons and the organization?
4. Interest groups
    a. Which groups exist and how are they clustered (eg primary, secondary, potential, marginal)
    b. Characteristics, current situation and challenges of each group
5. Communication
    a. Strategic core messages (words, stories, themes, topics, visual)
6. Objectives
    a. Long-term
    b. Short-term
7. Assessment
    a. Measuring tools
    b. Monitoring tools
8. Responsibilities
    a. Who is in charge of which tool and area of communication
9. Resources
    a. People and knowledge
    b. Technology (tools, forums)
    c. Finances
10. Complementing guidelines and policies
11. Summary of strategy (available to whom and where, when approved and updated)

8   Discussion

As social media are still rather new fora for communication, there is room for researching it. A political party as active online as the Greens benefits greatly on an outsider's analysis on their recent actions on social media and on Facebook, one of their primary communication tools. Making any sort of research, especially a qualitative one is not easy as I noticed during the process. Making a content analysis on a relative large batch of data takes time and a critical attitude, several double-checks and discussion with other people. Good planning but also flexibility during the process are essential for success in such a research, which I think was the biggest lesson this thesis taught me.

8.1   Reliability and validity

Validity means whether the research has studied what is was supposed to study. Reliability refers to whether the research's findings may be repeated (Tuomi & Sarajärvi 2009, 136). It took time for me to form clear research questions because the scope of my thesis changed some in the beginning. When the final focus of research was agreed on with the Greens, I managed to modify the research questions accordingly. Therefore, I claim that the findings and results of my thesis respond well to my research questions and the validity of my research is good.

Problems of making qualitative research that influence reliability, for instance, that a researched works alone in the field, no data displays, only conclusions are available and naturally, that human judgments are less accurate than statistical ones (Miles & Huberman 1994, 262). Therefore, I tried to ensure the reliability of my research by discussing my thoughts with the Greens communication team and my thesis supervisor. For example, when forming categories I discussed them with the Greens communication team to ensure if I was being logical. The team was a reliable and professional source since its members have a good understanding of the Greens' Facebook page's contents having followed it for a longer period than I have. Moreover, when reporting my findings, I created tables and figures as well as gave examples of comments, for instance, in order to help the reader to see as much of my data as possible. In order to make realistic judgments, I used also quantitative methods in my research in addition to qualitative. As a conclusion, I believe my research is reliable.

8.2 Further research topics

Even though the Greens make their own political assessment on topics in Facebook discussions, it would be interesting to continue such an analysis I did to include topics, their relations to comment types and communication means. In that case, the data should probably be larger to be double-checked in comparison to another batch of data. This is unfortunately not possible in a Bachelor's thesis of this kind although a qualitative research requires it.

In my opinion, it would also be useful for a student and the Greens to actually make a whole social media strategy including all tools they utilize and could start utilizing. Assessing all other social media tools the Greens currently use could be included in that research in order to see whether they all are being used in full capacity. For instance, the current Communication Planner did not know the Greens have a Flickr account which has mainly been used by the previous Web Communication Planner. The fact that people in charge at the Greens' office change rather often probably causes much of experience, plans and tacit knowledge to disappear. Therefore gathering all this somewhere would be excellent. Communication professionals having worked for the Greens during the last 5 to 10 years, for example, could be interviewed in order to see the development as a long-term process.

8.3 Assessment

My thesis topic is very current since the Greens have actively used social media for political and communicational purposes during last year's Parliamentary Elections and this year's Presidential Elections. The party also aims to be active on Facebook and in social media between elections - therefore post-electoral period is an excellent focus for a research. The more popular social media and Facebook grow, the more they are analysed and strategies for social media are planned as I point out in the theoretical part of my thesis by referring to various sources. As for sources, I used literature both Finnish and international, articles online, blogs, statistics, researches, the experience of the Greens Communication Team and the Web Communication Network. I think I compared and combined different sources very well always tried to find the newest ones as well as referred to both Finnish and international information.

As my analysis is mainly qualitative, it does not aim to making statistical generalizations but rather focus on a phenomenon. Therefore, I think a politically important period, when the Greens communicate actively is an excellent time for a research. The idea for it also was the wish from the Commissioning Party, from professionals in the field of communication. Analysing an active period on Facebook, in my opinion, gives guidelines and estimates on what discussion and communication on Facebook is and how the Greens apply it in a demanding situation.

To assess the analysis on the Facebook data, distinguishing comment types was useful in analyzing the tone of comments and the interactivity of people. The comment types generated much interesting information and a framework to be used by the Greens. Nevertheless, the analyzing process is rather time-consuming, which is why it might be complicated for the Greens to find the time for applying the framework as I did. However, another researched may apply it later if the Greens notice a substantial change in communication on their Facebook page or wish to analyse another Facebook page. The tool as such is quite limited to Facebook as the comment types were formed based on the contents of the discussions. In my opinion, however, it could be customized for other fora of communication in social media.

For giving improvement suggestions for the social media strategy, the comment types and analyzing the tone of discussion were indirectly beneficial because they helped gain information on the Greens' Facebook page followers and assess the current status and different qualities of the party's Facebook page and people participating in discussion there. As such, I consider the analysis a little too detailed for directly helping in developing a social media strategy. Facebook is an important forum for communication for the Greens, therefore an essential part of the social media strategy but not the only one. If the emphasis had been more on developing a strategy, all tools should have been assessed equally or according to their importance to the Greens.

As for planning and time management, I did not finish my thesis as quickly as I had planned. This was because it took more time to determine the scope of my thesis than I thought. I also could not focus on the thesis as much as I thought when I had my last

courses to follow. How time-consuming and also complicated making the content analysis on my Facebook data was surprised me, too. If I improved something in my work, I would outline the amount of data more strictly and estimate my personal limits better in order to follow a schedule. Moreover, the Greens did not set any deadline for my work and it was possible for me to graduate in the spring.

The thesis process taught me enormously on social media, communication, project management, conducting qualitative and quantitative research as well as assessing and developing communication. I also noticed the Greens Communication Team found my work interesting and useful based on their comments during the project. Moreover, my thesis supervisor and professor of organizational communication invited me to present my Facebook analysis to a class in HAAGA-HELIA. As I read through my thesis, memo and other notes and make changes and corrections, I notice how much my understanding of the topic has become more profound, critical and even more open for continuous learning and development. Social media changes constantly but now I know how and where to start, when jumping in it.

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Attachments

Attachment 1. Summary of postings on the Greens' Facebook page

Date (number of posting)	Communication means	Posting	Comments	Likes
2 May (1)	Long publication	"The Greens have responded to the government negotiator: --" Link to a blog entry "The Green party representation and the party delegation's responses to the government negotiator on 2 May 2011" and the responses at vihreat.fi.	2	21
2 May (2)	Link to an article	"In the Greens' opinion the next government must enact a national climate law, widen the forest conservation areas, increase the basic social security by at least 100 € per month, decrease income disparities, enact an equal marriage law, promote equality and complete the reform of electoral law started by the previous government." Link to an article "The Greens are hoping the new government for a new climate law and increasing the refugee quota" at vihrealanka.fi.	14	44
3 May (3)	Long publication	Link to a Facebook article "Our responses to the government negotiator" and to the responses published also on May 2.	13	16

4 May (4)	Link to a blog	"Anni Sinnemäki and Ville Niinistö about the Portugal-decision: The future government has to take responsibility." Link to a blog entry "About supporting Portugal" where the Greens defend themselves against a claim in the media that the Greens would have changed their opinion on stabilizing the European economy after the elections.	6	52
4 May (5)	Link to a blog	Facebook article "About supporting Portugal" written by Anni Sinnemäki and Ville Niinistö, published also on May 4 as a blog entry at www.vihreat.fi.	26	34
9 May (6)	Long publication	Facebook article "The Green party representation and the green party delegation's response to the government negotiator's additional questions." and to the responses published also on May 2 and 3.	0	1
12 May (7)	Crowd sourcing	"A while ago the True Finns announced to be in the opposition. What do you think the Greens should do now?"	234	68
14 May (8)	Link to a blog	"Anni Sinnemäki sums up the Greens' opinion on participating in the government negotiations in her blog. Tomorrow a member poll will be conducted concerning the topic." Link to a blog entry "About the government negotiations" written by Anni Sinnemäki at www.vihreat.fi.	16	42
14 May (9)	Link to a blog	Facebook article "About the government negotiations" written by Anni Sinnemäki, published also on 14 May as a blog entry at www.vihreat.fi.	16	52

14 May (10)	Link to an article	"We have given the government negotiator Katainen a bunch of conditions that must be fulfilled in case Katainen wants the Greens to enter the government." Link to an article "The Greens will join the government negotiations only on strict conditions" at hs.fi.	13	59
14 May (11)	Notification	"We have sent all our members a poll, in which we inquire our members' views on the government responsibility as well as on what should be included in the government program. If you have paid your member fee and haven't received the poll, please email us at verkkomedia@vihreat.fi. (Note: First check out your spam emails!)"	18	52
18 May (12)	Link to a blog	"Anni: "The Greens have set strict conditions on participating the negotiations: the government will not grant permissions of principle for new nuclear plants, it raises the level of climate protection by enacting for instance a climate law, decreasing the poverty will be undertaken by increasing the basic social security by at least 100 €, among other means. A positive response to these conditions was received from the government negotiator, and we can start negotiating over our other goals." Link to a blog entry "About the positions in the government negotiations" written by Anni Sinnemäki at www.vihreat.fi.	22	115

26 May (13)	Link to a blog	Facebook article "About the positions in the government negotiations" written by Anni Sinnemäki, published also on 18 May as a blog entry at www.vihreat.fi.	8	8
1 June (14)	Link to a blog	"- The Greens think it still could have been possible to find a solution in the negotiations gone on hold that would have decreased income disparities and realized fair fiscal policies, Anni Sinnemäki comments on the government negotiations in her Green blog." Link to a blog entry "We need a government decreasing income disparities" at www.vihreat.fi.	31	39
2 June (15)	Link to a blog	Important for the Greens is to change the fiscal system as a whole into a direction decreasing income disparities and poverty, Oras writes in his blog." Link to a blog entry "A fair tax solution still possible in the negotiations" at www.orastynkkynen.fi.	6	17
6 June (16)	Notification	"The Green party representation and the party delegation's joint meeting is about to start in Helsinki. Continuation in the government negotiations is on the agenda."	11	18
6 June (17)	Link to an article	"The Greens' party representation and the party delegation's joint meeting stated after voting that the Greens have neither the will nor the preconditions to take part in the government based on the National Coalition Party and the Centre Party. Further information later on!" Link to an	15	192

		article "The Greens will not enter the bourgeois government" at www.vihrealanka.fi.		
6 June (18)	Link to a blog	"- We did not believe that after having lost in the election we would succeed with the previous government's fundament in promoting nature protection and reforming agriculture policy, defensive forces and municipal structure, argues Anni Sinnemäki for the party representation and delegation's decision not to take part in the negotiations build on the old government's fundament." Link to a blog entry "No continuation to the old fundament" at www.vihreat.fi.	16	77
6 June (19)	Link to a blog	"Also Ville Niinistö leading the party representation comments on the party delegation and party representation's decision in his blog: - I am content with the joint meeting's solution because I considered the success of the government fundament unlikely, Niinistö writes." Link to a blog entry "105 doesn't fly" at www.villeniinisto.fi.	8	29
10 June (20)	Link to a blog	"We will enter the new negotiation round with 6 parties with the same goals as the first time, says Anni Sinnemäki. The party representation will share their feelings about the situation tomorrow." Link to a blog entry "About the second round of government negotiations" at www.vihreat.fi.	6	19

17 June (21)	Notifi-cation	"Information session on the government negotiations in live on TV2 at 20 o'clock. The session can be followed also on YLE's website and on Radio Suomi." Link to www.yle.fi.	1	9
17 June (22)	Long publica-tion	"The Greens' negotiating group's esti-mate on the government program: A brave government program decreases the income disparities and invests in the fu-ture" Link to a long blog entry at www.vihreat.fi.	13	56
17 June (23)	Crowd sourcing	"What do you think of the government programme – is it green enough? Com-ment, discuss, ask and contradict! The viewpoints are discussed on Monday from 12 onwards when the Greens will decide whether we enter the government or not.--" Link to the government pro-gramme.	64	17
18 June (24)	Link to an arti-cle	"Unfortunately the sex neutral marriage law could not be included in the govern-ment programme – meaning that the item is not mentioned in the programme. This makes it possible to promote the law through the Parliament's ititiative. Therefore: we shall propose the sex neu-tral marriage law, to which we are gather-ing the Parliament's support. Let's start lobbying MPs for the cause!" Link to an article "The Greens will propose the sex neutral marriage law" at www.hs.fi.	24	238

19 June (25)	Link to a blog	"- For the first time the climate law is included in the programme and the proposal of it will be drafted by the Minister of the Environment, Oras lists the green wins for environment of the government programme. Read Oras' evaluation in the Green blog about how the government programme looks like for climate, energy solutions, transportation, agriculture and foresty." Link to a blog entry "The climate law is doing progress, new nuclear plants have been knocked out" at vihreat.fi.	5	77
20 June (26)	Link to a blog	"The Greens will decide on entering the government today at the party representation and the party delegation's joint meeting starting around 12 am. Before that on should to read the fresh vice chairperson Timo Juurikkala's thoughts on the environmental policies of the government programme: - Probably the most important item in the government programme states that the production of peat be directed to drained bogs or bogs having lost their natural value, Timo writes in his Green blog." Link to a blog entry "New touch in the environmental politics" at www.vihreat.fi.	8	22

20 June (27)	Notifi-cation	"The Greens' party representation and the party delegation are having a meeting about entering the government. Also the choices for ministers are on the agenda."	7	23
20 June (28)	Notifi-cation	"The party representation and the party delegation have spoken: the Greens will enter the government by 43 votes to 5."	11	97
27 June (29)	Long publica-tion	"- The Greens think it is important that the voters know what kind of politics the parties promote in the negotiations. That is why we want to publish the Greens' goals for the government programme, which we have agreed on together with the party representation and party delega-tion when entering the negotiations, Ville writes in his Green blog." Link to a long blog entry "About the government pro-gramme" at www.vihreat.fi.	8	44

Attachment 2. Email interviews' questions

1. What do the Greens want to talk about on the party's Facebook page?
2. What topics do you expect to spark off discussion on the party's Facebook page?
3. What do you expect from communication on Facebook?
4. In what different ways do you utilize the content of the discussions held on the party's Facebook page?
5. What sort of means of communication do you consider Facebook to be?
6. What is a typical discussion like on the Greens' Facebook page?
7. Does the Greens' way of approach influence the discussion? (direct question, linking to a blog etc.)
8. What do you think of crowd sourcing as a method and its functionality on Facebook?
9. Why are the Greens on Facebook?
10. Is Facebook an important arena of communication for the Greens?

Attachment 3. Excel sheet for the analysis on Facebook data