

**ALL ROADS LEAD THROUGH BRUSSELS?
CAREER AMBITION AND THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT**

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ABSTRACT: My dissertation presents an institutional theory for career behavior in the European Parliament. By focusing on the careers of members of the European Parliament, the study presents a rigorous analysis of the powerful multinational legislature from within—problematizing the link between institutional change and individual action, as evidenced in the changing career paths taken by MEPs.

I address variation in the dependent variable of the dissertation—MEP career behavior—in three different ways: (1) the incidence of MEPs who develop extended careers at the European level, (2) the incidence of MEPs who use their time in the EP in order to promote a broader career path, and (3) the strategies used by MEPs to advance internally within the EP's unique committee system.

The dissertation uses a major new source of quantitative data collected on the personal and professional backgrounds of all MEPs, 1979-2009. It also relies on extensive qualitative data, taken from over fifty interviews with legislators and other elites in Belgium, France, Germany, Luxembourg, and Poland. The dissertation has implications for the nexus of institutional change and the behavior of political elite, broadly, as well as the study of representative democracy in the EU, specifically. It should be seen as an important contribution to the fields of legislative studies, political sociology, and party politics.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES	ix
LIST OF FIGURES	x
PREFACE.....	xi
1.0 CAREER AMBITION IN THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT	1
1.1 THE IMPORTANCE OF THE QUESTION.....	1
1.1.1 Why Study the European Parliament?.....	2
1.1.2 Careers as endogenous indicators of institutional change	3
1.2 CAREERS AS INSTITUTIONS	5
1.3 THE ARGUMENT IN BRIEF	9
1.4 OUTLINE OF THE DISSERTATION	12
2.0 AN INSTITUTIONAL THEORY FOR MEP CAREER BEHAVIOR	15
2.1 INSTITUTIONAL CHANGE AND INDIVIDUAL ACTION.....	16
2.1.1 Careers as Institutions.....	17
2.1.2 How institutions change	20
2.1.3 A theoretical view for MEP career behavior	22
2.2 LEGISLATIVE PROFESSIONALISM AND CAREER AMBITION.....	23
2.3 PARTIES AS GATEKEEPERS ACROSS MULTIPLE LEVELS OF GOVERNMENT	31
2.3.1 Candidate selection and recruitment.....	32
2.3.2 Party organization across multiple levels of government.....	34
2.4 EXPERIENCE AND EDUCATION: INTERNAL ADVANCEMENT IN THE EP	37

2.4.1	Individual influence within the EP	38
2.4.2	Rapporteurship allocation and individual control.....	39
2.4.3	The Rapporteur as technician and chief negotiator	41
2.5	HYPOTHESES	43
2.6	RESEARCH DESIGN: QUANTITATIVE AND QUALITATIVE APPLICATIONS	46
3.0	PROFESSIONALIZATION, POWER, AND AMBITION	49
3.1	LEGISLATIVE POWER AND INSTITUTIONAL PROFESSIONALIZATION	51
3.1.1	Power and Prestige	52
3.1.2	Institutional capacity and professionalization	54
3.1.3	Changing legislators, changing roles.....	60
3.1.4	Hypotheses	61
3.2	NEW QUESTIONS, NEW DATA.....	62
3.3	TESTING THE PROFESSIONALIZATION AND POWER HYPOTHESES	64
3.3.1	Variables.....	66
3.3.2	Constructing the Model	68
3.3.3	Results and Analysis.....	70
3.4	TOWARDS A BROADER VIEW OF MEP CAREER ADVANCEMENT	73
4.0	FEDERALISM AND PARTY GATEKEEPING.....	76
4.1	FEDERALISM, DECENTRALIZATION, AND THE NATIONAL PARTIES	78
4.1.1	Federalism and decentralization	78
4.1.2	Connecting subnational and supranational forms of representation.....	81
4.1.3	Political parties and multi-level elections.....	82
4.2	A MULTI-LEVEL THEORY FOR MEP CAREER PATHS	84
4.2.1	Federalism and career specialists.....	84

4.2.2	Decentralization and the centripetal hypothesis	87
4.2.3	Hypotheses and additional explanations.....	89
4.3	TESTING THE EFFECT OF FEDERALISM AND DECENTRALIZATION.....	90
4.3.1	Data and coding choices.....	91
4.3.2	Results and analysis.....	94
4.3.3	Career paths across multiple levels.....	100
4.4	CONCLUSION.....	104
5.0	RAPPORTEUR SELECTION AND INTERNAL ADVANCEMENT	106
5.1	THE PROCESS OF COMMITTEE REPORT ALLOCATION	107
5.1.1	Rapporteurs as ideological moderates	108
5.1.2	Timing and importance of committee reports	110
5.2	A THEORY OF EDUCATION AND EXPERIENCE.....	111
5.2.1	Specialization and complexity in the European Parliament	113
5.2.2	Education and expertise.....	114
5.2.3	Seniority and institutional memory	117
5.2.4	Hypotheses and alternate explanations.....	119
5.3	TESTING THE EFFECT OF EDUCATION AND SENIORITY	120
5.3.1	Variables and coding	120
5.3.2	The Data	122
5.3.3	Modeling Choices.....	124
5.4	RESULTS AND ANALYSIS.....	125
5.4.1	The Importance of co-decision	128
5.4.2	Additional explanations.....	134
5.4.3	Robustness at the committee level.....	138
5.5	CONCLUSION.....	142

6.0 ILLUSTRATIONS IN FRANCE, GERMANY, AND POLAND	146
6.1 CASE SELECTION	147
6.1.1 Major findings	149
6.2 FRANCE: PARIS, PARTIES, AND PRESTIGE.....	150
6.2.1 Power and Professionalization (H1 & H2).....	151
6.2.2 ‘Partitocrazia’ à la française? (H3).....	154
6.2.3 Why High turnover hurts the French (H4 – H6).....	158
6.3 GERMANY: JUST ANOTHER DAY AT THE OFFICE?	160
6.3.1 High professionalization, low turnover (H1 & H2).....	160
6.3.2 All Politics is local? Or, how German MEPs circumvent Berlin (H3).....	163
6.3.3 With Seniority comes power (H4 – H6).....	166
6.4 POLAND: A HINT OF WHAT’S TO COME?	167
6.4.1 Professionalization and matters of scale (H2)	167
6.4.2 Strong parties or confused MEPs? (H4 & H5)	170
6.5 CONCLUSION.....	174
7.0 TOWARDS A BROADER APPRECIATION FOR POLITICAL CAREERS	176
7.1 REVIEW OF MAJOR FINDINGS	176
7.2 KEY CONTRIBUTIONS OF THE STUDY.....	180
7.3 FUTURE LINES OF INQUIRY	181
HISTORICAL PARTY GROUPS BY PARTY FAMILY	184
NEW MEMBER STATES ADDED TO EP, BY WAVE	185
BIBLIOGRAPHY.....	186

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1. Descriptive Statistics (Chapter Three models)	66
Table 2. The Effect of Professionalization and Power on Reelection Seeking in the EP.....	70
Table 3. Select Federalism and Decentralization Scores, 2009	92
Table 4. Descriptive Statistics (Chapter Four models)	94
Table 5. The Effect of Federalism and Decentralization on MEP Careers.....	95
Table 6. MEP Career Outcomes Instead of Seeking Reelection to the EP	101
Table 7. MEP Career Outcomes Instead of Seeking National MP Election.....	103
Table 8. Average Number of Committee Reports per Term	122
Table 9. Highest Degree Completed (% MEPs)	123
Table 10. Descriptive Statistics (Chapter Five Models)	124
Table 11. The Effect of Education and Seniority on Report Allocation (cross-sectional)	126
Table 12. The Effect of Education and Seniority on Report Allocation (pooled)	129
Table 13. Report Allocation by Education, Political Group, and Country of Origin (%)	139
Table 14. Report Allocation by Committee, 2004-2009 (%).....	140
Table 15. Hypotheses Illustrated in France, Germany, and Poland.....	147
Table 16. Incumbency Rates in Select French and German Elections, 1979-2009	152
Table 17. Historical Party Groups by Party Family (EP abbreviations).....	184
Table 18. New Member States added to EP, by wave	185

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1. Three Ideal Paths for Multi-Level Careers in the European Parliament	7
Figure 2. MEP Salaries by Country, 1979-2009.....	56
Figure 3. MEP Size and Legislative Productivity, 1979-2009	59
Figure 4. The Conditional Effect of Time on EP Reelection Seeking.....	71
Figure 5. The Conditional Effect of Salary on EP Reelection Seeking	72
Figure 6. The Interplay between National and EU Politics	98
Figure 7. The Conditional Effect of Time on Committee Report Allocation.....	131
Figure 8. The Conditional Effect of Seniority of Report Allocation	132
Figure 9. The Effect of Time and Salary on Ambition (French MEPs)	153
Figure 10. MEP Ambition over Time (French MEPs)	157
Figure 11. Seniority and Committee Report Allocation	159
Figure 12. The Effect of Time and Salary on Ambition (German MEPs).....	162
Figure 13. MEP Ambition over Time (German MEPs).....	165
Figure 14. The Conditional Effect of Time on EP Reelection Seeking.....	168
Figure 15. Jerzy Buzek boards a Warsaw-bound jet, to applause	172

PREFACE

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1.0 CAREER AMBITION IN THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

Institutions change constantly. New sets of rules are adopted at work, innovative ideas come to the forefront of popular discourse, and circumstances beyond our control force us to modify standard operating procedures in our private lives. But, how do we gauge our reaction to these changes? What footprints are left in evidence of the course of institutional evolution? And if institutional change can be explained, can it also be measured? This dissertation addresses such questions within the context of the European Parliament (EP). In doing so, it examines the development of the EP into a powerful legislative institution and assesses the impact of these changes on the careers of its membership. By focusing on the changing career paths of members of the European Parliament (MEPs), I propose that we can better understand the symbiotic relationship between institutional change and individual behavior.

1.1 THE IMPORTANCE OF THE QUESTION

What is to be gained by this inquiry? The European Union and its institutions have long been a popular venue for problematizing institutional change. Scholars of rational choice, historical institutional, and sociology have all found more than ample evidence of the rise and practice of political institutions within the EU (Hall and Taylor 1996; Kreppel 2002; Streeck and Thelen 2005; Tsebelis 2002). Yet, few acknowledge the leverage to be gained by combining these

approaches. The development of the European Parliament is undeniably the product of the EU's history; so too is it the product of visionary individuals, such as Jean Monnet or Altiero Spinelli. Yet, the choice to work as an MEP is a professional one and career development is perhaps the most rational of all individual calculations. Thus, the EP is the perfect laboratory to examine the multiple facets of institutional change.

1.1.1 Why Study the European Parliament?

The European Parliament was initially created following the 1957 Treaty of Rome to serve as an unelected advisory board to the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC). Appointed from national parliaments of the founding six ECSC member states, delegates to the General Assembly—as it was then known—were responsible for providing collective oversight for the common use and export of raw materials taken from the multinational Ruhr Valley region. As the ECSC developed into a broadly powerful European Union, expanding its membership, growing first to include a customs union and then later a single market, and creating a common currency, so too did the fledging General Assembly develop into a popularly elected legislature.

Today, the EP contains nearly 800 deputies, each elected from across the twenty-seven member states of the EU. MEPs are elected to national delegations, whose size is based roughly on member state population size. National governments retain the right to the ground rules for these elections, although elections must be carried out on the basis of proportional representation. Once elected to the EP, members sit not with their national parties, but with a set of highly developed transnational party groups. Formed along common ideological lines, these groups have changed somewhat over time, but are meant to represent the major party families of Europe: Christian democrats, national conservatives, social democrats, free-market liberals,

green movements, communists, and Euroskeptics. Party groups serve as both the main internal administrative divisions, as well as the EP's voting blocs. To ensure that party groups are formed on an ideological and not a national basis, the EP requires groups to have members from multiple national backgrounds.

This brief overview distinguishes the EP as a venue for the study of institutional change and individual career behavior that is rich in its variation. The EP contains hundreds of national political parties from dozens of national backgrounds, working together to represent prevalent societal differences before an increasingly powerful parliament. The EP is a highly unique arena for academic inquiry, to be sure, but its study also contains a number of useful implications for scholars whose main interest extends beyond the purview of EU studies.

A central goal of this dissertation is to examine the impact of institutional changes in the EP on MEP career behavior in such a way that touches upon general questions from a variety of research areas: institutional change, legislative studies, federalism, political party organization, and policymaking. The EP and the careers of its membership are an important case for consideration, particularly in light of the legislature's rich diversity in each of these areas. Thus, the dissertation is not the story of just one legislature, but a story of the thousands of individuals who have comprised it since its creation.

1.1.2 Careers as endogenous indicators of institutional change

In a recent special issue of *Regional & Federal Studies*, Borchert and Stolz (2011) discuss growing scholarly interest in political careers within multi-level systems and advocate a renewed focus on the pathways taken by politicians, themselves, as opposed to a continued interest in the individual jobs that they hold. In doing so, they criticize political scientists who limit their unit of

analysis to specific institutions in order to explain change—particularly, the national legislature—as opposed to studying how the careers of those working in such institutions connect them with others. While the articles in the volume do not consider the EP directly, we might imagine that the European Parliament lends an ideal backdrop for such a study of political careers.

Directly elected since 1979, the EP is a bulwark of representative legitimacy within the European Union (EU) and the largest directly elected legislature in the democratic world. The EP has substantially increased its power under subsequent EU treaty reforms and now stands on even footing with the Council of Ministers with regards to the passage of EU legislation in many subject areas. As veteran EP scholar Amie Kreppel (2011) suggests, the EP has evolved into a sort of ‘lower house’ for the inter-institutional EU policy-making process. While institutional developments in the EP are now well documented by the scholarly literature, it remains less clear how such changes affect those serving in the institution itself.

Indeed, if we are to take an interest in how institutions change, then we ought to also be looking at whom these changes affect. In the realm of legislative studies, legislators, themselves, are the closest that we can get to observe the pulse of an institution. Their careers are important to consider, as they form a link between the various professions where they have served. MEPs come from a variety of backgrounds, ranging from former ministers to novice campaign staff, and go on to serve as heads of government, CEOs in the private sector, or simply to retire. Their careers are not only dynamic indicators of the EP’s impact on professional behavior, but also demonstrate the extent to which MEPs exact change within the EP, in return.

Accordingly, this dissertation should be of major interest to all scholars whose work touches upon political careers. It has wide-ranging applications to the study of institutional

change, the European Parliament particularly, and the course of representative democracy in the European Union. MEP careers depend not only on individual ambition, but also on the parties and voters they represent. Thus, the puzzle of MEP careers is also of direct interest to scholars of legislatures, political parties, and elections. By focusing the unit of analysis on the careers of politicians, themselves, we can take a critical eye to the numerous political phenomena that they connect and are affected by.

1.2 CAREERS AS INSTITUTIONS

The puzzle examined by this dissertation is how institutional variation found in the EP interacts with the professional behavior of its membership. Beyond the more obvious implications for legislative scholars, political sociologists, and devotees of the European integration literature, an examination of political careers and the institutions that they connect also touches upon the foundational theories of institutions themselves. We often consider career ambition to be among the most rational of an individual's impulses—some take new jobs for the pay increase or added prestige, while others bide their time in an undesirable post, waiting for an ideal time to search elsewhere. Yet, the most common critique of rational choice theories is its inability to explain where these preferences come from and how they change. A combined focus on the EP's development and the ambitions of its membership is the ideal venue to examine the source and change of professional preference formation.

Throughout the dissertation, I refer to career paths as institutions. By this, I do not mean to imply that careers come with prescribed rules of procedure, as in a legislature, or with the precise legalese of a national constitution. Rather, I view career paths, particularly in political

settings, as containing a number of the same attributes as these more formal institutions. Politicians, as in any career, learn a set of more or less formal ‘rules of the game’ (to paraphrase Douglas North), which they deploy in order to climb the ranks of elected office. I discuss my view of career paths as institutions in more detail in Chapter Two.

The analysis of career paths in multi-level systems such as the EU can reveal either strict hierarchies of advancement, non-overlapping sets of office with little interchange, or present multiple gateways for entry at various levels of government (Borchert 2011). The pathways themselves offer the best evidence for the relative importance and functioning of each institution within these systems. In this way, the institutions matter, but they are saved from being analyzed as if they operated in a vacuum. Within the context of the EP, MEP career behavior may reveal the varying ‘faces’ of the institution: the steppingstone parliament, the retirement home, the prime arena for EU policy, and so forth. I propose three such ‘ideal’ paths for careers within the multi-level EU in Figure 1.

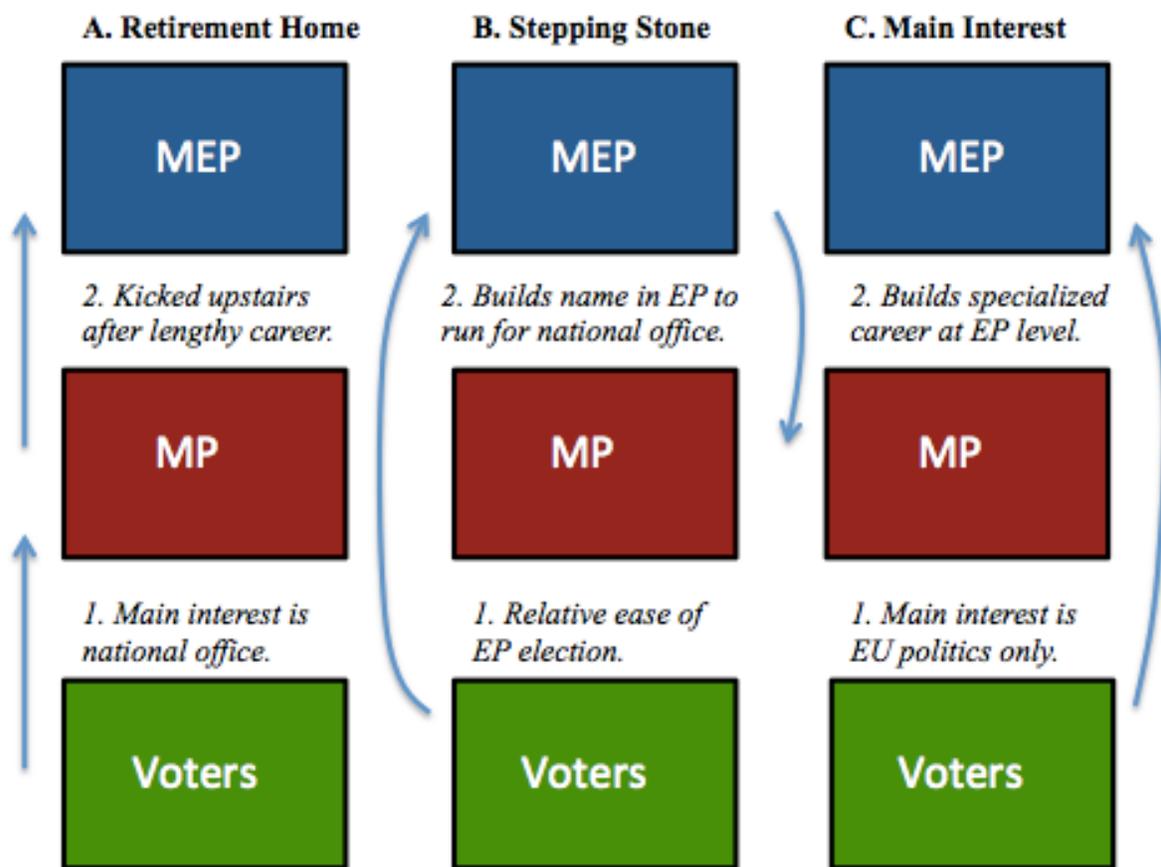


Figure 1. Three Ideal Paths for Multi-Level Careers in the European Parliament

The left column in Figure 1 illustrates the usage of the EP as a sort of prolonged exit from active political life. Having served in national government for the bulk of his career, the MEP retiree is sent to Strasbourg to drink coffee with analogues from other European countries, biding time on the pension clock and musing about matters of continental importance as an avocation. However popular (and even academic) this conception of the typical MEP career may be, the remaining two professional paths shown in Figure 1 are, in fact, more likely to be found in today's EP. In fact, the evidence from the project suggests that are far more likely to either enter the European political stage *before* an extended career in national politics or to bypass national

office altogether, in favor of lengthy career at the EU level. The empirical goal of the dissertation, naturally, is to tease out which MEPs are taking which of these pathways and under what conditions.

Variation in the careers of its legislators can also reveal the EP's relative position in the hierarchy of other European political offices. If career time in the EP level is shorter than at the national level, then it is not necessarily becoming a "more important" legislative body. Conversely, if a growing number of politicians develop entire professional lives within the EP, over multiple terms of office, then the EP might be increasing in its importance. Such a finding would not only be important for those concerned with the EU's democratic deficit—indeed, if the only elected body in the EU is of minimal importance to voters and politicians, then democracy in the EU may be in trouble—but also for those with an interest in the party systems that direct the broader careers of MEPs, themselves.

The EP's relation to national parliaments is also important to party politics scholars. In the multi-level European system, national political parties serve as principal gatekeepers for candidate selection and nomination to elected careers at both the national and European levels. When selecting ideal candidates, parties are forced to consider the EP's function and select appropriate candidates for that venue. An examination of political careers between these two legislative bodies can tell us a number of things—not just about the relative position of two legislatures, but also about the inner-workings of political parties themselves. If MEPs look different from national members of parliament (simply referred to as MPs, hereafter) in one country, but not in another, this may serve as a proxy for the parties' respective views of the institution. Variation in the national electoral laws and candidate selection processes used in the EP allows us to explore such propositions.

Finally, the careers of MEPs impact the continued development of the legislature itself. Returning to theories of institutional development, we see that career variation is not just an endogenous indicator of when a legislature is becoming more prestigious, or increasingly specialized, but can also impact the legislature's future development. High rates of member turnover and transience can affect a legislature's institutional memory, and thus performance, while uneven rates of prolonged careerism from specific national or political backgrounds can concentrate power in the hands of a few. In this way, the 'feedback loop' between the legislature and the careers of its legislators is likely to vary in ways that are important for the EP's continued development.

1.3 THE ARGUMENT IN BRIEF

My dissertation advances a theory for the interplay between institutional development and professional behavior in three novel ways. First, I argue that as the EP became a more attractive place of work—increasing in its legislative powers, developing an internally complex system worthy of substantial professional attention, and appropriately compensating members for the unique demands of supranational parliamentary service—the incidence of MEPs to develop lengthier careers at the EP level increased accordingly. Although this theory considers previous discussions of legislative institutionalization and professionalization (i.e., Polsby 1968; Squire 1992), as well as age-old evaluations of political ambition (i.e., Schlesinger 1966), it also relies upon an appreciation for the unique roles and capabilities of the EP.

Second, I posit a theory of party management for MEP careers across multiple levels of office, in order to account for the role of political parties as gatekeepers for both European and

national legislatures. I argue that parties from more federalized countries within the EU are more accustomed to dealing with candidate selection and nomination across multiple levels of government and are therefore more likely to draw qualitative differences between MEPs and MPs. Thus, we might expect MEPs from federal countries to specialize at the European level and thus their EP delegations to have less turnover than their unitary counterparts.

This line of argument contributes to the literature not only on candidate selection and nomination, but also on political parties as organizations and their roles within the legislature (i.e., Cox and McCubbins 2005; Norris 1997; Panebianco 1988). We might expect that parties who ‘specialize’ their politicians across multiple levels of government are less likely to anticipate movement between these levels. Thus, MEPs who view their role as being ‘in Europe’ are less likely to view the office in relation to other elected positions, whereas MEPs who are less wed to their specific function within and the EU are probably more aware of a ‘second order’ perception of the EP will thus try and move elsewhere.

Naturally, those who treat the EP as a transient stage in a diverse career are also less likely to become involved in its inner workings. Thus, career behavior also affects the ways in which the EP continues to develop its internal distribution of power. I therefore argue third and finally that careerist MEPs are more likely to specialize within the institution, occupying important internal leadership positions and serving as policymaking heavyweights in a way that would not be possible for one-term members with an eye for a different job. The institutional development of the EP clearly impacts the incidence of such careerism, as the increasing importance of the legislature vis-à-vis other EU and national policymaking bodies further encourages politicians to build careers at the EP level and specialize in its policy development.

By exploring the endogenous nature of career advancement and institutional development, my dissertation proposes a number of expectations that can help to further an understanding of legislator behavior. The literature on career paths expects career behavior to change in accordance with a job's *attractiveness*, *availability*, and *accessibility* (Borchert & Stolz 2011). However, the literature has remained mostly silent on predicted professional outcomes in one of the world's largest and most institutionally complex parliaments. It is possible that the more attractive the EP can present itself as a place of employment, the more likely we are to notice careerism among MEPs. Further, the more available seats that national political parties make for politicians with a specific interest in EU affairs, the less turnover with national parliaments we should expect to see. And those MEPs with longer careers within the institution are more likely to have access to its inner-workings and thus greater influence the course of its further development.

However, supporting these propositions with empirical evidence implies grappling with certain theoretical and methodological challenges well beyond the scope of extant scholarship. Whereas existing work on career paths has focused mostly upon professional levels *within* a given country, the nature of the European Parliament requires us to consider the political and institutional variations of twenty-seven national political systems, each relating in a different way to the supranational parliament. While scholars have examined the development of the EP, or the relationship between candidate recruitment and electoral success in the EP, or even the internal balance of power within the EP, none have attempted to integrate all three. A major aim of this dissertation is therefore meant to assemble the growing body of research on the EP under the common roof of political careers, as well as to create a standard approach for the empirical evaluation of these claims.

1.4 OUTLINE OF THE DISSERTATION

In this introductory chapter, I have presented my general research question, discussed its importance, as well as provided a brief overview of my theory. In Chapter Two, I provide a more complete theoretical background for my theory of institutional change and career behavior. I also propose a set of testable hypotheses that are in line with my theory of MEP career behavior and discuss a mixed method research design for testing these assertions.

Chapter Three introduces a significant source of new data for EP research, containing information on each and every MEP elected to the EP, 1979-2009. I use this data in order to test my theory for EP influence on career advancement via a series of multi-level regressions that demonstrate the EP's increasingly 'desirable' nature—as it developed internally and increased in its external power—and the corresponding positive effect on careerism among MEPs. This careerist streak demonstrates an increase in reelection seeking to the EP and a decline in its usage as a steppingstone or retirement home, as previously illustrated in Figure 1.

Chapter Four considers the changing role of the national political parties as gatekeepers for both national and European legislatures. In doing so, I trace variation in MEP behavior in relation to national parties and the organization of their states of origin. I expect that parties that are already accustomed to working across multiple levels of government, as in a federal system, will be more likely to treat the EP as simply another level of representation, with its own unique membership characteristics and qualities. Thus, MEPs from more federal systems will likely display lengthier careers within the EP and move around less between political institutions.

Chapter Five explores the importance of MEP careerism within the legislature, using a series of tests to account for the distribution of legislative power within the EP. In doing so, I demonstrate that MEPs with longer backgrounds in the EP, as well as those with higher levels of

education, are more likely to be granted legislative rapporteurships, which are essential for impacting the course of legislation within the specialized EP committee system. This finding is particularly augmented since the advent of co-decision with the Council of Ministers. This evaluation speaks to my theory of MEP behavior and its effect on the further development of the EP as a legislative institution. If the EP caters increasingly to careerists, and parties reap policy benefits from sustaining specialist MEPs in European office, then the allocation of rapporteurships is an important benchmark for gauging the course of both the EP's development and political party response to it.

Chapter Six presents three cases in which MEP career variation has differed along national lines. By examining MEPs from France, Germany, and Poland, I suggest that the relationship between institutional development and career behavior is generalizable, but continues to have a strong source of variation along national lines. A classic unitary case, France's MEP delegations have been among the most volatile, as political parties frequently swap their politicians between national and European functions. Germany, in contrast, has a long history of highly productive specialist MEPs, who have also developed lengthy careers at the European level, which suggests that the role of national parties is quite different in this classic federal system. The Polish case demonstrates the appeal of the EP in post-authoritarian Central and Eastern Europe (CEE). Here, we view one example where the EP's professional attractiveness is perhaps stronger than a career in national politics.

Chapter Seven offers a discussion of the findings of the dissertation on the whole, considering evidence brought to bear by the empirical tests and qualitative inquiries. I demonstrate the importance of my findings for understanding the EP within a greater context, its implications for the changing career options of European politicians, and its potential interest for

politicians, policymakers, and scholars of European integration alike. I also return to the theme of representative democracy, asking just how well the EP has done at resolving the EU's democratic deficit.

2.0 AN INSTITUTIONAL THEORY FOR MEP CAREER BEHAVIOR

This chapter develops a theoretical framework for the interaction of the European Parliament's institutional development with the career behavior of its membership. Variation in the dependent variable of the dissertation, MEP career behavior, is addressed in three distinct ways: (1) the incidence of MEPs who develop extended careers at the European level, (2) the incidence of MEPs who use their time in the EP as one stage of a more diverse career path, and (3) strategies used by MEPs to advance within the EP, itself. For each of these facets of MEP career behavior, I argue that a corresponding set of factors related to institutional change in the EP plays a mediating role. The institutionalization of the EP as a professional legislature has a positive impact on legislators' tenure in the EP. The role of national political parties as gatekeepers for both European and national elections shapes the broader careers of MEPs. And a change in the policymaking opportunity structures, as the EP expands its purview in the EU legislation process, affects strategies used by MEPs for advancement within the parliament itself.

Before expanding upon this three-part theory, I first discuss a view of institutions and institutional change that incorporates aspects of existing rational choice, historical, and sociological institutional theories. I demonstrate how the career behavior of politicians is compatible with such a view of institutions. By viewing MEP careers as institutions, we can expand our analytic purchase on their study, but also view how MEP career behavior functions in

conjunction with developments in the legislature in which they serve. At the end of the chapter, I present my theory as a set of specific hypotheses, which are then tested in the following chapters.

2.1 INSTITUTIONAL CHANGE AND INDIVIDUAL ACTION

I assume throughout the dissertation that institutional change will affect the course of individual action. In other words, developments in the European Parliament should impact the career behavior of its membership. Such an inquiry requires an ecumenical view of the nature of institutions. Taking cues from North (1990), I view institutions as “the rules of the game in society or, more formally... the humanly devised constraints that shape human interaction” (p. 3). Within the context of a legislature such as the EP, institutions range from the more formal rules regarding the apportionment of deputy salaries and staff supports to the less formal sets of norms and standard operating procedures witnessed in the governing of the EP’s committee and group work.¹

While institutions vary between the more and less formal, I view the dividing line between a regularized pattern of action and an institution as stemming from a common currency of recognition and understanding generated by the creation of common group status or membership. Highly formalized rules, as in the case of MEP salaries and travel allowances, clearly govern the action of all members of the greater EP. Nonetheless, unwritten and informal norms—such as the drafting of electoral lists or the distribution of committee rapporteurships—also develop into recognizable patterns that can constrain a member’s political strategies within a

¹ For a discussion of norms as informal institutions, see March and Olsen 1989; Powell 1991.

political party or on a certain committee. If our view of institutions is expanded to include both these formal and informal practices, then we might similarly benefit from an analysis of MEP careers that treats the professional pathways taken by politicians as widely understood, yet hardly formalized, institutions themselves.

2.1.1 Careers as Institutions

While it is easy to see how the European Parliament would qualify as formal legislative institution, as well as contain a number of less explicit institutions, an expansive view of institutions leaves open the possibility that the careers of MEPs can be analyzed in a similar way. This notion is perhaps novel, yet is not intended to create controversy. Career advancement—in politics, as well as in many other fields—follows a path of more or less unspoken norms, arising from regularized patterns of group behavior. In the American political context, we often refer to a candidate as being an ‘outsider’ if he or she is seeking office without an extensive prior background in politics. What is an outsider, however, if not a politician whose career advancement does not meet the ‘normal’ pattern for advancement, as demonstrated by the majority of his or her professional cohort?

Career behavior is an institution, not only because it is a regular and widely understood pattern of action, but because it places a premium on subscribing to the well-trodden path of ones professional colleagues in order to maximize individual success. Residents shadow doctors in their desired specialty to observe best practices. Junior associates replicate the actions of senior colleagues to bring in substantial new business and make partner. Freshly minted PhDs seek out academic jobs at universities with teaching or research expectations that are the best fit for them. Senators first learn the hoops of political life as mayors or city councilmen.

In his foundational work on US congressional careers, Schlesinger (1966) essentially demonstrates the creation of American political careers as institutions—namely, the emerging hierarchy of professional advancement from local government to the White House. The political outsider may make waves in the popular media, but the politician who follows the more incremental pathway to power is the standard bearer. The English language is clear on this point: ‘normal’ politicians with ‘normal’ careers are synonymous with ‘the establishment.’ Political careers are institutions; the establishment is evidence of this fact.

As in America, MEPs are also products of the various career structures present in the countries that they represent; however, their own hierarchies for advancement may not be as neatly uniform as those found in the US Congress. This might lead us to view the role of MEP career paths as idiosyncratic or unimportant. Taken from twenty-seven country cultures and dozens of different ideological backgrounds, it is easy to reach Navarro's (2009b) conclusion that MEP career behavior is inchoate and irreducible to a common theme. However, such a view not only downplays the importance of MEP careers as institutions, but also the study of the EP itself. The theory and empirical findings of this dissertation suggest that MEP career behavior is perhaps complex and varied, but certainly not idiosyncratic.

Although the various professional and national political backgrounds of MEPs are seemingly too diverse to analyze at first glance, it would be unwise to assume that there is little room for MEP careers to be analyzed as a set of normal or regular patterns of professional behavior. Although we may not be able to locate a ‘normal’ MEP, globally speaking, there is plenty of room to theorize mid-level explanations for standard types of MEP career behavior, based not only upon an MEP’s country or political party of origin, but also upon their individual role as a legislator. What might such a view of MEP careers look like?

One might take Navarro's (2009b) view of the disparate career patterns present within the EP as indicative of the absence of equilibrium needed to view MEP careers as institutions: there are simply too many sources of variation to derive a common theory for the analysis of MEP career behavior; the development of the 'normal' MEP has yet to emerge. I argue, instead, that developments in MEP careers are in fact becoming more regularized, as the legislature itself continues to develop a strong role in EU policymaking. The variation in MEP career behavior that we witness today is a direct reflection of the EP's own path of development. MEP career behavior is important to cast in institutional terms because it is endogenous to developments in the legislature, itself.

MEP careers were initially linked with those of national parliamentarians, insofar as MEPs were nominated from national parliaments. This practice was replaced formally by the initiation of direct elections in 1979, yet many MEPs continued to serve a dual mandate with national parliaments until this practice was outlawed. Dual mandates were first banned by a handful of national electoral rule changes and later by an institutional directive that made holding a mandate in national parliament "incompatible" with EP office in all cases (Council of Ministers 2002). However, this is not the only source of change in the EP's composition. Along the way, we also note a shifting tendency away from retirees and elder statesmen to an increase in specialized political functionaries, interested in the particular policymaking demands of European office, itself.

On the one hand, it might be easy to account for the idea of MEPs as an 'elder statesmen,' given the institutional history of the EP as a nominated advisory board. Indeed, it would seem logical to nominate politicians with heightened profiles and lengthy careers behind them to such an office, particularly if we think of the original iterations of the EP as a sort of

guardian class of political institutional memory—not unlike the UK House of Lords or the French Senate. The initiation of direct elections to the EP might have changed this, yet scholars show that EP elections have been viewed of as ‘second order’ in importance to national ones from the start (Reif and Schmitt 1980; Schmitt 2005). If direct elections, at least initially, demoted the EP’s status vis-à-vis national parliaments, then it would also seem logical to view the EP as a sort of ‘kindergarten’ for political debutantes.

I argue that MEP career paths have shifted in correspondence with both the legislature’s internal developments and changes in its external stature. While MEPs may have many uses for the EP as a part of their broader careers (recall, for example, the three ‘ideal’ career paths brought out by Figure 1 in the first chapter), their career behavior is not ‘inchoate’ in the sense of idiosyncratic or unintelligible, but rather a multi-faceted representation of the legislature’s own circuitous path of development.

2.1.2 How institutions change

So far, I’ve explained my view of institutions and shown how MEP career behavior fits into this definition. More controversial than the definitional limits of institutions, however, is our understanding of how they change. I’ve noted that career paths emerge as institutions when enough politicians follow the same pathway for the purposes of professional advancement. This position presupposes a rational choice; a politician follows the career sequence most likely to lead to his or her maximum career payoff. Utility maximization, in this sense, could mean prestige, power, influence, visibility, access to resources, or any combination thereof.

Traditional rational choice approaches often come under fire for their lack of attention to institutional change, however, as they tend to be more concerned with explaining continuity and

equilibrium (see, for example, Tsebelis 2002). When rational choice does account for change, it is often criticized for its simplistic view of individual preferences as fixed, exogenous, and clearly understood (see, for example, Green and Shapiro 1996; Mansbridge 1990; Scharpf 1997; all in Schmidt 2010). Surely, MEP career preferences may change in response to institutional developments in the EP, yet, traditional rational choice is incapable of both explaining individual preference formation and endogenizing preferences within the processes of institutional change (but, see also discussions of bounded rationality in Peters 2005).

Historical institutionalism may provide us with a more appropriate set of tools for analyzing the sources of institutional change in a setting as diverse as the EP. Schmidt (2010) discusses the common claims of historical institutionalists. Conceived of as “regularized practices with rule-like qualities” (p. 10), institutions arise and consolidate within a context of path dependent historical processes. Indeed, the original decision to pay MEPs in line with national MP salaries has much to do with the fact that MEPs were originally appointed from national parliamentary delegations, yet this rule remained in effect until 2009—long after national MPs were barred from sitting concurrently in the EP. However, while historical institutionalism may provide us with a clearer understanding of *how* institutional change comes about, it does not necessarily do a more ample job of predicting *where* and *when* future changes may take place.

In his volume on institutional developments in the US Congress, Schickler (2001) offers a view of rule changes that might be viewed in light of both the historical nature of Congress, as well as the rational impulses of its lawmakers. He concedes that institutional complexity may favor equilibrium in general, yet certain ‘holes’ remain for future ‘disjointed’ developments. Hacker (2005) presents a similar story on his study of US pension schemes, showing that while

the public system has become seemingly too complex to revise adequately, private market-based 401(k) and IRA programs were easily launched alongside public pensions—benefiting from various vacancies within extant regulations. Eventually, these ‘complementary’ institutions usurped the public system in popularity altogether (see also the chapter by Palier 2005).

In their edited volume, Streeck and Thelen (2005) refer to such processes as the “layering” of institutions. New institutions are created alongside existing ones and their interaction produces an outcome that neither one would have been able to produce independently. This interaction of institutional development may be just the view needed for an analysis of MEP careers under institutional change. If we view MEP career behavior as a separate institution, alongside the more formalized institutions of the legislature itself, then it becomes easy to see how changes made to the EP’s operating procedures or status among the other EU institutions can effect change in the career behavior of MEPs. Internal complexity and external influence may attract increasing numbers of MEPs to seek reelection; national parties may nominate higher profile politicians to European office; internal advancement among MEPs may shift in accordance to the legislature’s organization

2.1.3 A theoretical view for MEP career behavior

So far, I have argued that the career paths of MEPs can be viewed as a dynamic institution, endogenous to developments in the EP, itself. My view of institutional change is sympathetic to rational choice, to the extent that career behavior is often the product of individual preferences and calculations about one’s personal utility. However, unlike in traditional rational choice theory, I seek to endogenize individual preference formation among MEPs within the changing role of the EP as a legislature. Change in the EP is a process that is closely related to its historical

development and I take a number of my cues from historical institutionalism. History can explain major changes in the EP's institutional design and account for the impact of these changes on MEP careers. MEP career behavior is an institution, in the sense that it has become regularized over time, and derives its meaning from both developments in the legislature, the national parties, and the incentive structures present for internal advancement within the EP itself.

In the remaining sections of the chapter, I present a detailed theory for MEP career behavior. I begin by discussing the potential impact of legislative professionalism on MEP career tenure. I then move on to examine how changes in the EP's role in EU policymaking present a new set of incentives for political parties to consider when nominating MEPs for the job. I finally consider the individual incentive structures present within the EP for MEPs to develop careers at the European level and bring policy specialties to the table. At the close of the chapter, I present my theory as a set of testable hypotheses and discuss my research design for testing them in the remainder of the dissertation.

2.2 LEGISLATIVE PROFESSIONALISM AND CAREER AMBITION

One way that MEP career behavior has become increasingly normalized is the development of a class of careerist MEPs whose professional ambition lies predominantly at the European level—that is, MEPs who seek to remain in the EP and do not use it as a steppingstone to elsewhere. I argue that the historical developments of the EP as a legislature have had a positive impact on the incidence of these careerist MEPs. The causal link is between the complexity of the EP as an institution—in other words, its ‘well bounded’ or professional character—and the incidence of individual MEPs who pursue a career at the EP level.

To develop this portion of my theory, I first review extant work on professional ambition within the EP and other elected contexts, before discussing the concept of legislative professionalization and its potential impact on MEP career behavior. In doing so, I show that a predominant strand of the literature has attempted to explain professional behavior among legislators by looking at their individual ‘roles’ within parliament. Although I find this instinct to be a natural one, it provides the social scientist with less analytic leverage than my view of MEP careerism as a consolidating institution, emerging from the changing capacity of the EP itself. I further explain the link between professionalism and ambition below, defining it in contrast to the more normative conception of legislator roles.

Schlesinger's (1966) work on the ambition of US legislators sets the cornerstone for the study of political careers. For Schlesinger, politicians exhibit one of three types of ambition: discrete, static, or progressive. Discretely ambitious politicians hold an interest in a particular office at a particular time, while static ambition pertains to politicians with a keen interest in lengthy service at a specific level of government. The progressively ambitious, naturally, use their post as a springboard elsewhere. The root causes and motivating factors for ambition can be viewed in light of a number of individual-level characteristics: having held previous office, possessing key social credentials such as race or class, and timing attempts at higher office strategically within the context of one's professional lifespan.

How has the concept of political ambition been exported to the EP, then? Notwithstanding Hix's (2008) skeptical view of the consistently ‘second-order’ nature of European office (see also work by Reif and Schmitt 1980; Schmitt 2005), much of the scholarship on careers within the EP has focused on explaining *why* politicians find themselves in the EP, instead of explaining how the EP fits into a larger picture of professional options

within Europe. A number of scholars have focused on the national sources of variation in seeking reelection to the EP (Kaiser and Fischer 2009; Marrel and Payre 2006; Patzelt 1997, 1999; Scarrow 1997)—noting higher rates of careerism from the UK delegation and the French and Italian tendency to rotate politicians between the EU and national level². While such case-oriented research can shed much light on the experiences of MEPs from specific national contexts, it does little to tell us about the general state of individual-level ambitions across the legislature as a whole.

As a result, the bulk of the literature concerned with individual MEPs takes on a more sociological tone, comparing the demographics of MEPs and their individual roles as legislators with those of national MPs, predominantly as a way of illustrating differences in the culture of national and EU legislative careers. For example, Norris (1999) demonstrates that the age distribution within the EP is curvilinear. Young politicians lacking elected experience go to the EP for a term, before returning home to run for office. Older politicians, conversely, are ‘kicked upstairs’ to Europe by their parties—using the EP as a sort of semi-retirement for the elder statesmen or as an exile from national positions of power (see also Meserve, Pemstein, and Bernhard 2010).

Following in the tradition of Eulau et al. (1959), Katz (1997), and Searing (1994), others take the view that MEPs have different personal motivations for their service and attempts to categorize these roles as one of a handful of possible types. For Bale and Taggart (2005), progressively ambitious MEPs are likely to serve as *constituency advocates*—signaling their loyalty to home constituencies as a way of currying favor with national voters for future pursuits.

² For example, Marrel & Payre (2006) discuss the “tourniquet” system used by the major French political parties in the early years of the EP, where politicians were constantly rotated between the national and European levels in six month intervals, in a conscious attempt to stunt the professionalization of the legislative body.

Policy advocates, conversely, use the EP as a soapbox for advancing specific policy platforms and tend to be more static in their pursuit of office at the EU level. Operating under the assumption that MEP roles are headed not towards professional uniformity, but rather increased diversity, Navarro (2009b) develops his own set of five ‘ideal type’ MEPs: the publicity-seeking *animateur*, the policy *specialist*, the constituent *intermediary*, the road-blocking *antagonist*, and the celebrity *dilettante* (see also Navarro 2009a).

Such taxonomies are attractive for their categorical parsimony and general applicability; nonetheless, they lack the causal capacity to predict which MEPs are more likely to demonstrate which role, as well as how these roles connect and serve their broader professional impulses. Indeed, they provide only snapshots of particular moments in a politician's career. Accordingly, the major lines of debate are somewhat muddled over whether an MEP's ambition is attributable to some roles more than others or simply idiosyncratic to the individual level. The result is a general dearth of predictive theory worthy of providing us with insights into the typical career paths of MEPs across national and partisan settings.

In some ways, it is unsurprising that the literature on MEP career ambition has reached such an impasse. Whether attempting to classify MEPs by their roles or simply differentiate between their personal characteristics, the literature on MEP careers has had no overarching theoretical framework. The classificatory schemes have been descriptive and deductive, taken more with the enumeration of taxonomical categories than with causal typology building. Thus, we have a relatively large amount of documented variation in MEP career behavior, along with a fairly small arsenal of theory to account for it. In order to fill this lacuna, I propose the mechanism of legislative professionalization as one way of predicting when an MEP's ambition will lie within the EP, instead of elsewhere.

Extrapolating from Polsby's (1968) classic work on the US Congress, I expect that a more "well bounded" legislature will do a better job of retaining its membership. Within the context of the EP, this should mean that a more professional EP advantages static ambition and thus careerism. The causal mechanism at play is well elaborated by the professionalization hypothesis for US state legislators as posited by Squire (1992). I briefly explain the impulse behind Squire's work, before demonstrating how his concept of professionalization can be used within the context of the EP to predict careerist among MEPs.

Squire's central claim is that legislatures that pay members and pay them well, provide them with adequate staff supports to focus on their legislative tasks, and meet for longer periods of time, are more professional. Correspondingly, members who serve as legislative professionals and not as seasonal workers or part-time amateurs will be more likely to launch full-blown careers at the state level and not continue on elsewhere. The logic behind such a measure is intuitive within the US state legislative context (see, for example, Moncrief, Squire, and Jewell 2001). The Montana Legislature—meeting once every two years for a quick seasonal session, and operating on a heavily volunteer basis—simply does not have the same professional character as its analogous body in New York State. Using a constructed index, Squire and others attempt to predict a variety of resultant outcomes based upon the professionalization scores of different state legislatures (King 2000; Squire 1992, 1993).

So, how should the EP's professionalization impact career behavior among its membership? Quite simply, more professional legislatures should attract more professional legislators. For legislators to maintain long-term careers in elected office, they must not only live 'for' politics, but also be able to live 'from' politics (Weber 2009). The spirit of this claim has been evaluated within a number of national contexts, from the French *Assemblée Nationale* to

the German Bundestag (Coates and Munger 1995; Gibel 1981; Saalfeld 1997), but not directly within the EP. Nonetheless, we should expect a more professionalized version of the EP to bring about a greater incidence of static ambition among its membership (see also a similar discussion in Norris 1999).

That a more professional EP should produce higher degrees of static ambition among its membership may seem obvious. In fact, given the dramatic rise of the EP as an institution in such a relatively short time period, it may seem almost tautological to suggest that as the EP develops institutionally, its membership will become more stable and reelection seeking will increase. However, it is important to consider not only the time variant nature of the EP as an institution, but also the variation in degrees of professionalism within the EP itself.

In terms of basic salary, MEP pay has traditionally been paid by national governments, at a rate corresponding to that of national parliamentarians from that country. The EP, in turn, has generally provided a series of allowances for travel and lodging in Brussels and Strasbourg, indexed to differences in national purchasing power, in order to smooth major differences. Only in the early 2000s did the EP decide to assume an even salary system across all countries, which did not come into full force until the 2009-2014 session began³. As such, MEP salaries have traditionally varied across both time and space a great deal.

In a given year, an Italian MEP might find herself making five times the base pay of a Polish deputy, although they may serve alongside each other in the same transnational party group and hold similar committee portfolios. Although the EP has traditionally compensated for this discrepancy, via a complex system of allowances and supports for travel, support, and lodging, the system varies in its application according to both national and EP party groups lines

³ MEP, personal interview, March 22, 2012, European Parliament, Brussels.

(Padowska and Brück 2010; Welti 1998). With an increase in policy competencies and the addition of EU members located far from the major worksites of Brussels and Strasbourg, the EP continues to offer a heterogeneous level of professionalism to its membership.

Thus, I take a view of the EP's professionalization that is conscious of teleology, while still making a strong argument for endogenizing MEP career behavior to the legislature's level of professionalism. It is a fair critique of this theory to suggest that a legislature may become 'more' professionalized, but not 'less so.' However, the unique amalgamation of various systems found within the EP, stemming from its patchwork development across the various member states, suggests that the EP is not headed along a unitary and inevitable path towards optimal professionalism, but rather has professionalized quite unevenly. MEP behavior will be expected to 'layer' accordingly, reacting to the varying degrees of professionalism afforded to them.

Professionalism is not simply a matter of salary and support, however, but is also related to the functioning of the EP itself. As Kreppel (2002) documents in her examination of the EP's emerging legislative power, the EP has greatly expanded its purview in the legislative process under co-decision with the Council of Ministers—a legislative option that has increasingly been invoked since its initiation under the Maastricht Treaty framework. This expansion of power has coincided not only with a proliferation of new ad hoc committees and the consolidation of transnational party group influence, but has also advantaged the role of individual MEPs within the policymaking process via the rapporteur system. Here, too, the argument might be made that the EP has increased in its institutional capacity in a way that cannot be reversed. On paper, this argument is probably correct. Yet, formalized institutional capacity does not necessarily guarantee the EP an increasingly visible role within the EU.

The EU financial crisis is an interesting example of the continuing gap between the EP's expected role in theory and actual role in practice. The nature of emergency politics and the leadership style of the major Council participants—particularly Angela Merkel and Nicolas Sarkozy—managed to limit the debate over the EU's fiscal compact limited almost entirely to the Council, even though under current legislative processes, one might have expected the EP to play a more visible role. While many scholars may view this as evidence of a continued intergovernmental streak in European integration (i.e., Moravcsik 1998), we might also view the EP's diminished role in the crisis as indicative of a lower level of professionalization than one might have expected. Unlike in a traditional parliament, the national leaders debating fiscal reform are not directly responsible to the EP, disadvantaging the legislature from weighing in with any level of clout. Thus, even though the EP stands on equal footing with the Council under co-decision, it cannot usurp the Council's function as a forum for intergovernmental action. Once again, we view the professionalization of the EP as uneven and layered.

I have shown that professionalization within the EP is likely to have interesting consequences for the incidence of careerism among its members. I have also suggested that professionalization may be somewhat more heterogeneous than one would imagine—as MEPs are confronted with many different 'versions' of the EP, based on the time period and their country of origin. However, it is also important to note that MEPs are not left alone to decide their career behavior. Rather, MEPs are agents of the national political parties who nominate them for office. Thus, to fully analyze MEP career behavior, one must look to the national parties' role of candidate recruitment and selection at both the national and the European level, in order to fully appreciate the interaction between the EP's professional development and its members' career behavior.

2.3 PARTIES AS GATEKEEPERS ACROSS MULTIPLE LEVELS OF GOVERNMENT

Although legislative professionalization may be useful for explaining the career behavior of MEPs whose goal is to stay at the EP level, it is perhaps less meaningful for distinguishing between the careers of MEPs and other elected politicians. One major area that remains underdeveloped within the EP sub-literature and that may be helpful in this capacity is the connection between MEPs and their national political parties. National political parties have the sole responsibility to distinguish between candidates best destined for either national or European legislative service. Thus, they also have an opportunity to direct political careers across multiple levels of office. A focus on how this professional triage takes place should indicate how the EP ranks in comparison to national political office, as well as how its changing stature has impacted longstanding party organizations.

In this section, I develop the expectation that parties already accustomed to working across multiple levels of government—particularly those from more federal systems—will foster the creation of distinct sets of politicians at both the national and European levels and thus encourage less movement between national and European political life. Conversely, parties from strong unitary backgrounds, whose function is essentially to select prime national candidates, will be more likely to treat the EP as a ‘reserve’ institution, leading to the increased volatility of MEP careers from these countries. I first review the extant literature on candidate recruitment and selection processes in national and European elections, before illustrating how variation in political party organization is likely to interact with differences in national regime type, in order to influence MEP career behavior.

2.3.1 Candidate selection and recruitment

Most of the extant literature on national parties and their involvement in EP affairs addresses the extent to which parties exert influence on MEP legislative behavior *after* elections. Parties control MEP voting behavior, they negotiate and broker the obtaining of committee chairmanships, and they promote national policymaking priorities (see, for example, Hix, Noury, and Roland 2007; Müller and Saalfeld 1997; Whitaker 2001, 2009). However, parties also influence MEP career behavior *before* European elections, insofar as they recruit and select candidates suitable for the job. A suitable question to ask, therefore, is whether there is anything ‘unique’ about MEPs, as compared with national politicians, and how political parties assess these differences in directing elections at both the national and the European level.

How does the process of candidate selection and recruitment take place at the European level? Holland's (1987) discussion of the UK Labour Party's strategy in recruiting MEPs for the initial 1979 elections presents one example: local councils filter potential candidates up through a series of reviews and selections before finally slating national party ballots. Gherghina and Chiru (2010) present a similar story for Romanian parties in the 2009 EP elections, demonstrating the importance of party favor, local bases of support, and previous electoral success as determinant for ballot access and the probability of elections (see also Protsyk and Maticescu 2011). Such detailed accounts point to the importance of party organization in the candidate selection process, yet they offer few clues as to how parties treat EP elections differently from (or perhaps similarly to) national contests.

One way to address this gap is to return to the theoretical literature on candidate selection processes. Hazan and Rahat (2006) present the most cohesive work to date on the major sources of variation for such practices, using a two-stage model. In the first stage, a candidate is nominated for an election from a theoretically limitless pool of would-be politicians. Nomination practices can be open to all registered voters at a most inclusive level (such as in the United States), to party members only, or to a restricted subset of party members having fulfilled a set of special requirements. For example, the authors detail the previous policy of the francophone Belgian *Parti socialiste*, where candidates for public office were required to be party members in good standing for more than five years, subscribe to the *PS* newspaper, send their children to secular state schools, make appropriate donations to party organizations, and partake in the party youth and women's guilds. Such exclusive measures clearly restrict candidate movement and personal initiative (see Rahat 2009).

In the second stage of the proposed candidacy, Rahat and Hazan (2006) stress the importance of courting favor with the party 'selectorate,' whose job is to winnow the pool of eligible candidates down to a list for use in the given election. The selection process ranges along a continuum from open primary elections at its most inclusive to selection via a single party leader at its most exclusive—with numerous tessellations of local and central committee control in between.⁴ Selection practices clearly matter, as they demonstrate with an Israeli example, where potential *Knesset* candidates from a minor clerical party are easily eligible for party nomination, but must first be selected by a small clique of rabbis at the peak of the national party

⁴ For a discussion of additional sources of institutional variation in candidate selection processes, see work by Siavelis and Morgenstern (2008), as well as Narud, Pedersen, and Valen (2002).

organization. How, then, should this matter for MEPs and their relation to politicians with national legislative mandates?⁵

MEPs belonging to parties which organize their selection processes more centrally—restricting candidacy to a small subset of voters or selecting potential nominees at a central party level—are more likely to operate at the mercy of their parties in their career behavior. Simply put, more centralized recruitment processes restrict candidate agency, and increase the chance that a politician’s career will be centrally managed, rather than allowing politicians the opportunity to direct their own careers, in accordance with personal ambition. As Norris (1997, 1999) puts it, parties can either organize as ‘siloes’—funneling members up and down along well-established ladders of elected service—or they can function as disperse ‘lateral networks’ that permit entry and exit at multiple stages of the game (see also Katz 2001). Thus, party organization is likely to affect MEP career behavior to the extent that parties control candidate placement along multiple tiers of office. However, what incentives do parties have to direct MEP careers? One major source of variation impacting political parties across Europe is the extent to which national regimes are organized as federal or unitary states. I now consider how this variation may interact with party organization, in order to direct MEP career behavior.

2.3.2 Party organization across multiple levels of government

Initial work by Scarrow (1997) suggests that there is a strong basis for national variation when it comes to MEP tenures. Her article details the propensity for French and Italian MEPs to demonstrate much shorter careers in the EP than their German and British colleagues. While this

⁵ For an interesting discussion on the relationship between national parties and their MEPs, see (Raunio 2000).

high rate of ‘turnover’ for MEPs is often cited as detrimental to the institution’s development as a serious legislature, it should be noted that this career volatility is likely attributable, at least in part, to MEPs’ national parties. I have already suggested that parties can be more or less centralized in their control of candidate careers. These organizational differences, in turn, are largely predicated on the federal regime type of their country of origin.

In relatively unitary systems, such as in France or Italy, political parties are accustomed to slating electoral lists for the entire country, for both national and European elections.⁶ If the same party electorate is accustomed to nominating candidates for two elections from a common pool, it is logical to expect some ‘shadow of hierarchy’ to develop in the minds of politicians between the two institutions. For example, it’s not uncommon for well-known French politicians to stand for election at the European level, in order to raise the visibility of their party lists, without ever intending to fulfill their mandate. Or, as another politician put it, the EP may be offered as a “second place” prize for national MPs who have lost their mandate.⁷ The assumption made in both of these situations is that the EP is a secondary arena to be used by a common set of national politicians. That is, French politicians are treated as a single set, to be divided among the various institutions of government, as dictated by party need.

I anticipate that the unitary system of government found in France creates and exacerbates this mindset, as the majority of French governing competencies rest in Paris. Indeed, the longstanding tradition of the *cumul des mandats* in France supports this idea. Politicians increase their national profile by combining positions at the local commune, the regional council,

⁶ Although French electoral laws for the European Parliament were changed in 2004 to replace national lists with a set of regional ones, selection is still carried out at the national level. For a discussion of the effects of this change on EP campaigns, see Costa, Kerrouche, and Pélerin (2007).

⁷ French MP, personal interview, November 15, 2011, *Assemblée Nationale*, Paris.

and the national legislature. Even today, a cursory glance of national legislator websites reveals that a majority of French MPs legislators continue to serve as either mayors or regional representatives back in their home districts (see also work by Abélès 2000; Jan 2005). In the French case, all politics is not only local, but also national. The addition of a European level of representation simply provides for another arena to conquer, or another mandate to accrue, and thus the basis of comparison between the EP and the national parliament is understandably linked to the institution's perceived prestige.

If Paris has only ever been the only game in town, why should this change under the additional career option of Brussels? The same could be said for any other heavily unitary system, however. If politicians (and thus their parties) are prone to comparing the EP with the national legislature in terms of prestige, instead of function, then we should expect greater fluidity in career behavior between the national and European levels of elected government.

By contrast, federal systems are accustomed to dividing competencies along multiple levels of government, usually linked to geographic areas. In such systems, politicians are wont to gravitate to the functional areas that make the most sense for their professional interests. Taking an equally extreme example, such as Belgium, a Francophone politician with an interest in cultural policy would be better suited by a career in a the Francophone language community parliament than the national Chamber of Deputies, while a Flemish politician with an interest in health policy will be of more use working for the Flemish Parliament. In a system of divided competencies, multiple governing units already exist; however, they are less likely to be as associated with a given level of prestige. In such a system, the EP simply becomes another legislature, complete with its own set of competencies and interests. Thus the politician inspired by Europe will likely focus her attention there.

Parties, similarly, will already be accustomed to working across these multiple levels—or at least have a clearer idea of their existence. As opposed to unitary systems, we should expect to see not one set of politicians, shared across multiple offices, but rather separate sets of politicians—cultivating around each constellation of government. Insofar as this applies to my theory of MEP career behavior, we should expect federal systems to disfavor movement between the national and European levels, allowing for MEPs to build lengthier careers in Europe. Put more crudely, Paris may be the only game in town for an ambitious French politician, but Berlin is already used to sharing the stage with Postdam, Düsseldorf, and Bremen—and must therefore also with Brussels, as well.

So far, I have suggested that the EP’s institutional development is likely to influence the career behavior of MEPs interested in pursuing a career at the European level. I have also shown that national political parties are likely to impact the movement of politicians between the EP and elsewhere, based upon the interaction between differences in party organization and state regime type. However, I have yet to discuss how MEPs advance in their careers within the EP, itself. In the next section, I expand my theory for MEP career behavior and discuss the development of a unique system for internal advancement within the EP, which favors experience in European policymaking, as well as individual technical expertise.

2.4 EXPERIENCE AND EDUCATION: INTERNAL ADVANCEMENT IN THE EP

Thus far, I have discussed MEP career behavior as a function of the EP’s course of institutional development, as well as the interaction between political party organization and state regime type. However, developments within the evolution of the EP have also impacted pathways of

internal advancement. In this section, I briefly discuss possibilities for internal advancement within the EP, before illustrating the increased tendency for the most influential MEPs to belong to a class of career European politicians, often possessing skilled technical backgrounds relevant to specific policy areas. I then consider the consolidation of this elite ‘clique’ of MEPs and its effect on the continued development of the legislature as a part of the EU legislative process.

2.4.1 Individual influence within the EP

As the European Parliament has developed as a legislature, its increased internal complexity is not only demonstrated by the proliferation of a strong committee system, used in the amending and preparation of legislation for plenary votes, but also the enumeration of a complex hierarchy of influential positions. At the head of the EP stands a president, elected from within the body, along with his or her council of 14 vice presidents. Although one might expect this system to function on paper in the way that most parliaments select a prime minister and opposition leaders, the system has in fact reflected a complex brokerage scheme between the transnational party groups that favors a rotating presidency between the two major groups (today’s center-left S&D and center-right EPP party groups), along with a balance of vice presidents from the other party groups. The leadership core is further augmented by a College of Quaestors, who join the vice presidents and president within the Bureau, and whose job is to regulate the administrative and financial activities of the EP.

Alongside this mostly administrative structure is a relatively opaque system of transnational party group leadership, voting whips, and committee-based group coordinators, who work with policy advisors and party group secretariats in order to regulate and direct the legislative behavior of the MEPs. Within the committee system, the allocation of leadership

positions is of direct interest to the political side of these operations, as the party group apparatchiks also administer the nomination and allocation of committee chairmanships and vice chairmanships, which are distributed in relation to the party group's relative group size within the EP.

As one might expect, each of these positions is associated with a degree of personal notoriety and prestige, and may thus be of professional interest to an individual MEP. However, unlike in other committee-based legislatures, it is not the committee chair or the voting whip that has the greatest amount of direct influence over the course of individual legislation, but rather the legislative rapporteur.

2.4.2 Rapporteurship allocation and individual control

Legislative rapporteurs are assigned to each draft piece of legislation upon its entrance into a given committee. Within the EU policymaking process, the EP acts either in consultation or in co-decision along with the Council of Ministers; however, legislative proposals originate most often from the bureaucratic Commission. Rapporteurs are thus individually responsible for articulating their committee's position on a given piece of legislation, which then translates into the opinion of the EP at large during plenary votes (as is shown formally in the work of Ringe 2010). Thus, rapporteurships are of critical interest to MEPs whose ambition rests in advancing within the European Parliament. How, then, are rapporteurships allocated?

At the start of a given legislative session, each committee distributes a number of points to the responsible party group coordinator, based upon his or her party group's relative size on the committee. Group coordinators then use these points to bid on reports that are referred to the committee. More important reports (i.e., those pertaining to co-decision) are worth more points.

Thus, the group coordinator has a clear stake in deciding which reports his or her party group should pursue. However, once a given party group has been awarded the report, it is less clear which MEP on the committee will be named rapporteur.

Kaeding (2004) illustrates a general bias for the awarding of rapporteurships to the so-called “high demander” legislators—chosen because of their lobbying connections, profile in industry, or political characteristics. Conversely, Høyland (2006) finds a political bias in the awarding of rapporteurships to MEPs whose national party is currently in government, which he shows to be a way of alleviating information asymmetries and inefficiencies across the multiple EU institutions. Others have looked to more structural factors, such as national delegation size within the committee; another camp attempts to identify expert MEPs in subject specific committees as more or less likely to become rapporteur (Benedetto 2005; Lindberg 2008; Mamadouh and Taupio Raunio 2003; Yordanova 2011; Yoshinaka, Mcelroy, and Bowler 2010). Inherent to each of these contentions is the notion that the rapporteur possesses a set of desirable personal characteristics that will favor a productive outcome for the report and thus a legislative ‘win’ for the EP.

One key problem with the extant literature in this area, however, is its relative dearth of generalizable data. Conclusions are drawn either from cherry-picked committees, specific legislative periods, or with only a few key countries in mind. This begs the question of whether or not the findings are truly generalizable. It may be logical for a German MEP from the CDU to receive a budget report when Merkel is in office, or for a marine biologist to have a disproportionate amount of reports on the fisheries committee, but should this logic extend to the hundreds of reports awarded in areas that are less politically sensitive or technically sophisticated? Further, the EP has not served in the same inter-institutional capacity across all

periods, particularly expanding its capabilities under the advent of co-decision in the early 1990s. Therefore, it is important to take up the issue of report allocation in a more broadly generalizable way.

2.4.3 The Rapporteur as technician and chief negotiator

In their discussion of personal characteristics best suited for MEPs, Beauvallet and Michon detail the increased importance for MEPs to possess advanced skills for negotiation and deliberation. As the nature of legislation at the EP level is comparatively technical, they also note the need for expertise in specific subject areas (in Déloye and Bruter 2007). The themes of technical expertise and deliberative experience seem generalizable within the allocation of rapporteurships, as well.

In a recent interview with a British MEP, the deputy explained that reports in the environment committee, on which she served, were frequently allocated based upon the merits of prior professional training held by the numerous scientists on the committee.⁸ Likewise, a former Polish MEP pointed to his background as a trained economist, as well as his status as a former finance minister, in his nomination for a highly sensitive economic report.⁹ Thus, the perception of education is clearly important when it comes to the allocation of certain sensitive, or otherwise technically complex, reports.

However, technical training may take a backseat to negotiating in other cases, as explained one Swedish MEP, who felt that his ability to compromise and listen to the opinions of

⁸ MEP, personal interview, March 22, 2012, European Parliament, Brussels.

⁹ Polish MP, personal interview, December 20, 2011. *Sejm*. Warsaw.

others had been decisive in his having received a number of reports.¹⁰ While he would not credit himself as being an expert on the financial decisions that he reported on, he nonetheless pointed to his ability to problem solve and collaborate with other deputies as paramount to his ability to draft reports. He learned this lesson early on in his tenure, when he attempted to lecture his committee on the ‘correct’ answer for another piece of legislation. A prominent former prime minister scoffed at him, reminding him that the European Parliament had “survived for many years without [him]... and without Sweden” and would continue to do so without his dogmatic attitude.

Such anecdotes highlight the necessity for influential MEPs to possess high levels of education, as well as be accustomed to the unique consensus-driven approach of EP legislative negotiations, in order to receive rapporteurships. Technical expertise comes with education and institutional expertise can only come from prior experience in the EP, thus we might expect more highly educated and experienced MEPs to be favored in the allocation of reports. This is not only important for the satisfaction of personal ambitions for internal advancement, but also tells us a great deal about the output of the EP on the whole. If these assumptions hold true across the entire legislature, then a specific set of expert and longstanding MEPs are likely to emerge as the disproportionate wielders of influence in EP policymaking output.

¹⁰ MEP, personal interview, March 7, 2012, European Parliament, Brussels.

2.5 HYPOTHESES

My theory for MEP career behavior examines the institutionalization of MEP careers within the context of a developing legislature. In doing so, it traces MEP behavior to developments within the legislature, a view of national political parties that is highly contingent on national context, and the emerging patterns of institutional advancement to be undertaken by MEPs with an interest in an extended career within the European Parliament. While the claims discussed in this chapter rely on both extant research and anecdotal evidence from MEPs themselves, they are also falsifiable propositions. In this section, I restate my theory in the form of testable hypotheses, before spending some time discussing the research design pursued by the rest of the dissertation.

H1. As the European Parliament expands its legislative power, its membership will increasingly seek reelection.

One of the most important factors in the development of the EP as a legislature is its increased power vis-à-vis the other European institutions and national parliaments—first under extended consultative powers and later under co-decision. As the EP increases its legislative capacity, it's logical to expect politicians will take a greater interest in developing extended careers as MEPs. Thus, we should see a correlation between the incidence of reelection seeking and the EP's formal legislative powers.

H2. As the European Parliament increases in its professionalization as a legislature, its membership will increasingly seek reelection.

On the other hand, we might also expect that a more 'professional' legislature will have a similarly positive effect on the likelihood of an MEP seeking an extended career. Not simply a matter of formal powers, legislative professionalization pertains more directly to the perks of the

job of MEP itself: suitable financial compensation, an internally complex system of posts and functions, and a demanding full-time professional commitment. Part time work may be fine between jobs, but MEP careers are unlikely to flourish if the legislature cannot make a case for its professional capacity.

H3. MEPs from federal backgrounds will build more extensive careers in the European Parliament than MEPs from highly unitary systems.

MEP careers operate not only at the whim of individual ambition, but also at the mercy of political parties who nominate them. My discussion of the interaction between party organization and national regime type suggests that MEPs from federal backgrounds are likely to display lengthier careers within the EP. Parties in federal systems tend to be organized in such a way that already facilitates the selection of working with multiple sets of politicians across varying levels of government. This leads to a less hierarchical view of the EP's placement in relation to national offices and thus suggests a basis of interest in the EP that is not as reliant on the mandate's perceived prestige.

H4. MEPs with higher levels of education will have greater influence over the EP legislative process via the accrual of rapporteurships.

MEPs wishing to advance within the EP itself are able to do so via a set of leadership positions, of which rapporteurships provide the greatest potential for individual impact on European legislation. The nature of EU policymaking is often technically sophisticated. Furthermore, committees vary greatly in size and MEPs are confronted with numerous votes during each plenary session. Thus, the institutional structure of the EP favors the nomination of specialist MEPs to serve as legislative rapporteurs in situations of technical complexity.

H5. MEPs with more experience in the European Parliament are more likely to serve as rapporteur.

The institutional complexity of the EP, as well as the large number of deputies from dozens of ideological and national backgrounds, requires that even the most recognizable of politicians invest energies in the creation of interpersonal networks within the EP, in order to cultivate the sort of personal profile needed to influence the course of legislation. A reputation as hardworking and able to reach consensus is indispensable to the EP policymaking process, yet such reputations do not develop overnight. Thus, experience within the EP over the course of multiple legislative mandates will favor the accrual of rapporteurships and thus influence within the Parliament.

H6. Education and experience matter more in the assignment of higher profile rapporteurships, as under co-decision.

The advent of co-decision under the Maastricht Treaty elevated the EP to the status of ‘veto player’ along with the Council of Ministers. Under the Treaty of Amsterdam in 1999, this status was further expanded. These developments indicate that the EP’s opinion on a given piece of legislation is increasingly valuable. This would also seem to indicate, therefore, that report allocation has become increasingly valuable to MEPs, whose opinions now have the opportunity to derail entire pieces of proposed Commission regulation. MEP education and experience are not only important determinants of rapporteurship allocation in general, but are expected to be increasingly important as the EP increases its legislative clout.

2.6 RESEARCH DESIGN: QUANTITATIVE & QUALITATIVE APPLICATIONS

How do we explain MEP career behavior? This central question is evaluated by a theory that relies on the institutional capacity and professionalization of the EP, the influence of national political parties in candidate selection and nomination processes, and the behavior of MEPs themselves within the legislature. My theoretical background takes a critical view of institutional change that favors a symbiosis between institutional development and individual action. I argue that career behavior is an institution in and of itself, and the development of this institution is an extension of the legislature in which it operates. To examine the effect of institutionalization on MEP behavior, I employ a series of quantitative and qualitative tests.

Chapter Three tests the first two hypotheses presented in this chapter—namely, that an increase in the professionalization and legislative capacity of the EP will favor the incidence of reelection seeking among MEPs. I evaluate this claim using individual-level data from all members of the EP, 1979-2009. I conceive of reelection seeking as contingent on influence at multiple levels—individual ambition, national background, and developments within the legislature—thus, I employ a hierarchical linear model (HLM) to test these hypotheses.

Chapter Four tests the third hypothesis and evaluates the influence of political parties on legislator volatility. I test the assumption that domestic regime type will impact MEP reelection seeking, using the new data source described in Chapter Three. I then use a series of multinomial logit models to indicate the relative likelihood that MEPs from federal systems will seek reelection to the EP, as compared with a number of other professional possibilities, and explain this behavior in terms of party organization at the national level.

Chapter Five tests the remaining hypotheses and addresses MEP behavior within the EP. I test the assumption that a clique of highly specialized and careerist MEPs is wielding an

increasingly disproportionate amount of influence on the EP legislative process via the accrual of rapporteurships. I return once again to the main source of quantitative data to test these hypotheses, before placing this development within the greater context of the increasingly ‘technocratic’ EU institutions. I return to the normative implications of this increase in technocracy, even in the most democratic of EU institutions, in the concluding chapter.

Chapter Six presents a qualitative assessment of my theory for MEP career behavior, applying it to the national delegations of France, Germany, and Poland. To evaluate differences in these country delegations, I rely on both quantitative and qualitative collected about MEPs from the three countries. France is presented as the ‘weak’ case for MEP behavior, as professional paths remain inextricable from party control and volatility between multiple levels of government remains great. In contrast, German MEPs are shown to possess extraordinary degrees of technical specificity and lengthy careers within the EP. Thus, they roughly demonstrate the ‘elite clique’ of MEPs described by Chapter Five. Finally, the Polish case demonstrates the appeal of the EP to recruit top legislators from the new member states, hinting at the professional power and legislative capacity of the institution.

Chapter Seven offers a summary discussion and conclusion of my findings, as well as discussing some of the normative results of the institutionalization of MEP behavior. Although the EP is frequently cited as a balm for the democratic deficit within the EU, I suggest that the EP’s behavior is less democratic than we might think. If institutional changes in the EP unevenly favor the development of lengthy careers by only a set of MEPs, and these MEPs in turn wield a disproportionate amount of influence on the legislative process of the institution, then link between voter preference and representative democracy may not be satisfied. Instead, the EP

may be headed towards a 'two-speed' institution, where some voices are heard more clearly than others and the preferences of the European publics remain obfuscated.

3.0 PROFESSIONALIZATION, POWER, AND AMBITION

The first chapter concluded with a discussion of three ideal pathways for the treatment of the EP by ambitious politicians, each following from a popular understanding of the legislature: (1) the EP as a retirement home, (2) the EP as a springboard to national office, and (3) the EP as permanent place of employment. The following two chapters will examine the latter of these two possibilities, asking how MEPs are likely to incorporate the EP into broader careers, as well as how successful MEPs build extended careers in EP politics, itself. For the present, this chapter takes a more longitudinal view, assessing how the EP has perhaps become less of a retirement home or a steppingstone and more of a serious legislative institution in its own right.

Identifying the mechanism for MEP career stability requires a separation of two distinct forces of political development. On the one hand, the Polsbian view of legislative professionalization discussed in the previous chapter suggests that careerism in the EP is likely a function of increased material perks related to the job (salary, support, and so on), as well as the ‘well-boundedness’ of the legislature (Polsby 1968). It is logical to assume that the EP has indeed become a more desirable place to work, over time: it has paid its members somewhat better in recent years, proliferated its internal institutions in a response to its bulked up legislative capacity, and grown from an under-funded talk shop run out of a rented space in Strasbourg to a highly developed collection of campuses—complete with facilities for research, dining, and exercise—in three different countries.

On the other hand, however, the opportunity structures present for MEPs do not presuppose that only material concerns will dictate career behavior. Weber's (2009) distinction between careerist politicians living "from" instead of "for" politics is an important one. However, the professionalization of political careers is likely only to enhance the means towards a preexisting goal already present in the minds of ambitious politicians. The increased institutional capacity of the EP does not necessarily create a set of new incentives for politicians without a previous interest in European politics, but it can certainly make the goal of working as an MEP a more easily realizable one. What else, then, is likely to pique the interest of an ambitious politician? Strøm (1997) contends that legislators are in the business of seeking votes, policy, and office. Each of these objectives is meaningless without a degree of institutional professionalism, but also without the promise of adequate and readily identifiable power once in office. What good are votes and an office if they do not come with the mechanisms available to actually advance ones policy goals?

In the remaining sections of the chapter, I discuss the evolution of the EP's professional capacity and test its effect on membership stability. I begin with a discussion of the institutional professionalization of the EP since initial direct elections in 1979. Evidence from parliamentary archival holdings demonstrates that the EP has not exceeded a normal rate of inflation for many of its professional capacities since 1979, although the overhaul of the MEP salary system in 2009 is one notable exception to this lack of meaningful variation. On the other hand, the EP has vastly expanded its legislative capabilities, as well as its power vis-à-vis the other European institutions, particularly since the conclusion of the Maastricht Treaty. The expansion of the EP's legislative power does show a strong and significant effect on MEP behavior.

In the following section, I differentiate between an increase in power and an increase in institutional professionalization within the EP, before summarizing their predicted effects on MEP career stability, as presented in the previous chapter. I then introduce a major new source of empirical data for the study of MEP career behavior in the second sections, collected from a variety of archival and EP sources. In the third section of the chapter, I use techniques from hierarchical linear modeling (HLM), as well as maximum likelihood estimation, to gauge the predicted effect of the EP's institutionalization on the career behavior of its MEPs. I find that an increase in the EP's legislative power does have a net positive effect on reelection seeking to the EP, but major sources of variation for MEP background—particularly differences in a given MEP's country of origin—are worth exploring further. This finding motivates the continued empirical analysis in the following chapter.

3.1 LEGISLATIVE POWER AND INSTITUTIONAL PROFESSIONALIZATION

As already discussed in the theoretical framework from the previous chapter, the question of MEP career behavior is closely linked to the evolutionary development of the EP as a 'new' legislative institution. The incidence of seeking reelection to the EP is one identifiable measure for gauging the course of this development, but how do we assess changes within the structures of the EP that might affect the incidence of MEPs desiring to maintain their current position in Brussels and Strasbourg? As late as the 1994 European elections, only 49.3% of current MEPs sought reelection. This figure ballooned to more than 56% of MEPs seeking reelection in the most recent elections in 2009, reflecting a steady pattern of growth in the rates of MEP reelection

seeking, even as the legislature itself dramatically expanded by nearly 300 seats during the same time period.

The question therefore is not, 'Is the EP becoming a more stable legislative body?' but rather, 'Why is the EP becoming a more stable body?' For the purpose of my analysis, I assume a rational model for career behavior that predicts an individual legislator from legislative wave t to seek reelection for legislative wave $t+1$, if doing so maximizes the personal utility derived from his or her remaining in office. Because the rapid course of institutional development undertaken by the EP between 1979 and 2009, I expect that changes in the institution itself have had an effect on this utility function. I examine two specific mechanisms, the power of the EP and its professional institutional capacity, that have both expanded since 1979 and are likely to impact the desire of an MEP to seek further election to the EP.

3.1.1 Power and Prestige

Kreppel's (2002) authoritative exploration of the EP's institutional development points to the substantial expansion of the institution's legislative power between its founding as an unelected advisory board for the ECSC in 1958 and its current status as a popularly elected veto player for EU legislation. Her discussion of the EP's expanding legislative powers under the parade of EU treaty reforms indicates the presence of a strong expansion of the legislature's power to effect change in Council decisions in a relatively short time period, likely also to impact how legislators view their service in the EP.

Beginning in 1958, the EP legislative process revolved mostly around a procedure known as 'consultation.' Not unlike the House of Lords in Westminster, the EP was allowed to draft opinions on legislation proposed by the Commission, which would then be referred to the

Council of Ministers for possible inclusion into the Council's binding decision on the piece of legislation. As Kreppel (2002) indicates, the only major innovation on the part of the EP under consultation was their ability to strategically delay problematic legislation, as developed in the 1980 "Isoglucose" case (pp. 71-73). The EP had no right to initiate legislation and no right to kill legislation—only the chance to delay its passage and offer an opinion.

In 1987, the Single European Act (SEA) brought about not only major structural changes for the implementation of the common market, but also the addition of the 'cooperation' legislative procedure, to be used by the EP in certain subject areas. Under cooperation, the EP was given a second reading of Commission proposals, allowing it some powers of dialogue with the Council of Ministers. It could also force the Council to override EP opinion via unanimity (as opposed to a qualified majority), should an absolute majority of MEPs still disagree with the Council's position following its second reading. Under the SEA, the EP retained no rights of initiation or legislative vetoes, but it could effectively force the slow and painful death of unpopular legislation. As a result, Kreppel's (2002) work demonstrates that the Commission and Council were more likely to take EP opinions seriously in the amending of legislation following 1987 (pp. 79-80).

Finally, the Maastricht Treaty reforms and subsequent treaties of Nice and Amsterdam finally attributed veto player status to the EP in 1993, expanding the purview of this status to further subject areas in 1999. The new 'co-decision' process, which is discussed at greater length in Chapter Five, not only allowed the undisputed right of the EP to amend and veto legislation proposed by the Commission, but also to dialogue with the Commission on equal footing to the Council of Ministers. As in the US Congress' 'reconciliation' process, both the Council and the EP were forced to come to agreement on a wide variety of Commission proposals related to the

implementation of the single market, providing the greatest single expansion of the EP's legislative power over the course of its history.

The effect of the EP's expansion of power could not be more distinct. Gazzo Dilley (1974)'s journalistic assessment of the EP in a UK news magazine refers to the legislature as a "talking-shop" with "no real political power at all... [and an] embryo of what could at some future date be a European legislative body" (p. 47). Her view of the legislature in the 1970s is strikingly different from that of a recent interviewee from Spain, who bragged about his being "good friends with Berlusconi" and knowing "the American ambassador to Spain quite well," as well as his personal connections with a former French prime minister.¹¹ The MEP in question also noted that, although his colleagues continue to have a "complex" about their level of power, they often fail to see how much they have won in such a short amount of time. As another longstanding MEP put it, it's "only every 100 years or so that one gets to build a legislature."¹² Surely no other legislative body in an already consolidated democracy has seen such a dramatic reversal of its fortunes in such a short period of time. The development of the EP's legislative power is therefore a reasonable suspect for the driving mechanism behind increases in its relative prestige, as well as the stability of its membership.

3.1.2 Institutional capacity and professionalization

Nonetheless, the journalistic evaluation of the early EP mentioned above also references the "most precarious [of work] conditions" experienced by the original MEPs, of which "the only one who has an office of his own is the president" (Gazzo Dilley 1974: 47). Knowing that work

¹¹ MEP, personal interview, June 8, 2010. European Parliament, Brussels.

¹² MEP, personal interview, March 7, 2012. European Parliament, Brussels.

in contemporary elected politics must not only be an avocation, but also a vocation, which trends in the EP's professionalization as a legislature have been witnessed since the initiation of direct elections in 1979? For the purposes of this assessment, it is helpful to look at the criteria for legislative professionalization proposed by Polsby (1968), Squire (1992), and others: legislative salaries, institutional support, and professional commitment.

As previously discussed in Chapter Two, the base salaries of MEPs were paid by their home countries for the majority of legislators between 1979 and 2009. Although the initial protocols for the direct election made reference to the need for a harmonized system of salaries, the historical basis of the EP's membership—nominated by the national parliaments between 1958 and 1979—led MEPs to initially receive their salary in parity to that of a national legislator. This fact did not go unnoticed by the popular press. A 1978 article from *The Guardian*, in the run-up to the first direct elections, describes the unfairness of German MEPs “paid at three times as much as British” ones, but nonetheless argues against the use of a common salary (Langdon 1978). As Figure 2 demonstrates, disparities between the salaries of MEPs vary dramatically by country for much of the EP's history.

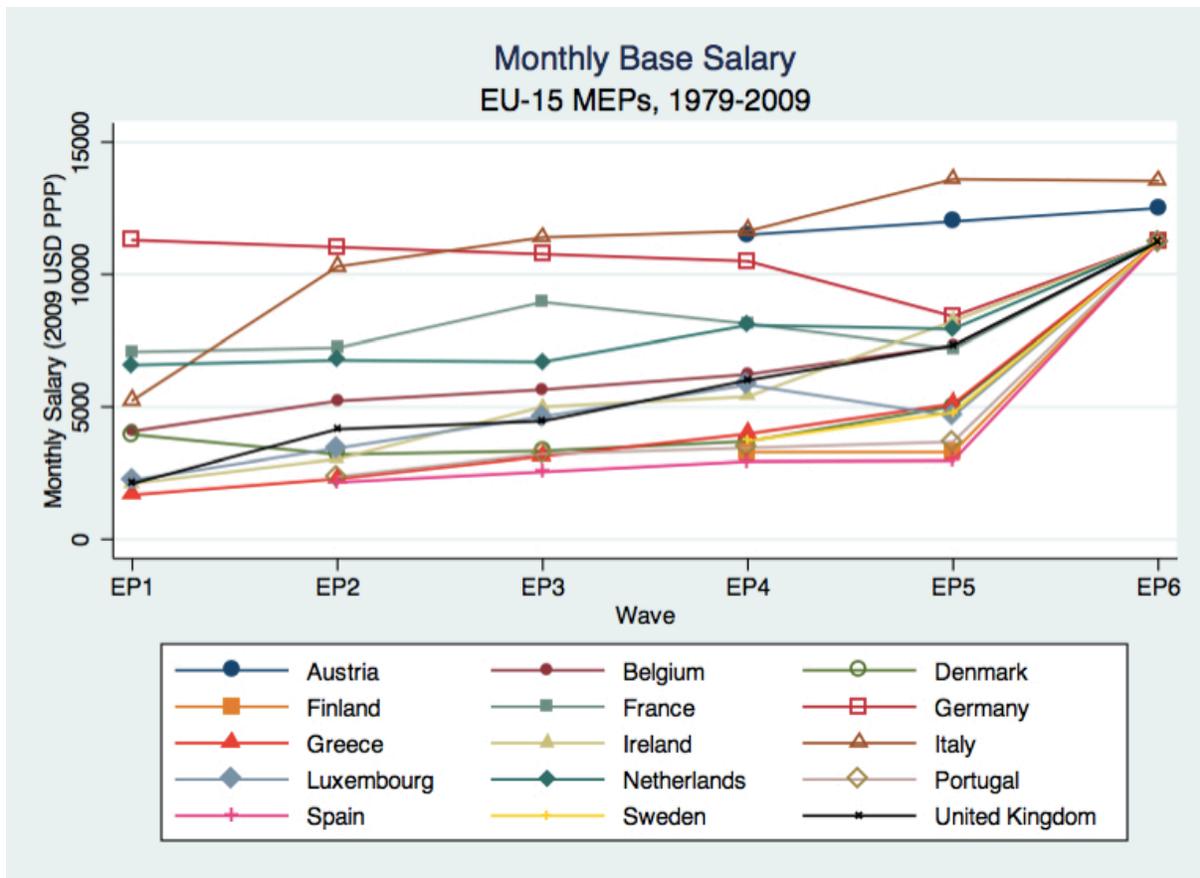


Figure 2. MEP Salaries by Country, 1979-2009

Figure 2 displays the monthly base salary, converted into comparable 2009 US PPPs, for members of the EU-15. The data reveals that MEPs from countries such as Germany or Italy received three to four times the base salary of MEPs from others, such as Greece, Spain, and Portugal. The introduction of a harmonized salary during the 2004-2009 period—set in relation to the a fixed percentage of the base salary of a judge from the European Court of Justice—greatly increased the earnings of most MEPs, although the new salary is somewhat lower than MPs from Austria and Italy are accustomed to receiving.¹³ Although salaries vary in relation to one another, once inflation is controlled for, it becomes apparent that most MEPs did not

¹³ Grandfathering provisions for the new harmonized salary allow current MEPs to choose between their present salary and the new EU salary for as long as they remain in the legislature. Thus, the figure reflects the assumption that Italian and Austrian MEPs will continue to choose their higher national salary, whereas all other MEPs will switch to the new system. This assumption is also maintained in the regression analysis at the end of the chapter.

experience much in the way of ‘real’ salary growth between 1979 and 2009—at least until the initiation of the harmonized salary. In other words, if we expect an increase in professionalization to bring about greater reelection seeking, we would hope to see salary figures that track with the steady growth of reelections seeking to the parliament—not a relatively static set of salaries.

If salary growth is unlikely to explain an increase in the EP’s professionalization, there are still many other factors related to the EP’s institutional capacity that might explain growth in the reelection seeking of its membership. Staff and other institutional supports are obviously integral parts of a job’s professional attractiveness. Unlike MEP salaries, staff and travel allowances were maintained at uniform levels by the EP throughout the 1979-2009 period. In fact, the diversity of base salaries was actually explicitly compensated by a routinely generous set of benefits provided to all MEPs. The legislature’s internal administrative unit, the College of Quaestors, has maintained the EP’s “Rules Governing the Payment of Expenses and Allowances to Members” document since 1979.

According to these administrative documents, all MEPs are provided with allowances for travel to and from their principal residence, per diem allowances for days that the EP is in session in Brussels or in Strasbourg, stipends to be used in the hiring of individual staff, standard offices in both of the EP’s main locations, an EU insurance and medical policy, additional training for the acquisition of languages and computing skills, subsidized meals and exercise memberships within the EP compound, and even lifetime access to the legislature’s business facilities, following the end of their mandate.

According to a communiqué from the College of Quaestors, the 2009 rates for travel reimbursements provided for by the EP included direct reimbursement of fully flexible airfare to

and from Brussels and Strasbourg or a per kilometer rate for travel by car, in addition to a 4148 EUR annual lump sum for travel. Further, MEPs were provided a 298 EUR per diem for every day spent working in Brussels, Strasbourg, or on official business. Each MEP was also granted an additional 21,742 EUR allowance per month, in order to cover office and staff expenses and salaries (Fazakas 2008). Although the support schemes afforded to MEPs are certainly generous—in many cases much more so than those afforded to national MPs—each of the rates has been indexed automatically to inflation since 1982 and does not represent a substantial increase upon the institutional levels of support provided by the EP since the initiation of direct elections in 2009.

One final way in which scholars have considered variation in the level of institutional professionalization is to examine the professional commitment demanded by a legislature. Squire's (1992, 1993) index of US state legislative professionalization includes variables for the specific time commitment demanded by the legislature. The popular anecdote necessitating this variable, of course, is a comparison of Montana's seasonal legislature—meeting for a summer term every two years—to New York or California's round-the-clock professional commitment demanded of state legislatures. If the EP has varied between these two extremes, it's worth considering whether a more professionally demanding EP might also inspire a more long-term professional commitment on the part of its legislators.

Evidence for substantial growth in the time commitment of MEPs is negligible. The EP calendar has remained fairly similar since the 1980s. Disagreement over the legislature's official location have led to mandates even within the treaty structures of the EU itself, ordering the legislature to convene for set plenary dates in Strasbourg each month. The current monthly schedule of an MEP alternates between a week of plenary in Strasbourg, a week each for both

committee and party group work in Brussels, and a ‘green week’ for MEPs to spend at home in their constituencies. If we examine the variation described even among US House members in Fenno's (1978) discussion of legislator “home style,” it is clear that the EP is used to following a heavily regimented routine for the schedules of its members.

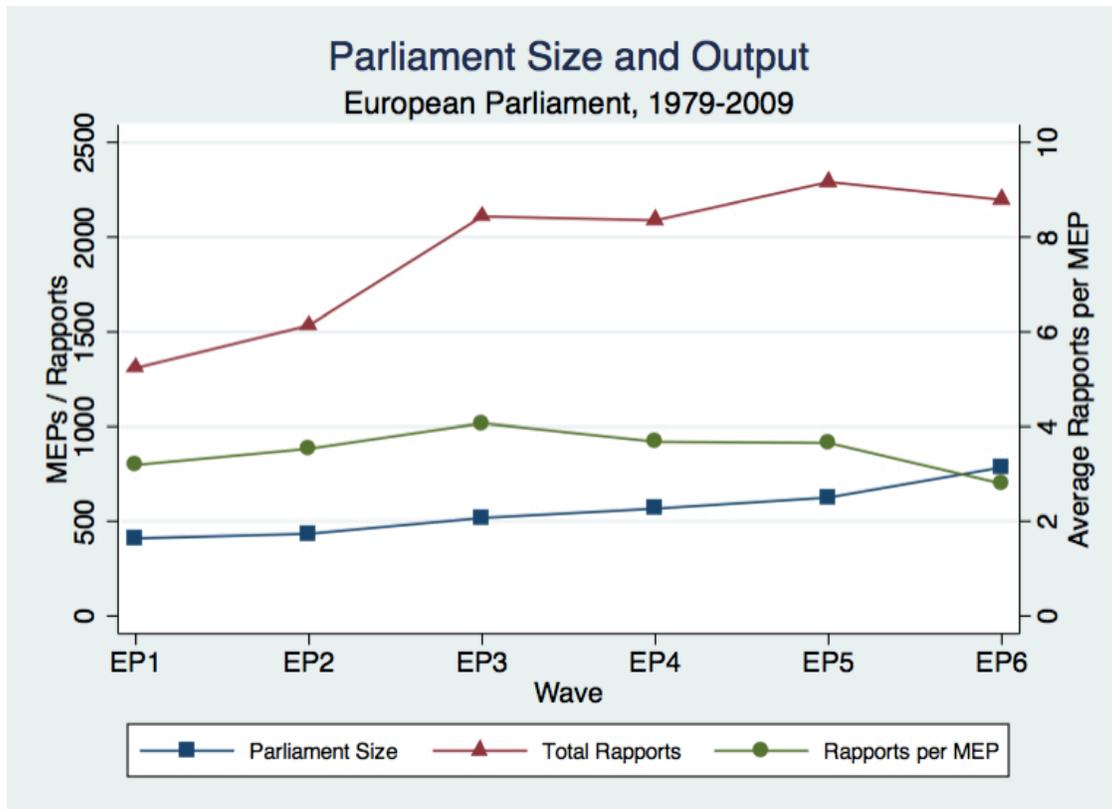


Figure 3. MEP Size and Legislative Productivity, 1979-2009

What other indicators, then, might provide us with information about the possibility for growth in the level of the EP’s professional commitment? Although the time MEPs spend at the office may not have changed much over the years, the amount of work they do there may certainly have increased. Figure 3 provides some evidence of this increase, looking at growth in the number of legislative reports completed by the EP, in relation to the legislature’s size. As the figure displays, both the EP, as well as its legislative output, have grown substantially since 2009. However, the average number of reports completed by an MEP has not changed

significantly during the same time period. While Chapter Five will address the importance of these legislative reports, both as a measure of productivity and personal clout within the legislature, it is worth noting that the raw gross output of the legislature has not varied that greatly since 1979, excluding obvious increases in the legislature's ability to draft additional reports following the addition of the cooperation and co-decision procedures.

3.1.3 Changing legislators, changing roles

Although the EP's level of institutional professionalization may not have grown at the same rate as its legislative power, it's clear for longstanding MEPs that a change is in the air among their colleagues. One of the most senior MEPs interviewed in the project indicated that her colleagues today were much "more interested and better informed" than when she began work as an MEP back in the 1980s.¹⁴ Another longstanding MEP, having previously served in national office, said that while there was "not a great difference in the amount of work required" by both legislatures in which he had served, he did notice a "qualitative difference" in the conduct of MEPs, who were more quick to seek consensus and less partisan in their debates.¹⁵

Many MEPs interviewed for the project agreed that their work in the EP was much more pleasant than back at home. As a senior MEP from the UK put it, "British politics is about arguing, European politics is about making friends."¹⁶ Although the view of MEP roles as consensus-seekers is nothing new to the literature, others pointed to a change in the nature of parliamentary debates with the addition of the 2004-07 enlargement states. One German from the

¹⁴ MEP, personal interview, February 29, 2012. European Parliament, Brussels.

¹⁵ MEP, personal interview, June 2, 2010. European Parliament, Brussels.

¹⁶ MEP, personal interview, March 7, 2012. European Parliament, Brussels.

EPP, attempting to diplomatically describe difficulties in working with MEPs from the new member states, was reminded that “one has to visit history a bit” in understanding why some MEPs were more difficult to reach consensus with than others.¹⁷ A Czech from the S&D disputed this assessment, defending his colleagues’ desire to argue for what could be accomplished in Prague “in the span of a day,” but “takes months” to complete in Brussels.¹⁸

For whatever reason one initially becomes interested in seeking election to the EP, it is impossible to tell with any certainty how an individual will react to the different style of politics at play in the EP, as well as the complex institutional framework and long time horizons for the completion of legislation. A number of MEPs interviewed mentioned that it took them the majority of their first term in the legislature to feel comfortable enough navigating the complicated interpersonal networks of vast institutional resources available to them, in order to even begin to think about accomplishing the policy objectives that had motivated them to seek office in the first place. While later chapters will address the importance of seniority within the EP at greater length, it is important at this stage to understand that the diversity of individual legislator roles is extremely important in predicting how MEPs will react to the large institutional shifts in the legislature.

3.1.4 Hypotheses

The remainder of the chapter provides an empirical analysis for the effect of both the EP’s legislative power, as well as its degree of institutional professionalization, on the behavior of MEPs. More specifically, it tests the following two hypotheses:

¹⁷ MEP, personal interview, March 7, 2012. European Parliament, Brussels.

¹⁸ MEP, personal interview, June 2, 2010. European Parliament, Brussels.

H1. As the European Parliament expands its legislative power, its membership will increasingly seek reelection.

H2. As the European Parliament increases in its professionalization as a legislature, its membership will increasingly seek reelection.

As discussed in the previous chapter, I expect that the dramatic increase in the EP's legislative power, particularly after the SEA and Maastricht treaties, is likely to have a positive effect on the reelection seeking of the legislature's membership. Similarly, any comparative assessment of the EP with other legislatures suggests that as the legislature increases its professionalization and institutional capacity, it will similarly positively impact the reelection seeking of its membership. Nonetheless, as the previous section also suggests, political ambition is undeniably linked to a highly diverse set of individual legislator roles. These roles will be examined with greater precision as major control variables in the empirical analysis. In the following section, I describe the collection and assembly of a new quantitative data source to test the empirical claims made by the project.

3.2 NEW QUESTIONS, NEW DATA

The scope of the research undertaken by this dissertation entails an ambitious program of data collection. In order to test claims about the effect of institutional change in the EP on the career behavior of specific MEPs, complete data on all members elected to the European Parliament between 1979 and 2009 is needed. Individual data on MEPs, their careers, and their personal backgrounds exists for portions of the time period examined, but is neither uniform, nor exhaustive. In order to test the empirical claims put forth by the dissertation, I collected

individual data on each of the more than 4000 MEPs present over the course of the six waves of the EP.

Initial data collection was greatly facilitated with software developed by Høyland, Sircar, and Hix (2009), which allows users to lift publicly available data from the EP website's membership archives. From this data, I was able to develop a list of each MEP, separated by wave, as well as collect basic demographic data, such as gender, age, country of origin, and political party affiliation. The data collection tool also provided information on each MEP's status on legislative and administrative committees, such as whether or not they had served as a committee chair or as a member of the EP's administrative Bureau.

From there, I needed also to collect data on institutional variables of concern. I consulted archives in the University of Pittsburgh's exhaustive Commission holdings, which provide the most complete copy of the Commission archives outside of the EU. Internal documents provided from the EP aided in the initial collection of salary and support information, which was later augmented and cross-checked by new work from Brans and Peters (2012).¹⁹ The EP's official archival and documentary assistance service at its secretariat in Luxembourg (CARDOC) was instrumental in providing data not available from the website, such as specific support figures and information on legislative reports prior to their indexation on the Internet.

Collecting information on the career behavior of individual MEPs proved to be the most challenging part of dataset construction. Archival holdings at the French *Bibliothèque Nationale* research library, the German *Statistisches Bundesamt*, as well as the electoral archives at Science Po – Paris' CEVIPOF unit were able to provide electoral lists and official European election materials and publicity from a number of EU member states, in order to examine whether or not

¹⁹ Other notable sources of data include Déloye and Bruter (2007), Larhant (2004), Lodge (1990, 2010) and the *European Parliamentary Yearbook* and internal articles from the EU's *European Report* circular.

MEPs sought reelection in subsequent terms. Personal webpages maintained by MEPs, their parties, and their home governments filled in most of the remaining gaps in the data and were also used to collect statistics on MEP levels of education used in Chapter Five. Additional data sources are explained, as they appear, in the relevant chapters. The end result is a fully comprehensive dataset of the elected EP membership, complete with a surprisingly low incidence of missing data and the ability to answer questions about the EP's effect on the career behavior of its members.

3.3 TESTING THE PROFESSIONALIZATION AND POWER HYPOTHESES

If H1 and H2 are true, I expect an increase in the professionalization and power variables to lead to a greater incidence of reelection seeking among MEPs over time. Taking cues from my previous discussion of the importance of individual characteristics and roles as determinant of professional ambition, I anticipate that specific individual characteristics, such as EP leadership, partisan affiliation, or gender, may also predispose the incidence of static ambition. Naturally, these explanations are not mutually exclusive. It is quite likely that both professional and individual variables interact in an individual's decision to seek reelection to the EP. The relationship between professionalization, power, and ambition in the EP involves the investigation of a number of variables, captured at multiple theoretical levels and time points. Individual-level characteristics, such as an MEP's role within the EP, are impacted on a broader systemic level by higher-order concerns, such as member pay, staff support, and time commitment. To account for the underlying multi-level nature of this relationship, I specify predictive models using techniques from hierarchical linear modeling (HLM).

HLM makes sense for a number of theoretical and statistical reasons. Using simple multivariate regression when variation occurs on different theoretical levels can lead to critical estimation errors and incorrect inferences. Usually, researchers attempt to correct for multi-level variation by generalizing higher-level variation at the individual unit level, thus reformatting these generalizations into lower-level observations, or vice versa (Singer and Willett 2003). The problem with treating a system variable as an individual one, or an individual variable as a systemic one, is that these generalizations can lead to ecological or atomistic fallacies. Beyond the inaccuracy of such techniques at a theoretical level, modeling multi-level causality at a single level can create huge statistical issues; disaggregated group-level variation attributed to specific individuals in the model can pool in the error terms and create efficiency problems or error term correlation biases (Luke 2005; Rabe-Hesketh and Skrondal 2008).

To correct for these hazards, I model the impact of professionalization and power on reelection seeking over time, using a predictive three-level longitudinal model. Theoretically, we know that the decision to seek reelection is comprised of both individual and higher-order influences. Thus, I estimate this relationship as three nested levels: the individual, nested within the country delegation, nested within the legislative time period. Using the MEP dataset described in the previous section, I organize the data as a longitudinal cross-section of the full EP. This allows for six waves of observation (parliaments are elected to five-year terms) and a total population of 3,942 MEP-wave observations.

3.3.1 Variables

Table 1. Descriptive Statistics (Chapter Three models)

Variable	Obs	Mean	Std. Dev.	Min	Max
Seek Reelection	3948	0.526	0.499	0	1
ln(Monthly Salary)	3948	8.850	0.549	7.429	9.518
Wave	3948	3.783	1.716	1	6
ln(Total Rapports)	3948	7.559	0.191	7.177	7.697
Seniority	3942	1.561	0.864	1	6
Dropout	3948	0.124	0.329	0	1
Age	3948	55.299	9.982	26	90
Female	3948	0.241	0.428	0	1
Party in Govt.	3948	0.446	0.497	0	1
EP Leader	3948	0.092	0.295	0	3
Committee Leader	3948	0.192	0.394	0	1
New Member State	3948	0.102	0.303	0	1
Local Elections	3948	1.502	0.683	0	2

Table 1 displays descriptive statistics for the data used in the chapter. I use the dichotomous dependent variable **Seek Reelection** and code it with positive values when the MEP in question sought reelection at the end of the current wave. Seeking reelection is the most outwardly visible sign of MEPs displaying what Schlesinger (1966) refers to as static ambition. For the purposes of this study, higher levels of static ambition correlate positively higher levels of MEP stability. I expect that MEPs running for continued service in the EP have a specific interest in the office; thus, static ambition is modeled in the affirmative direction.

The principal independent variables of interest are derived from the Squire professionalization index and modeled at the country (Level 2) and institutional (Level 3) levels of variation. For the purposes of my analysis, I use two continuous variables—**Salary** and **Total Rapports**—to proxy for professionalization. Salary values are scaled to inflation and converted into US dollars, to account for the fact that MEPs were traditionally paid in accordance with

national figures. **Salary** represents the average monthly MEP base salary figure for the given term. I assume that a discrete increase in salary will lead to a greater probability of reelection seeking. **Total Rappports** is a count variable for the total number of legislative reports concluded in a given session and is another measure of the EP's level of institutional professionalization. This variable is modeled at the institutional level. Because of the comparatively large variation in both salary and report figures, I use the natural log of both variables throughout the econometric analysis.

As previously discussed, the passage of time is also of critical interest, as it is directly related to the EP's legislative clout. Thus, I use the trend variable **Wave** to capture variance subsumed by each successive wave of the EP. For the first directly elected EP session in 1979, **Wave** = 1. The expected effect of **Wave** on MEP ambition is clearly positive. As the European Parliament evolves over time, gaining new powers of review and oversight vis-à-vis the other EU institutions, a general increase in the level of MEPs seeking reelection is expected. Thus, the expected sign on **Wave** is positive. This time effect, which affects the whole legislature, is also modeled as Level 3. I also substitute the count variable with a dichotomous indicator of EP power, **Co-decision**, to indicate waves of parliament where MEPs had an option to veto Council decisions.

To control for individual variation in roles and preferences, I model a series of control variables at Level 1. **EP Leader** is a dichotomous indicator for individuals holding an administrative leadership position (Bureau, Vice President, Quaestor, or President) in the EP. **Committee Leader** is a dichotomous variable for MEPs having served in a position of committee leadership (Chair, Vice Chair, etc.) during the given wave. **Seniority** is a count variable for the number of terms in the EP served by a given MEP. **Dropout** controls for those

MEPs who did not complete their full term and **Age** is the MEP's age at the end of their current mandate.

Other controls include **Party in Government**, for MEPs whose national political party was serving in the governing coalition of their country at the end of the current term, which is a possible indicator of an MEP's likelihood of returning to national office during political boom time. **New Member State** is a dichotomous indicator for MEPs whose country is new to the EU during the current term of the EP and **Local Elections** is a trichotomous indicator used by Beck et al. (2001) for whether an MEP's country of origin has a substantial subnational governing presence, if these offices are elected directly, or both. Country dummies are used throughout the analysis, excluding Ireland as the reference category.

3.3.2 Constructing the Model

Multi-level models can either be expressed in terms of their component-level equations, as in a system of equations, or in a 'mixed' form that encompasses all levels into one equation via basic algebraic properties of substitution. My model contains three theoretical levels: (1) an individual level, (2) a country level and (3) a temporal level. The individual-level essentially looks like a standard OLS model, where individual i from country j has individual-level traits $[X]$ that more or less predispose them to seek reelection at the end of wave t :

$$(1) \quad \textit{Seek Reelection}_{ijt} = \beta_{0j} + \beta_{nj}[X] + e_i$$

The corresponding country-level equations are essentially a parallel model, containing variables $[Z]$ that change by country for all individuals in country j at time t :

$$(2) \quad \beta_{0j} = \gamma_{00t} + \gamma_{01}\ln(\textit{Salary})_j + \gamma_{0nt}[Z] + \zeta_{0j}$$

Notice here that β_{0j} value in Level 2 corresponds with a random intercept in Level 1 (that is, the direct effect of the country-level variables), but does not interact with the slope coefficients of the Level 1 betas. Theoretically speaking, this indicates that I see no reason why salary, the presence of local elections, or any other country-level variable would impact females, elderly MEPs, or EP leaders in a systematically different way.

Finally, the corresponding Level 3 effects are modeled to include institution-wide variation at time t :

$$(3a) \quad \gamma_{00t} = \gamma_{00t} + \gamma_{01} \text{Wave/Co-decision}_t + \gamma_{02} \ln(\text{Total Rappports})_t$$

$$(3b) \quad \gamma_{01t} = \gamma_{11} \text{Wave/Co-decision}_t + \gamma_{12} \ln(\text{Total Rappports})_t$$

The Level 3 variables assume no random error term of their own and essentially collapse into the second wave. The values of γ_{01t} do interact with the slope of the salary variable in Level 2, however, indicating that there is a reasonable expectation for salary and productivity to matter more or less at different time points. After a bit of algebraic substitution, the full mixed model contains interaction terms between each of the constituent multiple levels. These raw coefficient values are displayed in the regression results found in Table 2. As the dependent variable is dichotomous, I estimate the model the logit link function, $\text{logit}(p) = \ln(p/1-p)$.

3.3.3 Results and Analysis

Table 2. The Effect of Professionalization and Power on Reelection Seeking in the EP

<i>DV: Seek Reelection</i>	(1)	(2)	(3)		(1)	(2)	(3)
ln(Monthly Salary)	-0.419* (-1.88)	-0.227 (-1.51)	16.85*** (2.70)	Age	-0.0547*** (-12.56)	-0.0546*** (-12.56)	-0.0556*** (-12.69)
Wave	-1.104** (-2.29)		-6.489** (-2.32)	Female	-0.0391 (-1.04)	-0.0377 (-1.08)	-0.0360 (-0.95)
Codecision		-5.020*** (-3.47)		Party in Government	-0.168** (-2.11)	-0.165** (-2.08)	-0.169** (-2.13)
ln(Total Rapports)			20.48*** (2.63)	EP Leader	0.178 (1.38)	0.179 (1.39)	0.168 (1.30)
ln(Salary)*Wave	0.128** (2.40)		0.356*** (3.21)	Committee Leader	0.243*** (2.69)	0.239*** (2.64)	0.248*** (2.73)
ln(Salary)*Codecision		0.577*** (3.54)		New Member State	0.177 (0.78)	0.141 (0.64)	0.409* (1.70)
ln(Salary)*ln(Rapports)			-2.406*** (-2.75)	Local Elections	0.0704 (0.18)	0.0693 (0.18)	0.0164 (0.04)
ln(Rapports)*Wave			0.439 (1.26)	Constant	7.263*** (3.63)	5.600*** (3.84)	-139.2** (-2.51)
Seniority	-0.113** (-2.25)	-0.112** (-2.25)	-0.110** (-2.15)	Country Effects?	Yes	Yes	Yes
Dropout	-3.914*** (-13.81)	-3.909*** (-13.80)	-3.930*** (-13.82)	N	3942	3942	3942
				Pseudo R ²	0.204	0.205	0.206
				AIC	4420.0	4414.8	4416.4
				BIC	4664.9	4659.7	4680.1

t statistics in parentheses; * p<0.1, ** p<0.05, *** p<0.01

Table 2 displays regression results for the effect of professionalization and parliamentary power on the decision to seek reelection to the EP. Model (1) estimates a simple effect, using only the continuous wave counter and salary data, as well as a set of individual controls. Model (2) tests the robustness of the wave counter, using the dichotomous co-decision variable. Model (3) incorporates legislative output data from the total number of reports measure. Because the models use logistic regression, the magnitude and substantive significance of the coefficient values cannot be directly interpreted. Furthermore, the interactive nature of the models makes variables in the shaded portion of the results table especially difficult to interpret substantively. I

will return to assess these variables graphically, but let us first consider what the models are telling us about the state of reelection seeking in general.

The controls perform similarly all specifications and offer an important snapshot as to which MEPs are more or less likely to run for reelection. Senior MEPs, as well as older MEPs, are less likely to seek reelection. MEPs whose national party is currently in government at home are also likely to defect from the EP, perhaps suggesting a return to national politics. Conversely, committee leaders are much more likely to seek reelection to the EP—perhaps indicating a self-selection effect for MEPs who are truly interested in EP work to seek out these leadership positions. MEPs from new member states are also somewhat more likely to seek reelection.

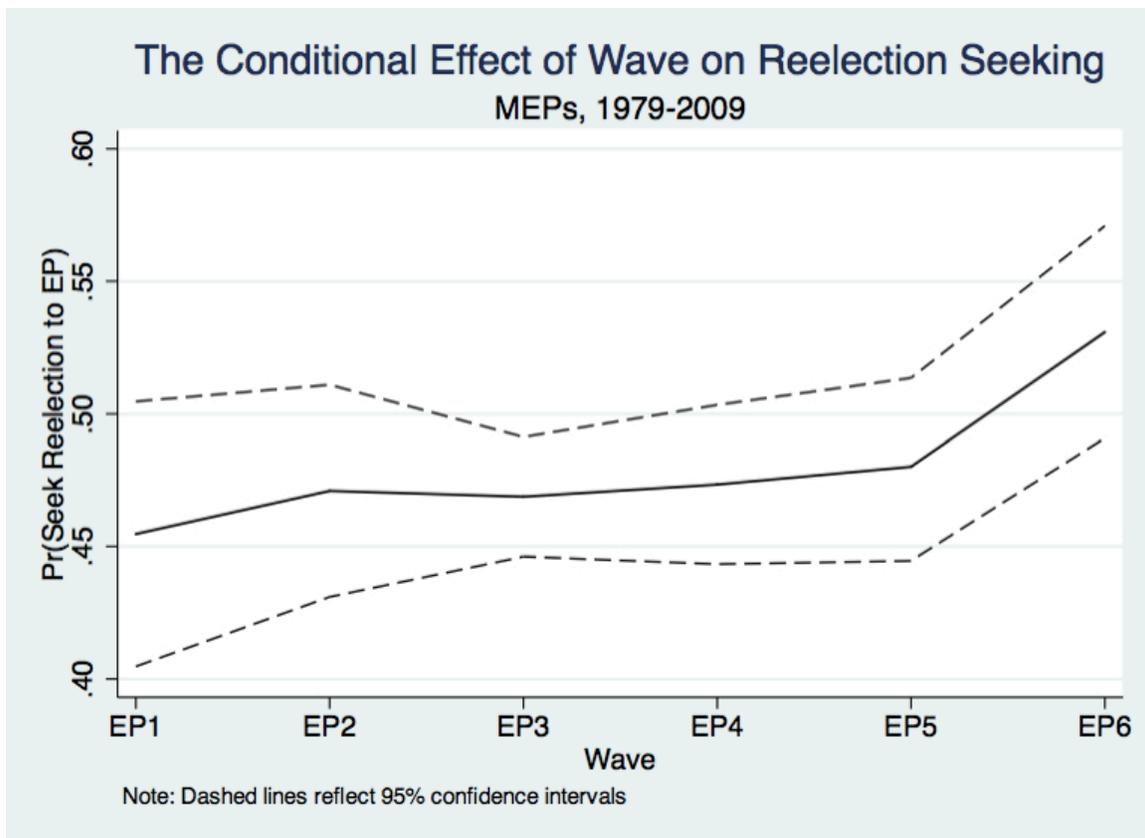


Figure 4. The Conditional Effect of Time on EP Reelection Seeking

Returning to an analysis of the key independent variables of interest, I use predicted probabilities generated by Tomz, Wittenberg, and King's (2001) CLARIFY software to estimate

the substantive effect of professionalization and power on reelection seeking, as estimated in model (3). Figure 4 displays the conditional effect of the *Wave* counter on the decision to seek reelection, when all other variables are held at their mean. In other words, if all other variables are simply taken at their averages, the conditional effect of the passage of time has a strong and positive impact on reelection seeking. For example, MEPs in the first wave had only a 45% likelihood of seeking reelection, whereas this effect increases to nearly 55% at the conclusion of the most recent parliament. Given the closeness of these predicted probabilities to the actual outcomes from the data, the regression results indicate that the passage of time—and the accumulation of legislative powers associated with it—is the principal driving feature of increased stability among MEPs. This offers support for H1. What effect, then, do the professional variables have?

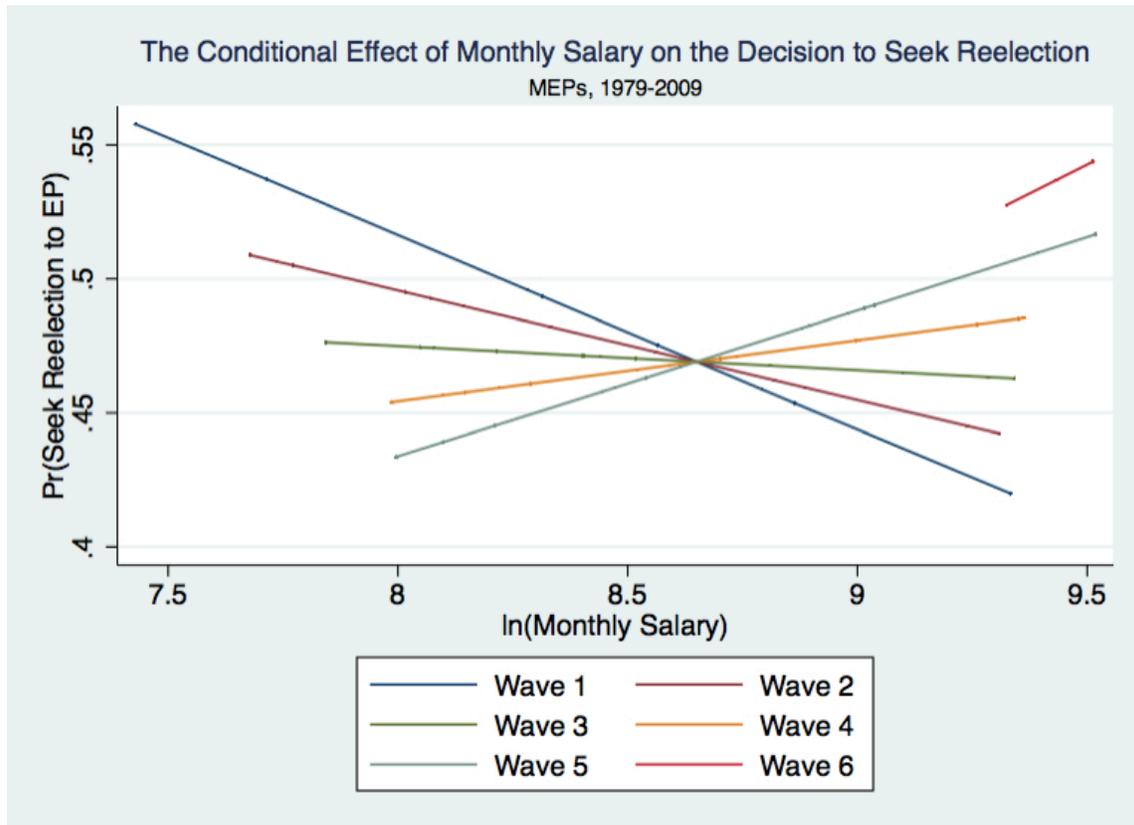


Figure 5. The Conditional Effect of Salary on EP Reelection Seeking

Figure 5 plots the conditional effect of salary on the decision to seek reelection for each subsequent wave of MEPs. Regression results are taken from model (3) and manipulate only existing values in the salary and wave data, as well as their interaction, when all other variables are held at their mean. The slope of each wave is therefore plotted to reflect the total effect of a particular salary on reelection seeking. The substantive interpretation is somewhat confusing. The graph would seem to indicate that, for MEPs in the first wave, low earning MEPs were actually *more* likely to seek reelection than high earning MEPs. Conversely, in later waves, MEPs with higher salaries do seem to seek reelection at greater rates.

An examination of confidence intervals between the different waves suggests that there may not, in fact, be substantively distinct differences between predictions for each of the intermediate waves and salary conditions. In other words, the coefficients in model (3) are statistically significant in their total effects: higher salaries have a positive effect, salaries matter more in later waves, waves with higher legislative output have a positive effect, and so forth, but the substantive effect for the professionalization variables is not particularly large or distinct from the wave trend. Although the coefficient values behave in the expected directions and are statistically significant, the substantive implications of H2 do not seem particularly large.

3.4 TOWARDS A BROADER VIEW OF MEP CAREER ADVANCEMENT

The empirical analysis indicates a strong and significant effect for the impact of the EP's course of development on the reelection seeking of its membership. The dataset provides evidence for the increasing numbers of MEPs seeking reelection as time goes on. The analysis in the previous section has suggested that a driving force behind this increase is the EP's expansion of legislative

powers. However, while the findings may not indicate that a Polsbian view of legislative institutionalization and professionalization is a wrong one, the empirical analysis suggests that variation in the professionalization variables (salary and legislative output) does not have a strong and independent effect. Why might this be so?

Considering the distribution of the data, remember that EP salaries and per capita legislative output have not varied that greatly since 1979. While certain countries may receive higher salaries than others, each of these figures has remained fairly constant over time. Thus, most of the effect of salaries on reelection seeking is probably an artifact of between country differences, which are all controlled for separately by the model. For example, once variation in Greek MEPs is controlled for, the lingering effect of a below average salary is not a large one. Within country salary variation will be considered more closely in the French, German, and Polish case studies found in Chapter Six. Where salaries may matter, however, is in their effect on the most recent 2004-2009 wave of the EP.

Harmonized salaries have the potential for greatly increasing the appeal of MEP careers for certain low-earning countries. As one Polish MEP put it, MEPs from developing Central and East European countries could “build an empire with the money” allocated to them in per diems and travel allocations alone, not even considering that their base salary exceeds national MP remunerations manifold. Consider Romanian national MPs who are some of the lowest paid in the EU and made only the equivalent of \$3480 a month in 2009. If an MEP had to choose between running for a national office at \$3480 a month and running for the EP, with its base salary of \$11,220, a strong case could be made that these high level salary differences *must* have some effect on their individual professional calculus. What remains to be seen, however, is just

how the effects of these salary differences persist over time. With the next elections for the EP not arriving until 2014, it will be at least a year before we can begin to examine this question.

This chapter has offered some initial empirical data for the career paths taken by MEPs since the initiation of direct elections in 1979. In doing so, it has presented a major new source of quantitative data for study of the EP. The findings of this chapter suggest that an expansion of the EP's influence on EU policymaking have had a tangible and sizeable impact on the incidence of MEP reelection seeking, offering support for H1. Increases in the EP's professionalization are shown to have a marginal effect, providing tepid support for H2. If the EP is increasing its visibility and power among the various European legislatures and institutions, it may be becoming a more attractive career option for ambitious politicians from across the EU. In the following chapters, I examine major country-level differences in the treatment of the EP by ambitious politicians across multiple levels of elected government. I then shift my attention to how MEPs develop fuller careers at the EP level in the fifth chapter.

4.0 FEDERALISM AND PARTY GATEKEEPING

The third chapter tested an empirical assumption about the European Parliament's development as a legislative institution, drawing the link between an increase in the Parliament's legislative powers, professionalization and the stability of its membership. In this discussion, institutional change accounted for developments in MEP career behavior. Growth in the EP's legislative power and increasingly professional internal structures both served as strong predictors for re-election seeking among MEPs. Yet, this discussion explains only a part of the story for MEP career behavior. The career behavior of MEPs is also greatly determined by a more stable source of variation, external to the EP: the political organization of an MEP's country of origin.

In this chapter, I explore variation in the national political systems of EU member states and its effect on the career behavior of MEPs. As discussed in the second chapter, one major source of variation between EU member states is the presence of federal or decentralized forms of governance. With regard to my theory for MEP career behavior, more highly federal or decentralized systems are expected to foster separate political groups, prone to career specialization at various levels of government. Thus, MEPs from federal and decentralized systems are likely to demonstrate greater levels of static ambition with regard to EP careers.

Conversely, centralized and unitary systems create a political environment in which the national government is used to being the 'only game in town' in the minds of ambitious politicians, vis-à-vis local and regional levels of government. Thus, with the additional

possibility of elected representation at the EU level, politicians from highly unitary and centralized countries are more likely to view the EP as merely a backup job—a ‘second place’ prize to national office. Accordingly, MEPs from unitary and centralized systems will demonstrate greater volatility in their tenure at the EP level. For such politicians, the EP is only a farm league or a waiting room—an added balcony over the backbench of national parliaments.

The concepts of federalism and decentralized governance take on many different guises, appearing separately or in concert. Accordingly, I begin the present chapter by outlining major differences in the two concepts. In doing so, I am careful to distinguish between federalism as a formal organizing principle for governments and decentralization as a functional differentiation in governing competencies. I then discuss the effect of these differences on the behavior and organization of national political parties—who select candidates for both national and European office and are thus the major gatekeepers of multilevel political careers.

Using the MEP dataset first presented in chapter three, I demonstrate the empirical effect of federalism and decentralization on career volatility at the EP level. I find that MEP career behavior is not only associated with temporal variations within the EP, but also in conjunction with a more fundamental source of variation within the EP’s membership—that of an MEP’s country of origin. This finding suggests that for the EP to maximize its potential to attract a cadre of professional politicians, capable of expanding the institution’s role in elected governing at the EU level, it must strive to make itself appear to be the ‘only game in town’ for politicians serious about working on European legislation.

4.1 FEDERALISM, DECENTRALIZATION, AND THE NATIONAL PARTIES

In order to construct a causal link between the sources of variation found in the political organization of EU member states and the career behavior of individual MEPs, it is first useful to separate the formal organizing principle of constitutional federalism from the more functionally oriented concept of decentralization. I then discuss the impact of this distinction on the operation of national political parties, who serve as the main management organizations for the selection and promotion of politicians at both the European and national levels. In doing so, it should become apparent why I expect more volatile MEP career behavior to emerge from unitary and centralized systems, where elected political life at the national level continues to dominate the professional aspirations of ambitious politicians.

4.1.1 Federalism and decentralization

The concept of federalism takes on nearly as many definitions as there are examples of it in the world today. Accordingly, it is helpful to begin by distinguishing which of these properties are indicative of a formal federal system and which of these characteristics are simply indicative of decentralized competencies at multiple levels of government. For the purposes of my theory, I rely on the spirit of work by Blume and Voigt (2012; 2011), who consider federalism to be a ‘constitutional choice,’ whereas decentralization is part of an evolving ‘reality’ of governance. Federal constitutions may designate multiple levels of elected government, while keeping most actual political power at the center, whereas decentralized governments may ascribe substantial budgetary discretion to subnational decision-makers on an *ad hoc* or per issue basis, without formally outlining an organizational hierarchy. For scholars familiar with theories of European

integration, this important distinction echoes Wibbels' (2000) differentiation between 'political' and 'fiscal' forms of federalism.

In their 2012 article, Blume and Voigt identify up to 25 different commonly used indicators for federalism and decentralization—ranging from constitutional decisions about the presence or absence of subnational elections to local veto powers and the degree of vertical transfers between national and local levels of government. Using factor analysis to examine correlations between these indicators, their work reveals that formal federalism does not necessarily correlate with more functional forms of decentralization at a reliably consistent level. They then go on to test the effect of their indicators on outcomes commonly ascribed to federalism—including national revenue, governing stability, and even the happiness of populations—in order to show that the concepts of federalism and decentralization not only fail to co-vary statistically, but also can have largely different effects on the governments that use them.

The important distinction between federalism and decentralization is crucial to my empirical analysis of MEP careers. If we have reason to believe that a country's domestic organization will impact the career behavior of its supranational elites, we ought to be very careful about identifying the specific mechanism at play. If MEPs from formally federal countries are remaining at the EP level for longer tenures than their colleagues from countries with unitary constitutions, then the distinction may be attributable to differing perceptions of prestige. If, however, politicians from functionally decentralized countries remain in the EP for longer than countries where major political power rests at the center, then the distinction may have something to do with qualitative differences between the types of politicians interested in work at the European level.

For example, contemporary French subnational government might be classified as having some formally federal components, insofar as the Fifth Republic currently allows for elected representatives at the communal, regional, national, and European levels and attributes some degree of self-rule to these sub-national bodies. However, the functional differentiation between the governing powers of Paris and those found Bordeaux or Lyon remains pronounced. By contrast, while the array of elected offices found in the Belgian federal hierarchy, with its local and regional governments, shares many similarities with the French on paper, the regional parliaments of Brussels, Flanders, and Wallonia retain a large degree of veto power over the bulk of legislation passed in the national Chamber of Deputies. Thus, the decision for a French politician to serve in a representative capacity outside of Paris is likely to differ from that of a Belgian politician's decision to seek elected office outside of Brussels, even though both countries might be viewed as being 'federal' to some extent.

The facility of national politicians to work at multiple levels is not only likely to be correlated with simply the existing number of jobs available, but also with their qualitative differences. Thus a German politician interested in health or cultural policy will likely prefer work in his or her regional *Landtag*, because health and cultural policy decisions are made primarily at the regional level. Similarly, a sitting German MEP was quick to identify his interest in the EP on the grounds that his specialization in agricultural policy was most directly impacted by decisions made at the EU level.²⁰ Conversely, in countries less accustomed to functional differentiation corresponding to territorial levels, a lack of appreciation for the separate policy functions of the EU and EP is more likely to pervade the organization of both political parties, as

²⁰ MEP, personal interview, March 7, 2012. European Parliament, Brussels.

well as the opportunity structures of individual politicians. I discuss this link in more detail in the following sections.

4.1.2 Connecting subnational and supranational forms of representation

I have thus far identified two distinct bases of variation for the study of subnational governments—formal federalism and functional decentralization—and suggested that these variables may yield very different outcomes, both for governing realities, as well as for the career behavior of individual politicians. However, how does variation at the subnational level apply to our study of European legislators? To consider the effect of subnational variation on supranational careers, it is helpful to revisit Reif and Schmitt's (1980) notion of the European Parliament as 'second order' elections. The 'second order' election hypothesis suggests that European elections, being of lower interest to Europeans than their national analogues, will have lower turnout rates and privilege fringe parties—whose diehard supporters are more likely to show up to the polls and attract other votes with their 'hearts,' rather than their 'minds.'

It is worth noting that the authors' findings are virtually parallel to those of Hough and Jeffery (2006; 2001), who examine the relative importance and outcomes of regional and subnational elections in formally federal contexts. Thus, the supranational context may function in a similar way to the domestic one when operating along multiple levels of government. Both voters and politicians likely view elections at the subnational and supranational levels as being of 'second order' in their importance to national ones.

While second order elections may bolster the electoral results for a few, fringe politicians and their militant followers, it is far more likely that mainstream politicians and voters alike will view the result of these competitions as less interesting than those of national elections, even if

the devolution of power to both subnational and supranational government may indicate that the elections are just as consequential in their outcomes. Regardless of popular demand, however, political parties have a rational incentive to maximize election results at all levels of competition, regardless of their interest to the general public. Accordingly, it is worth considering how national political party organizations handle recruitment and selection strategies for politicians at different levels of office.

4.1.3 Political parties and multi-level elections

Deschouwer (2003) argues for the use of a renewed ‘multi-level language’ in the treatment of political parties at multiple levels of elected government. In his view, political parties in federal systems are likely to differ from party organizations in unitary systems, asserting that “since two different games are being played, one at the federal and one at the regional level... one can expect an internal difference of the political parties” (p. 221). Recognizing that electoral contests are held at multiple levels of government, parties in federal contexts are likely to organize their recruitment and selection strategies differently from parties in more unitary contexts. As a result, separate levels of the party organization consider distinct pools of candidates, based upon the specific level of the electoral contest. The more pronounced the distinction between multiple levels of governing, the more developed the lower levels of the party organization will be.

Most scholarly work on multiple levels of party organization has discussed potential coordination problems for the national party organization, when local actors have an increased role in the selection and recruitment of candidates at the subnational level. Van Biezen and Hopkin (2006) refer to this problem as a potential crisis of leadership, with both candidates and voters unsure of whether to take cues from the national or subnational party platform. This

intuitive confusion is clearly demonstrated by the American system, where state politicians must decide whether to ‘ride the coattails’ of national party leaders or avoid them, altogether, in favor of a locally focused campaign.

Others consider the potential organizational perils of operating political parties at multiple levels in a cohesive manner (Fabre 2011; van Houten 2009; Thorlakson 2006, 2009). Should party mechanisms allow for candidates to be ‘pushed up’ the line to national office or should parties be more concerned with allowing subnational organizations to autonomously manage their own candidates, free from central party control? In societies with pronounced cleavages present only in some regions, this debate can be of great importance (see, for example, Caramani's (2004) work on ethnic fragmentation and national party management strategies).

Whether or not federalism complicates the organization and management of political parties, it is obvious that parties are more likely to diversify their organizational structures—and thus, multiply candidate selection and recruitment strategies—in federal and decentralized systems. Poguntke (2007) examines the effect of party selection on both national and EP lists by local organizations, showing that the decision to draw German MEPs from local, rather than national, pools of candidates has a diminishing effect on the previous elected experience of German MEPs. Meanwhile, Chhibber and Kollman's (2004) work on the construction of national party systems discusses an inverse effect for party organizations in systems moving towards more central forms of governance, as parties are able to centralize management strategies in increasingly nationally oriented systems.

If it is reasonable for parties in federal and decentralized systems to have greater organizational capacities for managing elections at multiple levels, then there is not only a psychological effect at play in the minds of federal MEPs—used to picking a level at which to

work—but also a reinforcing organizational effect as well. In the most extreme cases, German MEPs, just as their colleagues from the *Landtage*, answer to local party leaders. Conversely, all French MEPs eventually answer to the party secretariat in Paris.

4.2 A MULTI-LEVEL THEORY FOR MEP CAREER PATHS

The previous section addressed key theoretical differences in the concepts of federalism and decentralization, as well as their connection to the organization of political parties and consequent effect on MEP career behavior. In the current section, I emphasize a set of theoretical claims for the effect of government organization on the professional behavior of MEPs. In doing so, it should become clear that while many politicians view the EP as a ‘second order’ legislature on balance, its comparative importance with national political life is likely to vary according to the organization of domestic governments—particularly the extent to which governing structures are federal or decentralized.

4.2.1 Federalism and career specialists

The logic of federalism is often specific to the particular country under consideration: subnational autonomy may bolster national ethnic minority rights; differences in lawmaking abilities may predispose certain levels of government to consider some policy questions more so than others; separation of powers across multiple levels may diffuse the chance of domination by a central governing majority. In her authoritative opus on the subject, Norris (2008) argues that power sharing institutions, such as those found under federalism, may be advantageous to

maintaining governing stability and domestic harmony. How, then, might federalism impact the careers of politicians *beyond* the national level?

In the second chapter, I developed a general argument for why political parties, as gatekeepers of politicians at both national and supranational levels, have incentives to designate separate ‘teams’ of politicians at each level of elected government. I argued that political parties in federal systems, already used to fielding candidates across formally distinct levels of elected office, will use diverse candidate recruitment and selection strategies to identify the politicians most suitable for each elected level. There are a number of reasons why an impulse towards specialization at different levels of office may be desirable for both the politician and his or her political party.

Specialized careers at one level of government allow politicians to maximize their influence in specific legislative areas of interest over the course of an extended career. Individuals used to working at one level of government better learn the system, create valuable interpersonal networks across party lines, and have a chance to promote issues that are important to them. One green MEP mentioned his interest in the environmental policymaking conducted at the EP level as indicative of his decision to build a career at the European and not the national level.²¹ Similarly, a German initially serving in her local *Landtag* switched to European office because of her interest in protecting organized labor from the effects of globalization.²² In both instances, the MEPs’ national parties identified them as individuals with interests better suited for EP (and not national or local) service and continued to nominate them for office at the European level.

²¹ MEP, personal interview, June 8, 2010, European Parliament, Brussels.

²² MEP, personal interview, June 8, 2010, European Parliament, Brussels.

In the context of the EP, such ‘policy specialists’—as Bale and Taggart (2005) or Navarro (2009) would likely identify them—have an increased chance of advancing policy agendas, either by relying on their acquired seniority in the EP or by revealing their expertise in certain policy domains. The legislative influence afforded to these long-serving policy specialists clearly benefits national party programs and will be explored in the following chapter in greater detail. For the present, it is worth considering how parties are more or less likely to identify potentially valuable politicians across all levels of representation.

It is the contention of this chapter to test whether or not parties in federal systems are the driving mechanism of MEP career stability—organized across multiple spheres of government and accustomed to triaging potential candidates to the level most suitable to their interests and abilities. Consider, however, the opposite situation suggested by this proposition. In a unitary system, the main candidate management strategy for political parties is not to match candidates with their ideal level of representation, but rather to funnel the most talented or loyal politicians to the political center. If unitary party systems therefore focus on only one level of elected representation, the national one, then MEP careers will be more volatile in these contexts, as they are taken from the wings of European office and moved onto center stage.

Every single French elected official interviewed for this project, regardless of their political affiliation, noted the capriciousness of national political parties in directing their careers, as they routinely witnessed colleagues sent from the EP to fill seats in the *Assemblée Nationale* or shifted advisory roles in the *Élysée*. One former French MEP detailed her career in this way. Initially elected to the national parliament, she lost reelection and was moved to Brussels by her party to “wait for the next national election.” Two years into her MEP mandate, she once again

was offered a seat back in Paris, as her party was committed to maintaining a female candidate from the region.²³

The French delegation, although similar in size to both Germany and the UK in terms of EP seat allocations, routinely experienced the most turnover of any country in the dataset, with most French seats alternating between at least two MEPs over the course of a given five-year mandate. This specific case will be explored in greater detail in the sixth chapter. For now, it is worth considering whether or not the driving mechanism influencing French MEP careers is also generalizable in all unitary EU member states.

4.2.2 Decentralization and the centripetal hypothesis

While Norris (2008) and others suggest that formal, federally organized constitutions may be useful for delegating responsibility, it is also worth considering the effect of the more functionally (but not necessarily formally) decentralized modes of governance present in many European countries on our study of MEP career behavior. A rival hypothesis to the Norris position is that the ‘centripetal’ nature of governance—where ‘inclusive’ and ‘authoritative’ governing power is centralized and not delegated—is more likely to result in system stability and efficiency gains (Gerring, Thacker, and Moreno 2005). While the centripetal hypothesis may naturally rival the normative claims for quality democracy evinced by Norris, what might a more or less centripetal system of government mean for MEP career behavior?

In the centripetal hypothesis, formal indicators of federalism are adjusted using functional characteristics of centralized governance. Taking cues from Pascal’s assertion that “plurality

²³ MP, personal interview, November 15, 2011, *Assemblée Nationale*, Paris.

which does not reduce itself to unity is anarchy” (in Gerring, Thacker, and Moreno 2005: 16), the authors advocate for a centripetal government, working to ‘focus’ power to the center. We know from our previous discussion of work by Blume and Voigt (2012) that this sort of functional centralization has an empirically different effect on a number of governing outcomes than does formal constitutional federalism; therefore, the result for centripetal governance on MEP career behavior may also be distinct from the federal hypothesis discussed above.

Most centripetal systems have strong national parties whose job is to focus power at the center and avoid the confusion of multiple levels of government. Thus, centripetal countries may have a destabilizing effect on MEP careers, as in unitary systems. However, the aim of centripetalism, in the view of Gerring et al., is to increase governing ‘authority’ and ‘inclusion’ at all levels of government. Thus, MEPs from centripetal countries may find their desire to move from EP service to national office desirable for participating in central decision-making and not just indicative of national office being more prestigious. Conversely, less centripetal systems may encourage diffuse governing authority and separate bases of power at the political periphery—even if these multiple levels of government do not carry the formal designation of those found in federal entities.

Thus, while the direction of the federal and centripetal hypotheses may be the same, with more centralized and unitary forms of governance increasing MEP volatility and more diffuse or federal regimes engendering the greater stability of EP membership, the theoretical and statistical basis for the twin concepts of federalism and decentralization are distinct and can be tested separately to better account for all possible mechanisms at play. That is, the same effect on MEP careers may be found in countries with federal constitutions as well as in formally unitary countries with high degrees of functional decentralization. These effects can be empirically

estimated using separate sets of variables, which will be discussed at greater length in the following section.

4.2.3 Hypotheses and additional explanations

Following from the above theoretical discussion, we can summarize the anticipated effect of federalism and decentralization of domestic governments on MEP careers in the form of two related hypotheses:

H3a. MEPs from federal systems will build more extensive careers in the European Parliament than MEPs from unitary systems.

In keeping with the previous discussion, I expect that MEPs from federal countries will demonstrate less volatility at the EP than their analogous cohort from unitary systems. This effect can be tested in a number of ways. We might expect MEPs from federal systems to seek reelection to the EP at greater rates than unitary MEPs—indicating a desire to specialize in EU policymaking and increase their seniority within the EP. However, we might also notice this effect in terms of an MEP's career path, *following* their tenure in the EP. If MEPs from federal systems are mostly finishing their career after their EP mandate, while their unitary system colleagues are seeking further office at the national level, then we can identify the effect of federalism not only on EP stability, but also on the fuller career paths of MEPs beyond the European level. Both of these contentions will be addressed in the following empirical analysis.

H3b. MEPs from functionally decentralized countries will build more extensive careers in the European Parliament than MEPs from centripetal systems.

Acknowledging that the mechanism at play may be the same for MEPs from countries where functional competencies are decentralized—but no formally federal constitution exists—we should consider that the corollary hypothesis for such systems might also impact MEP career behavior. If we simply classify federal countries by their formal constitutional documents, our roughshod measures may be open to omitted variable bias in the empirical analysis. H3b, a logical corollary to H3a, suggests the additional value of considering multiple forms of government decentralization.

Whereas the previous chapter examined the effect of institutional sources of variation (evolution of EP power and its professionalization), this chapter is more concerned with domestic sources of variation on the similar outcome of MEP career paths. Thus, a similar host of controls will matter for our consideration of the effects of federalism and decentralization on MEP career behavior. These include both temporal and political factors, as well as individual demographic differences between MEPs. Nonetheless, the additional value of the present chapter is its consideration of MEP careers *beyond* their time in the EP. Using similar variables from the previous chapter, I also consider differences in the future careers of MEPs after their present term in office. I will elaborate upon this discussion in the following section.

4.3 TESTING THE EFFECT OF FEDERALISM AND DECENTRALIZATION

To test for the effect of federalism and decentralization on MEP career behavior, I use individual-level data for all MEPs in all completed waves of the EP since the initiation of direct elections, 1979-2009. The basic data is collected in the same way as in previous chapters. Sources include Høyland, Sircar, and Hix's (2009) tool for extracting publicly available data

from the EP website, as well as a variety of public records kept by the EP archives in Luxembourg, national political archives and research library holdings. Main indicators for federalism and decentralization are taken from the Norris (2008) and Gerring, Thacker, and Moreno (2005) volumes. The unit of analysis is individual MEP mandate, with a total of 3942 observations in the full sample, across 6 waves of parliament. The dataset is fully comprehensive, including all MEPs in all completed EP settings. Missing data, although relatively minimal, is distributed randomly across variables, MEP backgrounds, and time periods—suggesting a lack of major concern that gaps in the data will bias the empirical results.

4.3.1 Data and coding choices

The main dependent variable is an unordered indicator for an individual MEP's career **Outcome** following the conclusion of the present wave of the EP. The variable is dichotomized to test an MEP's decision to **Not Seek Reelection** to the EP, **Leave Politics** entirely (retire, private business, etc.), run for a position as **National MP**, present his or her candidacy for a **National Executive** (or be assigned a cabinet portfolio), join an **EU Institution** (such as the European Court of Justice or the Commission), or simply return to one of a number of positions in **National Politics** (combining values from both national MPs and executives). The dependent variable is clearly indicated for each of the models considered.

Table 3. Select Federalism and Decentralization Scores, 2009

	Federalism	Local Elections	Anarchism
Luxembourg	0	0	0
France	0	1	0.5
Poland	0	1	0.5
Sweden	0	1	0
Netherlands	1	0	0.5
Austria	1	2	0.5
Germany	1	2	2
Italy	1	2	1
Spain	1	2	1
United Kingdom	1	2	0

Note: Federalism (Yes=1, No=0), taken from Norris (2008); Local Elections (Yes=2, Some=1, None=0) take from Beck et al. (2001); Anarchism (see § 4.3.1 for coding) taken from Gerring et al. (2005).

The independent variables of interest are three commonly used indicators of government federalism or decentralization. Selected values for the indicators are displayed in Table 3, in an effort to support the claim that federalism and decentralization are theoretically and empirically distinct concepts. **Local Elections** is a trichotomous indicator of the presence of direct subnational elections in a given MEP's home country and is taken from the *dpi_state* indicator initially developed by Beck et al. (2001, as cited in Teorell et al. 2011). Countries with no direct subnational elections were coded with 0, while countries with either a directly elected subnational executive or legislature were coded with 1 and both a directly elected subnational legislature and executive were coded with 2. Higher values of **Local Elections** indicate an important source of variation for formal federal organization. Another important indicator formal indicator of federalism is the dichotomous **Federalism** indicator, taken from Norris (2008). Positive values indicate a country with specific mentions of federalism in the national constitution.

To account for the possibility that functional decentralization, even in formally unitary contexts, may lead to specific MEP career outcomes, I also rely on a recoded version of the Gerring, Thacker, and Moreno's (2005) centripetalism index. Each country in the sample was first assessed a trichotomous value based upon their constitutional organization (0=unitary, 1=semi-federal, 2=federal). They were then assigned a separate three-point value, based upon the balance of power and congruence between within the national legislature between the lower (national) and upper (subnational) house. If the membership of the upper house was highly incongruent (as in Germany, where the upper house is nominated by the subnational *Länder*), the country was coded with 2. If the upper house was directly elected from the same constituency as the lower house (a national one), or did not exist at all, it was coded with 0. Intermediate values (reflecting some power over the lower or some electoral differences) received 1 point. **Anarchism**²⁴ is the resulting average of both federal and decentralized measures of power and accounts for the theoretical possibility posited by H3b that the mechanism at play is not one of formal federalism, but functional decentralization.

All three independent variables were updated for each country at the end of the six waves of the EP and vary in accordance with the constitutional evolution witnessed in a number of EU member states since the 1970s. The indicators do not show significant degrees of piece-wise correlation, suggesting reason to believe that each indicator captures a distinct facet of either federalism or decentralization. A number of familiar controls were also included on an individual MEP basis, including **Seniority** (number of completed terms), **Dropout** MEPs who left the EP prior to the end of term, dummies for EP leaders (discussed in more detail in the next chapter),

²⁴ Anarchy is the term used by the authors to describe the opposite of centripetalism.

demographic controls, dummies for party group membership, and year effects by wave of the EP. Descriptive statistics for all variables used in the chapter are displayed in Table 4.

Table 4. Descriptive Statistics (Chapter Four models)

Variable	Obs	Mean	Std. Dev.	Min	Max
No Reelection	3948	0.474	0.499	0	1
National MP	3948	0.123	0.329	0	1
National Politcs	3948	0.168	0.374	0	1
Local Elections	3948	1.502	0.683	0	2
Anarchism	3948	1.303	0.678	0	2
Federalism	3948	0.644	0.479	0	1
Seniority	3942	1.561	0.864	1	6
Dropout	3948	0.124	0.329	0	1
EP Leader	3948	0.092	0.295	0	3
Committee Leader	3948	0.192	0.394	0	1
Age	3948	55.299	9.982	26	90
Female	3948	0.241	0.428	0	1
Christian Democrat	3948	0.359	0.480	0	1
Socialist	3948	0.311	0.463	0	1
Non Inscrit	3948	0.048	0.214	0	1

4.3.2 Results and analysis

I begin by estimating the effect of federalism and decentralization on likely outcomes of MEP career behavior. As all of the dependent variables used in this sequence are dichotomous, the lack of normal distribution in the data makes OLS unsuitable for use. Accordingly, I rely on the logit link function, which allows us to estimate the impact of the independent variables on the outcome's likelihood of occurring. Beta coefficients are displayed in Table 5, including t-statistics and conventional indicators of statistical significance.

Table 5. The Effect of Federalism and Decentralization on MEP Careers

<i>DV:</i>	(1) <i>No Reelection</i>	(2) <i>National MP</i>	(3) <i>National Politics</i>	(4) <i>National Politics</i>	(5) <i>National Politics</i>
Local Elections	-0.198*** (-3.06)	0.025 (0.29)	-0.203*** (-2.93)	-0.119[^] (-1.48)	-0.175** (-2.27)
Anarchism	-0.099[^] (1.53)	-0.118 (1.29)	-0.147** (2.06)	-0.091 (1.07)	
Federalism	-0.229** (-2.39)	-0.263** (-1.99)	-0.303*** (-2.79)	-0.130 (-1.05)	
Seniority (Continuous)	0.056 (1.21)	-0.234*** (-3.03)	-0.195*** (-3.07)	-0.263*** (-3.62)	-0.262*** (-3.61)
Dropout	4.021*** (14.73)	1.874*** (15.74)		2.851*** (23.85)	2.489*** (9.56)
Dropout*Local Elections					0.272 (1.60)
Age	0.068*** (14.47)	-0.012** (-2.13)	-0.015*** (-3.16)	-0.013** (-2.46)	-0.013** (-2.48)
Female	-0.059 (-0.68)	-0.011 (-0.29)	-0.081 (-0.82)	-0.004 (-0.14)	-0.001 (-0.03)
EP Leader	-0.098 (-0.79)	-0.133 (-0.69)	0.073 (0.50)	0.089 (0.55)	0.093 (0.58)
Committee Leader	-0.248** (-2.64)	0.126 (0.97)	0.168 (1.61)	0.218* (1.78)	0.222* (1.83)
Constant	-4.126*** (-13.50)	-1.146*** (-3.34)	0.115 (0.39)	-0.784** (-2.37)	-0.698** (-2.08)
N	3688	3891	3942	3891	3891
AIC	4505.6	2679.7	3531.2	2883.4	2880.3
BIC	4618.4	2792.5	3637.9	2996.2	2986.9

Note: t statistics in parentheses, [^] p<0.1 (one tail), * p<0.1, ** p<0.05, *** p<0.01; controls for EP Wave effects, Christian Democrat, Socialist, and Non Inscrit MEPs also included in regressions

Model (1) displays the effect of federalism and decentralization on an MEP's decision to not seek reelection to the EP after a given term. Both the presence of local elections in a given country, as well as the absence of centripetalism in the country's governing system, have a significant and dampening effect on an MEP's decision *not* to seek reelection to the EP. In other words, MEPs from more federal and decentralized contexts are more likely to remain in the EP for multiple terms of elected office, offering support for H3.

The main controls also perform in logical ways: dropping out coincides with the decision not to seek reelection; older MEPs are more likely to leave the EP; committee leaders are less so. Although time effects are considered²⁵, the model shows an important theoretical improvement upon the analysis performed in chapter three. Not only are MEPs more likely to seek reelection over time, but also the organizational background of their home country is consistently important for the stability of MEP careers.

Model (2) examines the likelihood of an MEP to seek election to their national after service in the EP. Positive outcomes for the dependent variable include MEPs who ran for national MP positions *after* the considered wave of the EP, as well as *during* it. Recalling the three 'ideal types' for MEP career behavior discussed at the end of the first chapter, model (2) provides evidence of MEPs who use the EP as a 'springboard' for national legislative office. Once again, we find support for the federalism hypothesis, with MEPs from federal countries seeking further election in their national parliaments at lower rates than unitary colleagues. Seniority and age also have negative effects on the use of the EP as a springboard, indicating that after a certain point in an MEP's career, politicians are likely to stay put. This finding is also

²⁵ Both 'time effect' dummies for each wave of the EP were used, as well as a count variable for the six waves of the EP. Results did not vary significantly across specification. All reported models use wave dummies.

consistent with the theory of ‘springboard’ uses of the EP. In other words, we would expect volatility among MEPs to be at its highest during their first elected term.

Models (3) and (4) test for the likelihood of MEPs to pursue positions in national legislatures, as well as in national executives. The dependent variable in the models is less restrictive than in model (2) and includes MEPs who not only became MPs, but also cabinet ministers or national executives (*viz.*, prime ministers, presidents, sub-national governors). The models test whether or not federalism and decentralization have an effect on the use of the EP as a ‘springboard’ not only to domestic legislatures, but other types of visible national positions. Models (3) and (4) perform similarly to the second model, suggesting that MEPs from federal or decentralized contexts are comparatively less likely to use the EP as a springboard to national office.

The main difference between models (3) and (4) is the inclusion or exclusion of the dichotomous indicator for dropout MEPs. Notably, MEPs who left the EP before the end of their elected term display a strong and significant chance of pursuing office at the national level. This effect is so strong that it nearly washes out the significance of the main independent variables of interest in model (4), although the proxy for formal federalism—the presence of sub-national elected government—remains a significant predictor for MEP career stability. The strength of the dropout variable suggests that there may be an interactive effect between the decision to dropout of the EP early and an MEP’s federal background.

Model (5) displays the interaction effect for an MEP’s decision to seek a position in national politics, based upon his or her federal background and having dropped out of the EP before the end of term. The coefficients perform similarly to previous regressions, both in terms of sign and significance. As coefficient values in logistic regressions are not directly

interpretable and the interactive nature of the model may make substantive interpretation misleading at best, I analyze the model using the CLARIFY estimator developed by Tomz, Wittenberg, and King (2001).

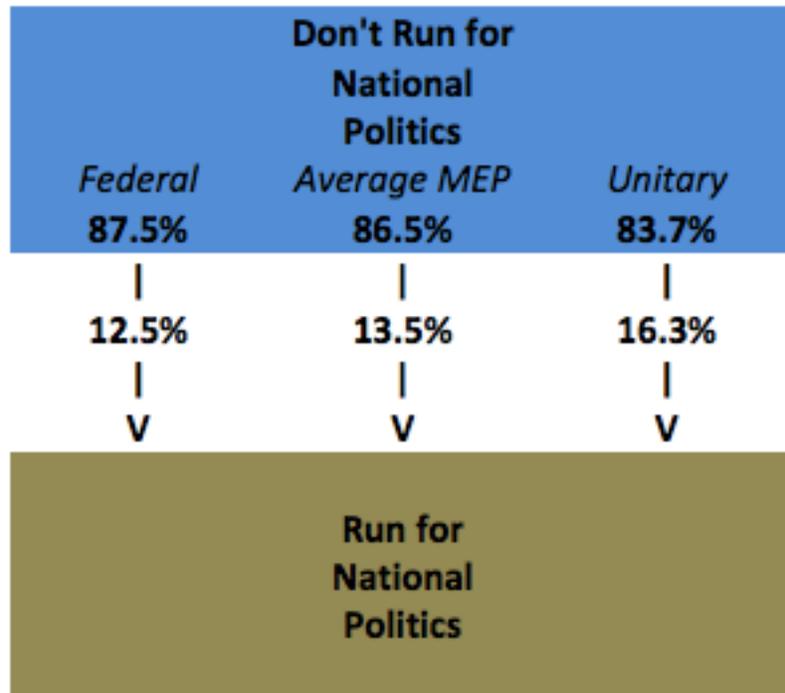


Figure 6. The Interplay between National and EU Politics

Figure 6 displays predicted probabilities for the effect of federalism on the decision to seek national office after work in the EP. While only 13.5% of all MEPs in the dataset were likely to run for national office, with all variables held at their means, the effect is notably higher among MEPs from systems with no sub-national elections—where more than 16% of all MEPs used the EP as a springboard for national office. By contrast, federal MEPs show a lower than average rate of using the EP as a springboard at only 12.5% of the sample. Model (5) also displays a strong and significant effect for the behavior of dropout MEPs, regardless of their desired career outcome. When only dropout MEPs are considered, regardless of their federal

background, a full 53.6% of the observations sought a future posting in national office following their early leave from the EP.

Interestingly enough, there is no significant difference between dropouts from federal systems and dropouts from unitary contexts, suggesting that politicians with the *greatest* ambition for national office—that is, a strong enough desire for national office that they leave their current job in the EP—do so at similar rates, regardless of the country context. Thus, while the average MEP from a unitary country may use the EP as springboard to national office more often than their federal colleagues, the majority of all MEPs leaving office early (although this includes only about 13% of all MEPs in the dataset) do so for the purposes of seeking national office.

Initial results from the full dataset reveal some interesting findings in support of H3a and H3b. While both formal federalism and functional decentralization affect the decision of MEPs not to seek reelection to the EP in similar ways (with more federal and more decentralized countries demonstrating lower rates of volatility among their EP delegations), the formal indicators of federalism—particularly the presence of local elections—are more robust when we consider the specific outcome of MEPs interested in national office. This finding indicates that the data may offer more support for H3a than for H3b.

The theoretical implication is that a country's formal institutional arrangement, as codified in the referent constitutional document, apparently has a more robust effect on the multi-level careers of its politicians than does the *ad hoc* arrangements of specific governing competencies. In other words, politicians and political parties already used to working across formally distinct levels of elected representation are more likely to treat the EP as 'just another level' of governance and not as a farm league for national politics.

4.3.3 Career paths across multiple levels

So far, the analysis finds evidence of increased volatility for MEP careers in formally federal countries, offering some support for the claims made by H3. However, the dependent variable is fairly expansive, providing us with only a rough gauge of the possible outcomes for MEPs to take following a given wave of parliament. The decision to take one job over another is not always binary, however, and the full dataset provides us with information about the future careers of MEPs across a number of possible venues.

MEPs careers were also coded for the possibility of **Leaving Politics** (retire, die, enter the private sector, etc.), seeking a position within the **National Executive** only, seeking a position in another **EU Institution** (like the Commission or ECJ), and seeking **Reelection the EP**, specifically. Using multinomial logistic regression, we can also examine the relative tradeoff between all of these options, when a specific outcome is held as a baseline.

Table 6. MEP Career Outcomes Instead of Seeking Reelection to the EP

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
<i>Base: Seek Reelection</i>	<i>Leave Politics</i>	<i>Nat'l Exec.</i>	<i>EU Instit.</i>	<i>Nat'l MP</i>
Local Elections	-0.201*** (-2.78)	-0.476*** (-3.33)	-0.439 (-1.13)	-0.119 (-1.26)
Anarchism	-0.109 (1.51)	-0.021 (0.13)	-0.148 (-0.39)	-0.121 (1.25)
Federalism	-0.211** (-1.96)	0.0765 (0.37)	-0.370 (-0.74)	-0.291** (-2.05)
Seniority (Continuous)	0.130** (2.55)	-0.137 (-1.11)	0.559** (2.30)	-0.190** (-2.32)
Dropout	3.220*** (11.59)	5.667*** (18.32)	4.942*** (9.53)	4.246*** (15.12)
Age	0.0968*** (17.51)	0.0298*** (2.83)	0.0457** (2.10)	0.0200*** (3.10)
Female	0.0357 (1.50)	0.0332 (1.11)	-0.867 (-1.38)	0.00473 (0.11)
EP Leader	-0.107 (-0.77)	0.339 (1.22)	-1.489 (-1.57)	-0.119 (-0.59)
Committee Leader	-0.417*** (-3.83)	0.132 (0.61)	0.361 (0.73)	0.0118 (0.08)
Constant	-6.512*** (-17.93)	-4.512*** (-6.53)	-23.19*** (-12.45)	-2.216*** (-5.51)
Party Effects?	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Time Effects?	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
N	3739	3739	3739	3739
Pseudo R ²	0.1878	0.1878	0.1878	0.1878
AIC	6921.1	6921.1	6921.1	6921.1
BIC	7356.9	7356.9	7356.9	7356.9

Table 6 provides the results for these outcomes, in comparison to the baseline decision of MEPs who decided to seek reelection. MEPs from formally federal countries are not only less likely than their colleagues from unitary countries to leave politics (Model 1) rather than seek reelection to the EP, but they are also less likely to seek national executive or parliamentary positions (Models 2 and 4). These findings are similar to those of the previous section, revealing the lower incidence of volatility in federal EP delegations.

Table 7. MEP Career Outcomes Instead of Seeking National MP Election

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
<i>Base: National MP</i>	<i>Leave Politics</i>	<i>Nat'l Exec.</i>	<i>EU Instit.</i>	<i>Reelection</i>
Local Elections	-0.0817 (-0.84)	-0.356** (-2.50)	-0.320 (-0.83)	0.119 (1.26)
Anarchism	-0.0116 (-0.11)	-0.0999 (-0.61)	-0.269 (-0.69)	-0.121 (-1.25)
Federalism	0.0803 (0.54)	0.368* (1.71)	-0.0782 (-0.16)	0.291** (2.05)
Seniority (Continuous)	0.320*** (3.85)	0.0530 (0.40)	0.749*** (3.04)	0.190** (2.32)
Dropout	-1.026*** (-7.18)	1.421*** (7.11)	0.696 (1.47)	-4.246*** (-15.12)
Age	0.0769*** (10.61)	0.00987 (0.96)	0.0257 (1.18)	-0.0200*** (-3.10)
Female	0.0310 (0.72)	0.0285 (0.58)	-0.872 (-1.39)	-0.00473 (-0.11)
EP Leader	0.0117 (0.06)	0.458 (1.52)	-1.370 (-1.45)	0.119 (0.59)
Committee Leader	-0.429*** (-2.75)	0.120 (0.55)	0.349 (0.70)	-0.0118 (-0.08)
Constant	-4.296*** (-9.10)	-2.296*** (-3.36)	-20.98*** (-11.29)	2.216*** (5.51)
Party Effects?	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Time Effects?	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
N	3739	3739	3739	3739
Pseudo R ²	0.1878	0.1878	0.1878	0.1878
AIC	6921.1	6921.1	6921.1	6921.1
BIC	7356.9	7356.9	7356.9	7356.9

Table 7 provides similarly organized results, based in comparison to a baseline of those MEPs who decide to seek election to their national legislatures. The results provide yet another way of supporting the findings from the principal analysis. MEPs from federal systems are significantly more likely than their unitary state colleagues to seek reelection to the EP than to seek election to national legislatures (Model 4). A further finding of interest is that MEPs from formally federal countries would rather run for national executive postings than national parliamentary ones, but the sign is reversed when countries with subnational elections are considered (both in Model 2). This particular finding is probably driven by the small set of relevant cases in both of these categories and should be interpreted with caution. Nonetheless, the table does provide some additional support for our view of federalism and its effect on the broader career paths of MEPs.

4.4 CONCLUSION

The previous chapter examined the evolution of the European Parliament as a legislative institution and the subsequent stabilization of its membership. In *Field of Dreams*, Kevin Costner tells us, “If we build it, they will come.” Along similar lines, the third chapter argued that, ‘If you improve it, they will stay longer.’ The present chapter asks a similar question—what predicts the long-run stability of membership in the EP—but answers it using a very different logic, looking instead to differences in the constituent member states of the EP.

I argue that federal and decentralized countries are more likely than their unitary or centralized counterparts to have stable MEP delegations. The chapter draws a causal link between formal federalism, functional decentralization, and the organization of national political

parties across multiple levels of government. It then hypothesizes that both decentralization and federalism will positively effect the stability of membership, albeit via different causal mechanisms. Using data from all waves of the EP and its full membership, I find some support for both variants of the hypothesis, although countries with local elections (a formal indicator of federalism) are the most likely to have stable delegations to the EP.

The connection between federalism and career specialization is another important piece of the puzzle in our exploration of MEP career behavior. However, why does it matter? In the following chapter, I examine the EP's internal balance of power via the assignment of legislative committee reports. The analysis reveals the benefit of experience and seniority within the institution—experience that can only come with MEPs who are committed to staying in the EP for multiple terms of service. As I explain in the next chapter, for national political parties to achieve desired policy goals within the EP, they must adapt candidate recruitment and selection processes to benefit from this burgeoning EP seniority system.

As the contrasting French and German case studies in the sixth chapter will then show, parties who prevent MEPs from achieving seniority in the EP—constantly shuffling them between national and European office—stand to lose the most in the allocation of committee reports, particularly when politicians with greater levels of experience in EP negotiations are ready and available to do the job. For the moment, the present chapter is content to explain one important source of variation in MEP term length—the effect of federalism and decentralization on the stability of MEP careers. For the EP to become 'the only game in town' and not a dreary second order legislature, it is first incumbent upon the national political parties to recognize which of their politicians are best suited for EP service. However, accomplishing this goal may come at the expense of age-old national differences in the view of multi-level politics.

5.0 RAPPORTEUR SELECTION AND INTERNAL ADVANCEMENT

I have thus far argued that the career behavior of MEPs has become somewhat of an institution itself, developed into a set of spoken and unspoken rules for professional advancement that are a reaction to both the European Parliament's internal professionalization, as well as its relationship with other national and international institutions. However, MEP career behavior is not only related to questions of external advancement—the decision to build ones career at the European level or use ones time in the EP as a steppingstone towards further national office—but rather, MEP career behavior also entails a system of professional advancement within the EP's internal structures, with careerist MEPs often winning the spoils of EP legislating power.

MEPs have the opportunity to seek one of a number of positions in building their political careers at the EU level. As the parliament has expanded its legislative purview, numerous elected and appointed possibilities from internal advancement have arisen. Administratively, an elected president leads the EP, along with a set of vice presidents and a college of quaestors. Within the transnational party groups, group coordinators steer positions on legislative committees and party group leaders attempt to unify the diverse national backgrounds present in each political bloc. Finally, a highly developed system of standing committees is replete with a set of chairs, vice chairs, and rapporteurs. Although each office carries with it a varying degree of internal and external prestige, few individual MEPs have as much direct power over the legislative process as the committee rapporteur.

This chapter examines the selection and assignment of committee rapporteurs in the EP during the legislature's first six directly elected sessions, 1979-2009. In doing so, I argue that rapporteurships have been increasingly assigned to a subset of highly educated and experienced MEPs, who represent only a portion of the legislative body's personal demographic. The tendency to award committee reports to this elite clique of legislators has risen dramatically since the initiation of the EP's legislative co-decision on Commission proposals with the Council of Ministers, suggesting that although the EP has augmented its power vis-à-vis the other EU institutions, this power has found itself concentrated in the hands of a few—a perhaps troubling finding for those in favor of the EP as a representative balm to the EU's widely perceived democratic deficit. Ultimately, however, the consolidation of committee rapporteurships amongst a handful of senior and educated parliamentarians is perhaps more indicative of the EP's heightened level of legislative professionalization.

I begin with a brief discussion of how legislative rapporteurships are traditionally awarded within EP committees, noting the importance of the office of rapporteur for both the crafting of legislation, as well as raising the EP's profile within the EU. I then present a testable theory for rapporteur assignment, based primarily upon the criteria of education and seniority, which are tested in the third section. The concluding section summarizes my empirical findings and places the results within the broader context of the legislature's professionalization.

5.1 THE PROCESS OF COMMITTEE REPORT ALLOCATION

In each legislative committee, the transnational party groups begin an EP session with a share of 'points,' set in proportion to their relative size on the committee and in the EP, which they then

use to ‘buy’ legislative dossiers that have been referred to the committee. Once the successful party group has been awarded a dossier, the group coordinator—an MEP on the committee who serves as the party group’s whip for legislative positions—decides in conjunction with the committee leadership which MEP from his or her group will serve as the rapporteur—individually responsible for steering the piece of legislation through the committee revision stage. “Shadow” rapporteurs are also named from all other party groups, who collaborate and negotiate with the rapporteur in the drafting of the committee’s policy recommendations. The committee then votes on the resulting report, before advancing it to the full EP plenary.

As extensive work by Ringe (2010) and others have shown, reports that are upheld at the committee stage are rarely defeated in plenary votes. Thus, the rapporteur has the unusual advantage of being able to craft the entire body’s position on a proposed piece of EU legislation in a highly individual capacity. In a legislature whose membership approaches nearly 800 voices and favors broad-based consensus, it is truly remarkable that one individual legislator might contain such personal power. It is therefore of major importance to consider which set of factors most regularly determines a rapporteur’s selection.

5.1.1 Rapporteurs as ideological moderates

Lindberg (2008) offers the clearest picture of this allocation process in his case study on rapporteur assignment during the controversial services directive debate, which was taken up by the Legal Affairs and Internal Market (JURI) committee. A highly contentious and politically divisive issue dealing with market liberalization as a part of the Lisbon agenda, the EP’s opinion on the proposed directive was of major importance to the legislature’s constituent party groups, as well as precedent setting for the EP on the whole. Lindberg’s account demonstrates the

internal bargaining at play within JURI, showing that the choice of Evelyne Gebhardt—a German member of the social democratic bloc (S&D)—to serve as rapporteur was the result of her membership in one of the major party blocs, her moderate voting record in both her national and EP party group, and her membership in the important German delegation (pp. 1200-1201).

Moderation is important, as rapporteurs are constantly constrained to a degree by their group policy, but also by the need to build broader consensus opinions with the shadow rapporteurs from the other groups. Without such consensus, the report is less likely to pass to a plenary vote. Evidence from the plenary vote on the directive, once Gebhardt's report had passed her committee, suggests that moderation was an important factor in her selection, as the plenary vote relied on large portions of both the center-right European People's Party (EPP) and S&D blocs supporting the controversial measure. Had she taken a more extreme position within the committee, it is unlikely that the directive would have received enough votes from the EPP to pass in plenary.

The case study offers one possible dimension of rapporteur assignment; however, such divisive and sensitive decisions represent a small fraction of the legislation considered by the EP. Thus, while rapporteur assignment may be desirable for to an MEP's individual prestige and that of the party that he or she serves, it is unlikely to be a contentious political decision for the committee leadership under most circumstances. The services directive is a useful example for such a high-level report, but generalizing from Gebhardt's selection is more likely an example of atomistic fallacy on the part of legislative scholars.

Lindberg's work is the not the only instance in which scholars have been quick to jump to complex conclusions about the balance of the MEP's notoriety, voting record, or political

connections, in the process of rapporteur assignment.²⁶ The literature has thus resulted in a general view of rapporteurs as a sort of political token, selected for their social connectedness, ideological position, or voting record. The problem with such a view is that the data are routinely taken from either well-known cases or heavily divided committees. The findings are thus open to a strong selection bias. Our understanding of rapporteur assignment has thus far missed the forest for the trees.

5.1.2 Timing and importance of committee reports

One specific element that is overlooked in the study of rapporteur assignment is the increased importance of the reports themselves. Only Costello and Thompson (2010) given due attention to the importance of co-decision in rapporteur assignment. Since the initiation of the co-decision legislative procedure in the early 1990s—whereby the EP can effectively block the Council of Minister’s opinion on EU legislation—the work of the rapporteur has greatly augmented in its importance. However, the authors also posit that co-decision increasingly limits the extent to which an MEP is individually able to shape the course of legislation. As reports become more valuable to the EP and the outcome of a report matters more to the EP’s standing vis-à-vis the Council, rapporteurs are increasingly confined to taking moderate and consensus positions.

This may suggest the increasing need for a political moderate to serve as rapporteur, but the point system used by committees still ensures a balance of reports among all ideological backgrounds. Further, even if an individual with a less moderate record is awarded the report, the

²⁶ For work on rapporteurs as outliers with connections to special interest, see Kaeding (2004). For information on rapporteurs as median voter MEPs, see Hausemer (2006). For information on rapporteurs as representatives of major national parties, see Benedetto (2005). And for information on rapporteurs as national majority party insiders, see Høyland (2006).

proposal itself is unlikely to pass the committee stage if the report reflects only the outlying member's individual views. More important than a moderate voting record, MEPs must possess the individual qualities needed to work together with people of different political stripes.

The advent of co-decision also grants rapporteurs a privileged role in inter-institutional debates with the Council under the trilogue system. In the trilogue, rapporteurs are invited to participate in privileged discussions about the EP's stance on legislation with key members of the Commission and the Council, before the EP legislative committee takes a vote on the report. The trilogue is an effort to reach common ground between the institutions before formal decisions are taken. Before a trilogue can take place, however, rapporteurs must be aware of both their shadows' positions, but also that of the other EU institutions. Ideally, all sides reach an informal consensus before the report is even circulated for a committee or plenary vote. As such, the rapporteur is both a point person for committee work and an important stakeholder for the EP on the whole.²⁷ This not only supports the increased importance of rapporteur selection under co-decision, but also personal qualities embodied by the rapporteur him or herself.

5.2 A THEORY OF EDUCATION AND EXPERIENCE

Although most scholars would agree that rapporteurships are important to accrue and that their assignment is often contested, there is less agreement on just which characteristics matter in the selection of a rapporteur. I suggest two particularly important determinants: an MEP's level of education and their seniority within the EP. While previous work has attempted to link specific

²⁷ For a more detailed account on the dynamics of inter-institutional bargaining between the EP and Council under co-decision, see work by Häge and Kaeding (2007), Héritier (2012), Rasmussen (2011), and Shackleton and Raunio (2003).

instances of expertise on select committees (i.e., does the marine biologist always get the fisheries report), the use of an MEP's general level of education is also likely to provide us with more generalizable insights on member aptitude, even when technical expertise is less relevant. Similarly, scholars have posited the likely importance of seniority in rapporteur assignment in a legislature with the institutional complexities of the EP; yet, the lack of longitudinal data on rapporteurships has hindered the ability of scholars to rigorously test the veracity of such claims.

The course of European integration favors two trends in the creation of EU policy—specialization and complexity. One need not stray too far from popular discourse in order to discover debates on the EU's view of correctly shape of bananas, the purity of commercially available beverages, and the particularities of bond swaps across the common currency. The EU, led notably by the Commission, has existed from the start as a major source of regulation for Europeans—stemming predominantly from the regulatory and stability needs of the single market project (Caporaso 1998; Majone 1994; McGowan and Wallace 1996).

However, as the competency of the EU has expanded and the weight of decision-making has extended to other EU institutions, the role of the EU as a specialist has continued in these new institutional forms. So too, then, has the EP witnessed the growing need to comment on the passage of legislation in a sophisticated and technically expert fashion. Whereas the EP initially existed to offer a popular voice in advising the course of Commission proposals and their passage through the Council, the current system envisions the EP in a decision-making capacity, with a strong role in the crafting of legislation.

The trend towards EU policy specialization has expanded the EP's committee system and favored the development of a strong and expert rapporteur. I briefly discuss the specialization and complexity inherent to the EP's strong committee system, before demonstrating the effect of

this mode of committee power on rapporteur allocation. In a later section, I consider the notion that as reports gain additional legislative importance under co-decision, the tendency to award them to an educated and experienced set of MEPs is amplified.

5.2.1 Specialization and complexity in the European Parliament

As detailed by McElroy (2008), the number of standing committees has ballooned over time, increasing to more than twenty permanent committees by the end of the 2004-2009 session. Unlike in many of Europe's national parliaments, however, this relatively high number of standing committees permits organization around a set of fairly specific legislative topics: fisheries, international trade, and women's rights, to name a few. Much like in the US Congress, committees vary in their level of prestige, with ambitious MEPs seeking seats on the desirable Environment, Industry and Research, or Economic and Monetary committees and freshmen MEPs filling remaining spots on less popular committees, such as Regional Policy or Culture (*ibid.*, p. 362-366). Unlike in the US Congress, however, committee assignment, leadership, and rapporteurship allocation are not as rigidly limited to seniority rules, but are left mostly to the discretion of EP leaders.

Developments in the EP's powerful committee system are viewable in light of both the parliament's form and function. With nearly 800 members, the EP is one of the world's largest democratic legislatures—necessitating smaller working units in order to reach consensus on the wide range of legislation passed in plenary sessions. However, the large number of committees also relates to the diverse array of topics addressed by the EU. Much in the same way that the course of European integration has led the Commission to multiply the number of commissioners and directorates general, the specialization of the EP's standing committee system is testament to

both the need for efficiency gains in the legislative process, as well as to the wide variety of subjects covered within the parliament.

As the committee system moves in favor of topic specialization and organizational complexity, so too have individual MEPs found themselves in increasingly specialist roles within the policymaking process. Institutionally, this specialization is reflected in the emerging power of the committee rapporteur. While the literature suggests that rapporteur selection relies heavily on identifying MEPs with a particular political profile, it is also worth noting the logic of rapporteurs as both topic specialists and drafters of consensus legislation. As one MEP put it, the rapporteur system allows for a balanced and focused view to emerge over time, in direct opposition to national parliaments, who often “legislate as a kneejerk reaction to a crisis.”²⁸ To spearhead the crafting of such consensus proposals, a degree of education and experience in the unique political environment of the EP are indispensable.

5.2.2 Education and expertise

An MEP’s level of education should matter in the drafting of committee reports. In a recent interview, one MEP explained that reports on harmful chemical waste reduction in the environment committee, on which she served, were frequently allocated based upon the merits of the professional training held by a number of scientists sitting on the committee.²⁹ Similarly, another MEP noted that his reputed policymaking background in public transit issues, developed while serving as that mayor of a regional hub, were the impetus behind his frequent participation

²⁸ MEP, personal interview, March 22, 2012. European Parliament. Brussels.

²⁹ MEP, personal interview, March 22, 2012, European Parliament, Brussels.

on transportation committee reports.³⁰ Moreover, a former German MEP pointed to her legal background as important to her leadership in border security issues.³¹ Even a Euroskeptic MEP, usually hostile to the aiding and abetting of productive work in the Parliament, once served as rapporteur on changing the nomenclature of a particular species of fish—lending his expertise as a biologist.³²

In each of these instances, MEPs called upon professional and technical expertise in science, policymaking, and constitutional law in order to form the EP's opinion. Although the MEPs each have substantively different professional backgrounds that contributed to their selection as rapporteur, they each possess advanced educations, commensurate with the expertise required to make policy in their individual domains. I thus propose that MEPs with higher levels of education will be more likely to serve as rapporteur.

In some cases, education is a clear proxy for substantive expertise in a given domain. A graduate degree in biology matters in the naming of fish, just as a chemist is best equipped to comment on the dangers of chemical waste. Analyzing education from a more general perspective, as opposed to trying to connect technicians with previous professional expertise, allows us to apply the theory across both different time periods and committees. However, education may not always be a matter of technical knowhow. The effects of education, when considered at a more general level, imply the addition of a number of personal qualities, which may be essential in the brokering of consensus policy positions.

It is exactly this secondary connotation of advanced education that is illustrated by an interview with a Swedish MEP, who felt that his reputed ability to compromise and listen to the

³⁰ MEP, personal interview, April 25, 2012. European Parliament, Brussels.

³¹ German MP, personal interview, May 9, 2012. Bundestag, Berlin.

³² MEP assistant, personal interview, February 24, 2012. European Parliament, Brussels.

opinions of his colleagues had been decisive in his having been chosen for a number of reports.³³ While he would not credit himself as being a technical expert on the financial decisions that he led, he nonetheless pointed to his history of high-level management in the private sector, and the education background that came with it, as an important determinant of his ability to problem solve and collaborate with other deputies. The value of an MBA is not only measured in the imparting of technical wisdom, but in the cementing of the very interpersonal and leadership skills needed to broker a consensus political view.

Naturally, in an advanced economy such as Sweden, experience in the boardroom correlates with high degrees of education. I expect such MEPs with white-collar backgrounds—lawyers, CEOs, or captains of industry—to typically possess either university or post-graduate training. I expect, furthermore, that an MEP's level of education is easily noticeable. Beyond a visible credential, published on a CV or a campaign website, education should be noticeable in the way that politicians debate policy, write questions, or simply construct their interpersonal networks.

Not simply a useful heuristic for the decision of the group coordinator, the political psychology literature suggests that higher levels of education correlate with lower levels of dogmatism, and thus the ability to reach broad consensus with other views (see, for example, Golebiowska 1995). In the democratization literature, liberal democracies are shown to have the most educated leaders, as citizens judge the value of their leaders based upon their educational background (Besley and Reynal-Querol 2011). Education likely also correlates with the presence of linguistic skills needed to work in a multi-lingual like the EP. It is notable that almost every MEP interviewed pointed to their extensive and diverse foreign language skills as crucially

³³ MEP, personal interview, March 7, 2012, European Parliament, Brussels.

important to their success as a rapporteur. Particularly as the brunt of the rapporteur's work moves towards coordinating with both committee shadows and members of the trilogue, the ability to work without the assistance of translators cannot be understated. MEPs able to work in multiple languages are undoubtedly more likely to come from educated backgrounds.

Higher levels of education, when measured in a generalizable way, can thus proxy for both the presence of specific technical expertise, as well as for the increased likelihood of successful professional and interpersonal skills needed for consensus politics. The key, of course, is to devise a coding system that is general enough to match the various education backgrounds present in the EU member states, while still specific enough to differentiate between different groups of MEPs.

Devising such a variable is actually quite possible in Europe, where differences in educational background vary in similar ways across different countries. Most education systems in Europe divide secondary education between college-preparatory and technical training and higher education is clearly separable between undergraduate and graduate degrees. Although nomenclature varies by country (although less so, since the initiation of the Bologna process for the standardization of higher education within the EU), if educational background and expertise matter for the allocation of rapporteurships, then an MEP's education should be easily recognizable. However, another indicator of interpersonal skills is also likely to be crucial in the rapporteurship allocation process—an MEP's experience within the EP itself.

5.2.3 Seniority and institutional memory

I also expect that policymaking experience, particularly within the EP, should also matter in the assignment of rapporteurs. Academics cannot simply parachute into elected office and expect to

make drastic changes to policy (as much as we may sometimes like to think it possible!). Therefore, education must also be accompanied by previous experience in elected office. As the EP follows a legislative model that is unlike most national European parliaments and may thus be unfamiliar to freshman politicians, rapporteurship allocations may be expected to occur along a functional seniority basis within the EP.

Numerous MEPs interviewed mentioned that they spent their first few years in the EP in a state of confusion—learning the ropes, making connections, and find their way in the massive and diverse legislature. However, long-serving MEPs were able to find a return on their personal capital. A veteran French MEP illustrated this point nicely, when she pointed out that her ability to gain a major report on the financial crisis had been cleverly secured by her office, in exchange for her crucial support of another MEP’s nomination to the EP Bureau. Essentially, when she wanted an important report, she knew how to get it.³⁴ Without her highly developed interpersonal networks and knowledge of the bargaining processes at stake in a report’s assignment, she would have been far less likely to successfully get the report. The connectedness of certain MEPs and its importance should not be underestimated. After meeting with a high-ranking administrator from a major party group and asking if he could help in securing interviews with a few of his colleagues, a few phone calls made by his office landed me a half dozen interviews that same afternoon.³⁵ Connections matter in the EP and they only come with time.

Multiple MEPs described the first time that they received report. One conservative French MEP summarizes nicely this experience. In her first few months in office, she was unknown to most of her colleagues. However, over time, she was able to contribute positively in

³⁴ MEP, personal interview, March 1, 2012, European Parliament, Brussels.

³⁵ MEP, personal interview, June 8, 2010. European Parliament, Brussels.

her committee's work—submitting questions to the Council as a means of oversight, suggesting amendments to the rapporteurs, and finally obtaining a shadow report dossier. The next time the EPP obtained a report on her committee, she was chosen.³⁶ Another conservative French MEP tells a similar story, explaining that most MEPs have to put a lot of preparatory work into receiving their first report. If it goes well, they more easily obtain reports the next time.³⁷ Credibility and reputations are not earned overnight. Thus, a strong bias in favor of MEPs with lengthy experience in the EP is likely to be apparent in the balance of rapporteurship allocation.

5.2.4 Hypotheses and alternate explanations

The remainder of the chapter tests the following hypotheses:

H4. MEPs with higher levels of education will accrue more committee reports.

H5. Senior MEPs will accrue more committee reports.

H6. Education and seniority both matter more in the assignment of rapporteurships since the initiation of EP co-decision powers.

Beyond these formal hypotheses, we might expect a host of other personal and professional characteristics to matter. For example, we can easily test Høyland's (2006) assertion that MEPs from national governing parties receive more reports. Following the logic of Cox and McCubbins (2007), we might also expect MEP leaders—whether within the committee system or within the EP, more generally—will receive more reports. My research design considers these additional explanations, as well as a host of demographic controls, as also potentially determinant in report allocation. I return to these alternate and additional explanations for report

³⁶ MEP, personal interview, April 26, 2012. European Parliament. Brussels.

³⁷ MEP, personal interview, April 10, 2012. European Parliament. Brussels.

allocation later on in the analysis section. For now, I move to discuss my data and method for testing the education and experience hypotheses.

5.3 TESTING THE EFFECT OF EDUCATION AND SENIORITY

To test for the effect of education and seniority on rapporteurship allocation, I use individual-level data for MEPs in each completed wave of the EP since the initiation of direct elections, 1979-2009. Sources include Høyland, Sircar, & Hix's (2009) tool for extracting publicly available data from the EP website, as well as a variety of MEP records kept by the EP archives in Luxembourg, national political archives and research library holdings. The unit of analysis is individual MEP mandate, with a total of 3948 observations in the full sample, across all six waves of parliament. Unlike in previous work on rapporteur allocation, the dataset is fully comprehensive, including all MEPs in all completed EP settings. Missing data, although relatively minimal (only 148 out of 3948 MEPs are not included in the regression analysis), is distributed randomly across MEP country delegation and time periods – resulting primarily from the lack of information on MEPs who were either elected to the EP formally, but chose not to remain in the EP, or from MEPs who served as replacements for a brief period.

5.3.1 Variables and coding

The dependent variable throughout the empirical analysis is **Reports**, which is measured as the number of rapporteurships allocated to an individual MEP over the course of the elected five-year mandate. In the principal multivariate analysis, the count is agnostic about the legislative

mode under which the report was decided (co-decision, consultation, and so forth). In later sections of the chapter, further analyses and robustness checks differentiate between report legislative modes, and thus their relative legislative importance.

The main independent variables of interest are **Education** and **Seniority**. **Education** is the four-point index for highest degree earned. Those whose educational background ended with a technical or vocational degree were given a 1, while those who completed a university-preparatory secondary school curriculum were coded with 2. Politicians with undergraduate training at a university were coded with 3, while those having obtained a postgraduate degree (masters, PhD, or equivalent) were assigned a 4. The appendix provides a lengthier discussion as to the assignment of these values across the diverse education systems of the EP members. **Seniority** is measured both as a dummy variable, coded positively for MEPs having already served a previous term in the EP, as well as a count variable for the total number of terms served in the EP by the individual. The differences in this measure are clearly indicated in the various results tables.

A number of control variables were also collected, in order to account for additional explanations and potential spuriousness. **Committee Leader** is a dummy variable for MEPs holding a committee chairmanship or vice-chairmanship during a given term; **EP Leader** captures those MEPs with an administrative position in the EP (President, Member of the Bureau, Quaestor, etc.). **Party in Government** is a dummy variable for MEPs hailing from a national party currently in government.

Dummy variables are also assigned based on an MEP's party groups to account for the possibility that fringe and extremist MEPs may receive fewer reports and include **Christian Democrat, Socialist, Liberal, Communist, Green/Regionalist, Conservative, Euroskeptical, or**

Non Inscrit political groups (today’s EPP, S&D, ALDE, GUE/NGL, EFA/Greens, ECR, EFD, and NI, respectively). Whereas the grand coalition between the center-right and center-left political groups might favor ‘majority’ MEPs from Christian Democratic or socialist backgrounds, unaffiliated NI members are likely disadvantaged in rapporteurship assignment. Additional variables also consider MEPs choosing not to complete their term, those who sought further reelection to the EP at the term’s conclusion, gender, MEPs from member states just having joined the EU in the current wave, and MEP age at the end of the current session.³⁸

5.3.2 The Data

Table 8. Average Number of Committee Reports per Term

Highest Degree	EP 1 1979-84	EP 2 1984-89	EP 3 1989-94	EP 4 1994-99	EP 5 1999-2004	EP 6 2004-09	Total 1979-2009
Technical	2.20	2.38	2.89	2.57	1.63	1.32	2.22
Secondary	1.42	1.87	2.65	1.56	1.58	1.42	1.76
Bachelors	2.50	2.62	3.04	2.78	3.17	2.49	2.77
Postgraduate	2.88	3.07	4.37	3.61	3.76	2.89	3.43
Total	2.47	2.56	3.47	3.00	3.15	2.50	2.85

A cursory examination of the data reveals that education is likely to correlate with rapporteurships. Table 8 shows the average number of reports completed by an MEP per term, sorted according to their level of education. The differences are particularly noticeable in later terms, such as EP 5 (1999-2004), where MEPs holding postgraduate degrees received almost twice as many reports as MEPs with a vocational or technical background. If education matters more as the EP specializes, particularly under the introduction of co-decision with the Council after EP 4, then it’s logical to see such evidence of a growing divide in rapporteurship allocation

³⁸ For additional information on coding schemes, please refer to Appendix.

along education lines. However, it's also important to explore the changing levels of MEP education over time, in order to account for the possibility of a maturation effect in the sample. In other words, if more educated MEPs are completing more reports later in the sample, but almost all MEPs are highly educated, then the theory is not as robust.

Table 9. Highest Degree Completed (% MEPs)

Highest Degree	EP 1 1979-84	EP 2 1984-89	EP 3 1989-94	EP 4 1994-99	EP 5 1999-2004	EP 6 2004-09	Total 1979-2009
Technical	19.65	14.93	14.18	13.43	10.27	7.45	12.56
Secondary	7.65	9.89	7.35	5.37	5.79	5.96	6.83
Bachelors	41.28	41.79	39.83	43.43	45.30	42.89	42.61
Postgraduate	31.13	33.39	38.63	37.76	38.64	43.69	38.01

Table 9 examines the change in MEP levels of education over time. The percentage of MEPs without a college degree (1 or 2 on the coding scheme) has indeed dropped from more than a fourth of MEPs in the first session, 1979-1984, to just over 13% in the most recent wave, 2004-2009. However, the number of MEPs with undergraduate degrees has remained fairly stable throughout the sample (at about 40%). The main difference is in the postgraduate category, where the proportion of MEPs with an advanced degree has expanded by over 10% since the first wave of the EP, effectively shifting the balance of MEPs towards a more educated population.

This pattern is not terribly surprising and reflects the broader societal trends in the professionalization of politicians, as well as Europeans, more generally. However, we would think that if MEPs are more educated today than yesterday, this might make differences in education less meaningful for report allocation. Of course, these assumptions should be considered with the full host of available controls. Thus, I now move on to test for a correlation

between education, experience, and report allocation using a multivariate regression framework.

Table 10 shows the descriptive statistics used in these models, across the full sample.

Table 10. Descriptive Statistics (Chapter Five Models)

Variable	Obs	Mean	Std. Dev	Min	Max
Reports	3946	2.854	3.959	0	55
Education	3807	3.061	0.973	1	4
Terms Served	3942	1.561	0.864	1	6
Seniority	3948	0.377	0.485	0	1
EP Leader	3948	0.092	0.295	0	3
Comm. Leader	3948	0.192	0.394	0	1
Saught Reelect	3948	0.526	0.499	0	1
Dropout	3948	0.124	0.329	0	1
Party in Govt	3948	0.446	0.497	0	1
Age	3948	55.299	9.982	26	90
Female	3948	0.241	0.428	0	1
New M-S	3948	0.102	0.303	0	1
Christian Dem	3948	0.359	0.480	0	1
Socialist	3948	0.311	0.463	0	1
Liberal	3948	0.094	0.292	0	1
Green/Region	3948	0.047	0.211	0	1
Communist	3948	0.071	0.256	0	1
Non Inscrit	3948	0.048	0.214	0	1
Codecision	3948	0.571	0.495	0	1
Wave	3948	3.783	1.716	1	6

5.3.3 Modeling Choices

Because the dependent variable is not normally distributed, I estimate the models using a negative binomial specification. Roughly half of the observations received no reports, with a steady decline in frequency outward to the maximum of 55. The negative binomial estimation allows me to fit the model more efficiently to the distribution of the data. As the alpha term is greater than zero in the estimated models, I choose this technique over the Poisson estimator. For

more information on these models, (see Land, McCall, and Nagin 1996). Poisson would not be appropriate in this case, because the dependent variable has a high rate of dispersion from zero.

I also consider the use of a zero-inflated negative binomial estimation (ZINB); however, I do not choose this estimation technique, as the selection effect for rapporteurship allocations is not anticipated to occur from multiple data generating processes. Although the incidence of zeros in the data is quite high, we do not assume that the difference between receiving one report versus no reports is theoretically distinct from receiving one versus many reports. The ZINB model would imply that the theoretical difference between an MEP receiving one versus no reports is qualitatively different than an MEP receiving one versus fifty reports. Although fewer MEPs receive many reports, I expect that all MEPs are able to serve as rapporteur, depending upon their education background and level of experience. This choice is thus informed by theory and is in line with the statistical recommendations of Yau, Wang, and Lee (2003).

5.4 RESULTS AND ANALYSIS

I begin by estimating a set of six separate regressions for each completed wave of the EP, using robust clustered error terms by country. This allows me to witness the changing effect of individual background on report allocation, as the EP matures over time. Table 11 displays these results.

Table 11. The Effect of Education and Seniority on Report Allocation (cross-sectional)

	EP 1	EP 2	EP 3	EP 4	EP 5	EP 6
<i>DV: Reports</i>	1979-1984	1984-1989	1989-1994	1994-1999	1999-2004	2004-2009
Education	0.067 (1.30)	0.054 (0.95)	0.132* (1.70)	0.132** (2.07)	0.271*** (7.59)	0.305*** (4.03)
Seniority (Dichotomous)	dropped (n/a)	0.238** (2.35)	0.284*** (4.26)	0.284*** (3.74)	0.221** (2.46)	0.478*** (4.22)
EP Leader	-0.402 (-1.08)	-0.125 (-0.93)	-0.0982 (-0.59)	0.0313 (0.23)	0.300** (2.19)	0.369*** (3.29)
Committee Leader	0.203* (1.80)	0.704*** (5.53)	0.582*** (3.33)	0.462*** (4.86)	0.598*** (4.75)	0.883*** (7.78)
Reelection	0.263** (2.28)	0.200* (1.92)	0.148** (2.12)	0.239*** (2.58)	0.307*** (5.06)	0.275*** (2.62)
Dropout	-1.094*** (-3.67)	-1.362*** (-7.77)	-1.144*** (-8.46)	-0.849*** (-4.02)	-0.514* (-1.76)	-0.596*** (-4.28)
Party in Govt	-0.246* (-1.82)	-0.034 (-0.21)	-0.122 (-1.24)	0.050 (0.87)	-0.010 (-0.16)	0.115 (1.34)
Age	-0.012* (-1.86)	-0.016*** (-3.14)	-0.010* (-1.86)	-0.002 (-0.52)	-0.002 (-0.29)	-0.005 (-1.01)
Female	0.010 (0.05)	-0.008 (-1.19)	0.091 (1.00)	0.123** (2.05)	0.185*** (2.79)	0.169* (1.90)
New Member State	-1.476*** (-23.17)	-0.573*** (-3.78)	dropped (n/a)	-0.476*** (-4.43)	dropped (n/a)	-0.583** (-2.18)
Constant	1.242** -2.35	1.100** -2.22	1.327*** -3.56	0.631*** -3.08	-0.710 (-1.17)	-1.148** (-2.22)
ln(alpha)	-0.096 (-0.42)	0.038 -0.3	0.057 -0.38	-0.453* (-1.95)	-0.292* (-1.68)	-0.166 (-1.15)
Party Effects?	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Country Effects?	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
N	453	534	585	670	691	872
AIC	1805.8	2145.5	2675.9	2918.3	3039.7	3337.6
BIC	1842.9	2192.6	2723.9	2981.4	3103.3	3423.4

Note: Coefficient values represent parameter estimates from negative binomial regression; t statistics given in parentheses (* p<0.1, ** p<0.05, *** p<0.01)

The results indicate a striking and dynamic story for the influence of MEPs over the course of the EP's development. MEP education is shown to be a strong and significant predictor for report allocation in each session between 1989 and 2009, EPs 3-6, although the effect is insignificant from 1979-1989. On balance, this offers support for H4, but only under certain time periods. With regard to H5 and the level of MEP experience, MEPs having served in previous terms of the EP are clearly advantaged in the process of report allocation—indicating the importance of interpersonal networks, as well as institutional knowledge.

As the EP has expanded its membership, other signifiers—such as EP and committee leaders—have seemingly become more important predictors of report allocation—perhaps as a way of distinguishing those MEPs with additional stature from a growing sea of other politicians. Unsurprisingly, MEPs who select out of the EP before the term concludes (the dropout variable) receive fewer reports, while MEPs who sought reelection for a following term were advantaged. Both of these variables proxy the sorts of self-selection that we might expect from MEPs who are professionally invested in their EP-level work. MEPs from new member states having just joined the EP are routinely disadvantaged in report allocation during their freshman term, and the major groups are advantaged (and the NI disadvantaged), when Euroskeptic and national conservative party groups are excluded as reference points. Returning to H5, however, why has education become increasingly important?

One reason that education may have become an increasingly significant predictor of reports may lie in the changing distribution of the data. Reconsider Table 9, which also displays the distribution of highest degree earned by MEPs, separated by each wave of parliament. As previously discussed, a clear pattern emerges, indicating a growing proportion of highly educated MEPs in each successive wave. By the 6th wave of the EP, postgraduate degree holders achieve a

plurality for the first time in the data. While this may seem to make the connection between reports received and level of education more mathematically favorable, piece-wise correlation coefficients between reports and education remain surprisingly constant over time (outside of EP5) and suggest that an intervening variable, or set of variables, may cause education to have become more important in recent years.

5.4.1 The Importance of co-decision

Moving to a direct discussion of H6, recall that the advent of co-decision under Maastricht has permitted the EP to have a decisive say over certain kinds of EU legislation—elevating it to the status of a ‘veto player’ with the Council of Ministers. Under the 1999 Amsterdam Treaty, and later the 2009 Lisbon Treaty, this status was further expanded.³⁹ These developments indicate that the EP’s opinion on a given piece of legislation is increasingly valuable. This would also seem to indicate, therefore, that report allocation has become increasingly valuable to MEPs, whose opinions now have the opportunity to derail entire pieces of proposed Commission regulation. MEP education is not just important, but increasingly so.

³⁹ A condensed guide to the EP’s additional competencies, following the instatement of the Lisbon Treaty, is available at: http://ec.europa.eu/codecision/docs/legal_bases_en.pdf.

Table 12. The Effect of Education and Seniority on Report Allocation (pooled)

<i>DV: Reports</i>	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Education	0.188*** (7.47)	0.008 (0.15)	0.011 (0.20)	0.125*** (3.67)	0.228** (2.77)	0.298** (3.46)
Seniority	0.104*** (3.63)	0.108*** (3.71)	0.272** (2.18)	0.107*** (3.71)	0.109*** (3.70)	0.278** (3.37)
EP Wave	-0.086 (-1.43)	-0.254** (-3.43)	-0.295*** (-3.71)			
Codecision				-0.721*** (-4.81)	-0.593*** (-5.18)	-0.647*** (-4.94)
Education *EP Wave/Codecision		0.052*** (3.70)	0.063*** (4.23)	0.127** (2.88)	0.304** (2.89)	0.399** (3.51)
Education *Seniority			-0.064** (-2.26)			-0.173** (-2.33)
Female	0.146** (4.04)	0.150** (2.96)	0.148** (2.91)	0.150** (2.96)	0.135** (2.65)	0.133** (2.64)
Committee Leader	0.621*** (12.52)	0.625*** (12.52)	0.623*** (12.54)	0.625*** (12.54)	0.626*** (12.59)	0.625*** (12.61)
Party in National Government	-0.051 (-1.21)	-0.045 (-1.08)	-0.043 (-1.03)	-0.049 (-1.17)	-0.051 (-1.21)	-0.053 (-1.27)
Dropout	-0.867*** (-9.73)	-0.865*** (-9.77)	-0.870*** (-9.84)	-0.867*** (-9.79)	-0.868*** (-9.80)	-0.869*** (-9.84)
Constant	-0.116 (-0.26)	0.496 (1.07)	0.513 (1.07)	-0.100 (-0.35)	0.110 (0.40)	0.041 (0.15)
Education Scale	4-point	4-point	4-point	4-point	2-point	2-point
N (Individual Cluster)	3800 (2345)	3800 (2345)	3800 (2345)	3800 (2345)	3800 (2345)	3800 (2345)
Wald Chi-Squared	929.84***	952.10***	957.90***	950.16***	923.07***	931.65***
ln(alpha)	-0.167	-0.174	-0.177	-0.171	-0.155	-0.159

Source: Author's own calculations; Note: Coefficient values represent parameters estimates from negative binomial regression; z statistic given in parentheses (*p<0.1, **p<0.05, ***p<0.01); include fixed effects for MEP country delegation, transnational party group, and EP wave (time), as well as controls for MEP age, EP leaders, reelection seeking, and member states new to the EU.

Table 12 displays pooled regressions for all six waves of the EP. Because individual MEPs may appear multiple times in the sample, I use robust clustered error terms by a unique ID number associated with each individual deputy, which is derived from the EP website. The findings remain essentially the same as in the separate samples, although education is shown to be, on aggregate, a significant predictor in the simple pooled model (1). To account for the possibility that time may serve as a transformative variable, causing education become more important in later years, I introduce a simple wave counter in model (2), as well as a dummy variable for waves of the EP in which co-decision is an option in model (3). Both of these temporal variables are then interacted with education.

Because of the nature of the interactive model, as well as the maximum likelihood estimator, direct substantive interpretation of the variable coefficients is misleading, if not impossible. Therefore, I use the CLARIFY package developed by Tomz, Wittenberg, and King (2001) in order to evaluate the statistical and substantive significance of education on report allocation over time. I then graph these expected values in various ways. Figures 7 and 8 display two of these graphs.

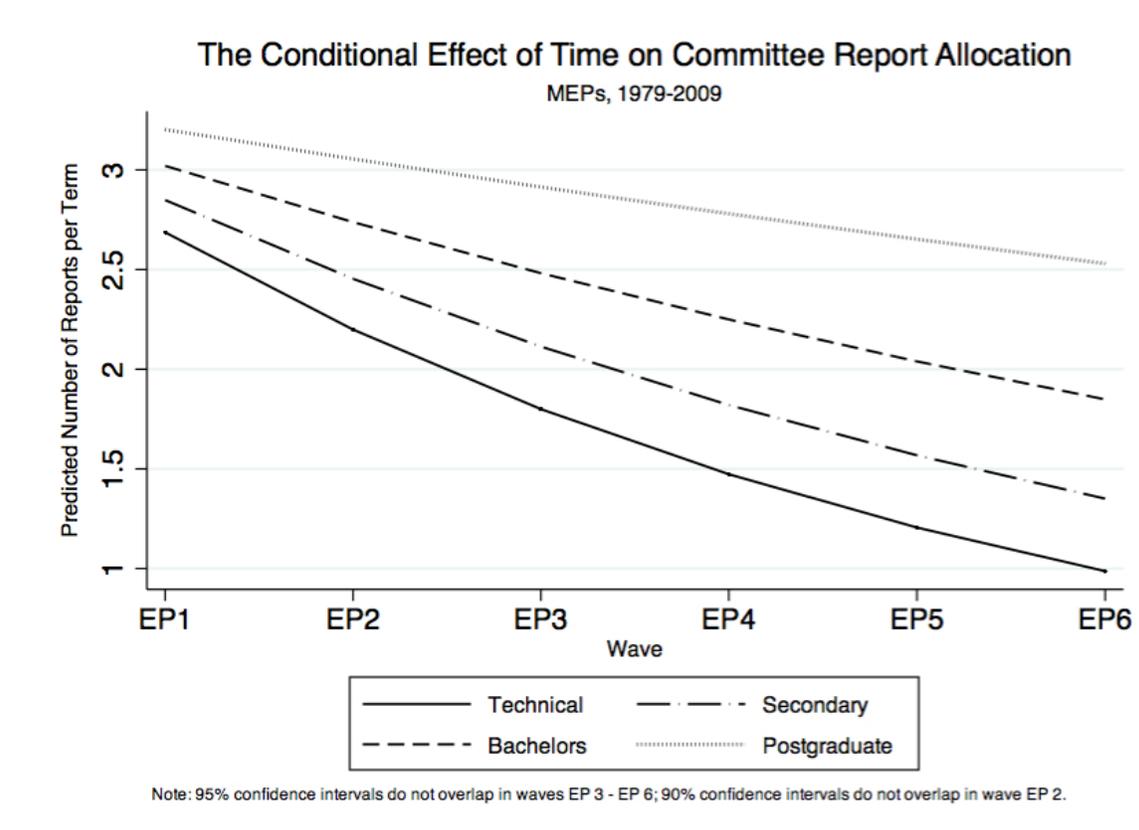


Figure 7. The Conditional Effect of Time on Committee Report Allocation

Figure 7 shows the predicted report allocation over time, based upon changing level of MEP education, when all other variables from model (2) are set at their means. As interacted variables are not always statistically significant at all values, I generate confidence intervals for each possible combination of education and wave. Apart from the first wave of the EP, where predicted probabilities reveal that different levels of education do not receive significantly different numbers of committee reports, better-educated MEPs are significantly more likely to dominate the reports allocation process over time.

Each level of education receives a significantly different number of reports from the other in the second wave of the EP, at a 90% level of confidence, and in waves three through six, at a 95% level of confidence. By 2009, MEPs with graduate degrees received, on average, nearly three times as many committee reports as an MEP with only a technical or vocational school

background. The evidence from model (2), as viewed in Figure 7, offers support for H4. More highly educated MEPs do receive considerably higher numbers of committee reports, controlling for their seniority, party background, and a host of other demographic and political measures. This effect is also shown to increase in its magnitude and significance over time, suggesting that co-decision may play a major role in the changing nature of report allocation.

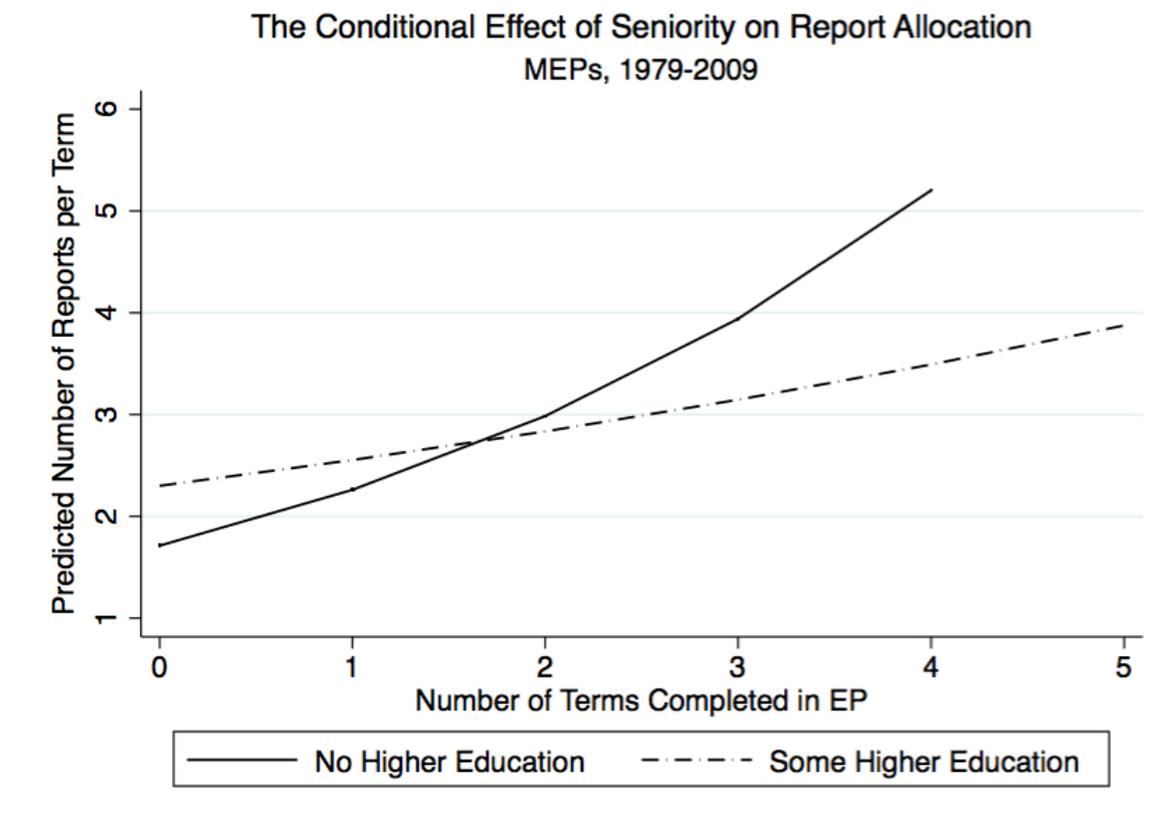


Figure 8. The Conditional Effect of Seniority of Report Allocation

Having provided evidence of the conditional effect of education on rapporteur assignment, it is worth comparing this effect with the importance of seniority proposed by H5. Figure 8 shows different expectations for report allocation from model (6), based upon differences in MEP education and experience. The distribution of the data in Table 8 suggests that the most major substantive differences in MEP education might be between those MEPs with some higher education (the top two values on the four-point index) and those with no higher

education at all (the bottom two values). Accordingly, Figure 8 illustrates the substantive effect of seniority on report allocation for the dichotomous classification of MEP education levels.

As shown by Figure 8, MEPs with some degree of higher education accrue more reports as they become increasingly senior in the EP, expanding their power on committees in an almost linear fashion. While more educated MEPs can expect to double the number of committee reports that they receive over the course of their careers, the effect of seniority is much more dramatic for MEPs without higher education. Although disadvantaged in their first term by comparison, MEPs with lower levels of education are clearly impacted by seniority, with the average five-term MEP in the category expected to receive more than five committee reports in a given session. It is important to note that the predicted values are generated using only real data (and thus there are no expectations for less educated MEPs in their sixth term—such a person does not exist in the data). Nonetheless, seniority appears to have a powerful and transforming effect on all MEPs, potentially even compensating for an MEP’s lack of education over time, and offering support for H5.

While the evidence considered has offered support for both H4 and H5, it is worth looking into just how the time affects seniority and education in committee report allocation, as posited by the discussion of co-decision in H6. Recall that the advent of co-decision under Maastricht has permitted the EP to have a decisive say over certain kinds of EU legislation—elevating it to the status of a ‘veto player’ with the Council of Ministers. Under the 1999 Amsterdam Treaty, and later the 2009 Lisbon Treaty, this status was further expanded.⁴⁰ If the EP’s opinion of legislation has increased in its own value, then so too must report allocation have

⁴⁰ A condensed guide to the EP’s additional competencies, following the instatement of the Lisbon Treaty, is available at: http://ec.europa.eu/codecision/docs/legal_bases_en.pdf.

become increasingly valuable to MEPs, whose individual opinions now have the opportunity to derail entire pieces of proposed Commission regulation.

Consider the following expected number of committee reports, generated using predicted probabilities from model (5). Prior to the possibility of co-decision, the average MEP with some degree of higher education could expect to receive 2.98 committee reports per term, while the analogous MEP without any higher education could expect to receive 2.38 reports per term—a difference that is not significant at a 95% level of confidence. However, since the ability of the EP to veto Commission proposals under co-decision, that number has greatly diverged. MEPs with some level of higher education can now expect to receive, on average, 2.25 reports per term and MEPs with no higher education are only likely to receive 1.32 reports per term—a difference in effect that is both statistically significant at a 95% level of confidence and substantively different on a magnitude of two. Remember that these predicted effects are taken from the mean values of all variables in model (5), changing only the possibility of co-decision. While education and seniority both matter to varying degrees, the possibility of co-decision has particularly augmented the importance of MEP education, supporting H6.

5.4.2 Additional explanations

As the EP has expanded its membership, other signifiers—such as leadership on EP committees or in the legislature’s internal institutions—clearly impact the possibility of increased report allocation—perhaps as a way of distinguishing those MEPs with additional stature from a growing sea of other politicians. Unsurprisingly, MEPs who select out of the EP before the term concludes (the dropout variable) receive fewer reports, while MEPs who sought re-election for a following term were advantaged. Both of these variables proxy the sorts of self-selection that we

might expect from MEPs who are professionally invested in their EP-level work and have no interest in going elsewhere. MEPs from new member states having just joined the EP are even less likely to receive reports than the average freshman MEP and members from major party groups are advantaged—a function of their parties having more points to ‘buy’ the committee reports.

Consider also how the findings track with the extant literature on report allocation. Høyland’s (2006) position that MEPs from governing parties are more likely to be awarded reports than those in their national opposition is not supported by the data. Why might this be so? The main reason would seem to be that Høyland’s data examine only a selection of politically sensitive co-decision reports, as opposed to a more complete sample of committee work. Thus, as in Lindberg’s (2008) discussion of the services directive, the findings are driven by the sample selection and are not shown to apply more broadly. By expanding the set of reports taken up by my analysis to the full breadth of committee work, I am able to offer a more broadly generalizable picture of the average rapporteur.

A look at the full results suggests other ways that the most productive rapporteurs differ from ‘normal’ MEPs. Across the various models, a picture of rapporteurs as ‘serious’ MEPs emerges. Rapporteurs are likely to come from the major party groups—an obvious finding, as the bartering system favours the large groups in rapporteur assignment—but also from the leadership of the EP, itself. Thus, committee chairs and quaestors—a subset of MEPs whose internal ambition has already led them to self-select into a leadership role—also have more legislative clout. This finding is not entirely unlike the experience variable and suggests that interpersonal networks and individual social capital matter a great deal.

Another set of variables examines the professional ambition of MEPs more directly. Those MEPs who did not intend to seek another term in the EP at the end of their current mandate were also less likely to seek out the office of rapporteur—demonstrating their lack of enthusiasm or participation on the job. MEPs who did not complete their mandate—mostly because they entered national office during an EP session—were also less engaged in the committee work process. At the limit, old age also dampens ones likelihood of serving as a rapporteur. The most prolific rapporteurs appear to be at the peak of their careers. Moreover, the careers of productive rapporteurs are also clearly centered in the EP and not elsewhere. Finally, although women make up only 24% of EP membership, on average, Table 12 does indicate that they receive somewhat more reports than their male counterparts—a finding that should certainly be given additional consideration in future explorations.

Another basis of comparison for rapporteurs is national background. Mamadouh and Raunio (2003) find that a disproportionate number of reports go to German and British MEPs, as compared with the French and Italians, during EP 4 (1994-1999). The pooled regression results do not replicate an advantage for the Germans or British, yet French and Italian MEPs do underperform in authoring reports. The reason for this is likely twofold. Thinking back to earlier chapters, we recall that French and Italian MEP delegations are much more volatile—MEPs from these countries spend less time in Europe and often cycle back to their ‘main’ careers in national politics. By comparison, the average UK or German MEP has spent the bulk of their political career in the EP, with more limited experience in national politics. Thus, experience on the EP level is reinforced by differences in national background.

An additional reason for this discrepancy is differences in the interpersonal networks of French and Italian MEPs from their German and UK colleagues. Although MEPs are provided

with top-notch translation and interpretation services, in order to guarantee their ability to work in their national languages, a tendency for informal work in the EP to be carried out in English is a growing reality within the EP—particularly since the accession of Central and East European members after 2004. The increased dominance of English in the EP clearly marginalizes MEPs who are not comfortable speaking English in the more or less formal settings of committee work. It is no secret that English language capabilities are less prevalent in France, as well as in the southern European countries. Thus, we might anticipate these deputies to be less central to the committee work process and therefore serve less often as a rapporteur.

One final caveat to the analysis of report allocation comes from the discussion of rapporteurs as ideological moderates. To check for the possibility that ‘extremist’ ideologues might receive below average shares of committee reports, I run additional robustness checks on all models featured in Table 12 to include proxies for ideological extremism. Two variables are constructed from MEP NOMINATE scores—a method of rating ideological differences in MEP voting behavior developed in work by Hix et al. (2007)—where one dimension represents traditional left-right ideological differences and the other positive-negative attitudes towards European integration. I calculate median ideological scores for each party group in each wave of the EP and then construct measures of extremism for an MEP’s distance from that median party group-wave ideal point. On balance, the additional variables are insignificant across most models (although pro/anti-EU extremist MEPs receive somewhat fewer reports in models (5) and (6) of Table 12). The main conclusions of the chapter remain robust. This would likely suggest that the decision to prevent extremist MEPs from serving as rapporteur is mostly subsumed by the bidding process for committee reports between party groups, a process where fringe MEPs are

already at a disadvantage, given their below average party group size (and corresponding lack of points for bidding).

5.4.3 Robustness at the committee level

The macro quantitative results indicate the presence of a strong and statistically significant relationship between education, experience, and the allocation of committee reports—providing evidence of an increasingly educated and veteran subset of MEPs who wield a majority of the EP’s real legislative power. Such a relationship is particularly striking when the breadth and scale of the data used in the multivariate analysis is considered. Given the extent of the data, it is worth considering whether these same relationships are robust to smaller samples of rapporteurships within the EP.

In order to test the sensitivity of my findings at a lower level, I consider a random selection of reports concluded during the most recently completed wave of the EP, 2004-2009. This wave of Parliament is particularly worth closer consideration, as it is the first wave to take place after the 2004-2007 EU membership expansions. It also contains the most legislation decided under the co-decision procedure, where the EP essentially has veto power over the Council of Ministers. I randomly select 100 reports decided under co-decision during the term, as well as an additional 82 reports decided via the consultation procedure: an older method of EP legislation, where the EP does not have a veto, but may propose amendments to the Council. The two random samples represent approximately 25% of all legislation decided by either co-decision or consultation, which in turn constitute the vast majority of EP legislation from 2004-2009.

Table 13. Report Allocation by Education, Political Group, and Country of Origin (%)

Degree	Consultation	Co-Decision	All MEPs
Technical	8%	5%	7%
Secondary	4%	10%	6%
Bachelors	43%	37%	43%
Postgraduate	43%	48%	44%
EPP	43%	34%	38%
PES	29%	38%	28%
ALDE	13%	16%	13%
GREEN	4%	8%	5%
GUE/NGL	4%	3%	5%
OTHER	5%	1%	11%
EU-15	89%	91%	73%
Enlargement	11%	9%	27%

Table 13 displays the relative distribution for the consultation and co-decision reports considered, based upon the rapporteur's highest level of education, as well as the relative balance of the rapporteur's EP party group and country of origin. The sample distribution essentially confirms results from the multivariate analysis. Under both legislative modes, MEPs with either an undergraduate or a graduate degree hold the majority of rapporteurships, although the distribution is roughly the same as among all MEPs in the wave.

More interesting, however, is the balance of rapporteurs from the different party groups. Under co-decision, MEPs from both the socialist and green blocks successfully outperform their relative size in the EP—particularly as compared with the smaller, more ideologically extreme groups, as well as MEPs from the unaffiliated *non inscrite* bloc. MEPs from outside of pre-enlargement EU-15 also receive a highly disproportionate balance of important co-decision reports: MEPs from enlargement countries received only 9% of co-decision rapporteurships, although they occupied over 27% of the seats in the EP.

Table 14. Report Allocation by Committee, 2004-2009 (%)

Committee	Consultation	Co-Decision
AFCO	1%	0%
AFET	0%	0%
AGRI	16%	2%
BUDG	4%	1%
CONT	3%	0%
CULT	1%	5%
DEVE	0%	1%
ECON	8%	9%
EMPL	1%	7%
ENVI	3%	23%
FEMM	0%	1%
IMCO	0%	8%
INTA	3%	0%
ITRE	8%	9%
JURI	3%	10%
LIBE	28%	9%
PECH	14%	0%
REGI	1%	1%
TRAN	5%	15%

Although the sampling exercise confirms the large-scale multivariate findings, the data contains further added value, insofar as it allows us to consider which committees are deciding the most important rapporteurships. Table 14 displays the balance of legislative reports decided in the most recently completed wave of the EP, by both decision mode and standing legislative committee. Committees that did not decide consultation or co-decision reports are excluded. The top five committees are bolded and underlined.

The results are interesting for their uneven and varied distribution. Most notably, the ENVI (Environment, Public Health, and Food Safety) and TRAN (Transport and Tourism) committees decide more than half of all co-decision reports from 2004-2009. This likely explains the high incidence of green and socialist MEP influence on co-decision reports during the wave,

as these issue domains are generally considered important bases of concern for the center-left and green political movements.

By contrast, the LIBE (Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs), PECH (Fisheries), and AGRI (Agriculture and Rural Development) committees decided a disproportionate majority of consultation reports. Micro-analysis of consultation reports assigned to these committees reveals a high concentration of consultation decisions not only in a small number of committees, but among a small group of MEPs, themselves. One liberal French MEP is listed as rapporteur for more than 10% of all reports decided in the PECH committee from 2004-2009, indicating a personal specialty in regional fishing treaties. Similarly, a Romanian MEP from the LIBE committee is listed as the only rapporteur on separate consultation proposals on visa issues for each non-EU country in the Balkans.

Powerful sounding committees in issue areas where both the EP and EU actually have little to no policymaking competence, such as AFET (Foreign Affairs), decided virtually no major reports during the term. This presents a problem for MEPs who wish to appear powerful and productive to their constituents. A former Polish MEP hinted at this peril in a recent interview, bemoaning his national colleagues' tendency to seek assignments on flashy sounding committees, such as international trade or foreign affairs, where the Parliament exerts very little influence, rather than seeking an assignment to a drier sounding regulatory or economic committee, where the EP's actual power lies.⁴¹

The connection between committee power, individual MEP characteristics, and professional ambition are interesting, when viewed in terms of such a lower level analysis. MEPs whose career ambition involves serving as an active legislator are best suited not only to

⁴¹ MP, personal interview, December 20, 2011. Sejm, Warsaw.

cultivate a personal background of education and experience at the EP level, but also to seek assignment to more substantively productive committees. By contrast, MEPs may also wish to ‘appear’ powerful, serving on committees that are easily identifiable to constituents, but are of little to no importance to the functioning of the EP, itself.

Following the ratification and implementation of the Lisbon Treaty in 2009, the co-decision procedure was expanded to include a number of new issue areas—including agriculture, fishing, and trade—which had previously existed only under the consultation procedure. In expanding its purview, co-decision was renamed the ‘ordinary’ legislative procedure and a number of other less-used legislative modes were condensed under the ‘special procedures’ heading.⁴² It will be interesting to see how this further strengthening of the EP’s power in EU decision-making further changes the process of rapporteur selection in the current 2009-2014 session, once the wave is complete.

5.5 CONCLUSION

MEP career behavior is viewable in light of both internal and external patterns of professional advancement. As seen in the third chapter, the institutionalization of the EP has led to an increased number of MEPs who build their entire political careers on the European level. The fourth chapter examined uses of the EP for those politicians whose professional goal is a different office. The present chapter has attempted to place the outcome of these different styles

⁴² A condensed guide to the EP’s additional competencies, following the instatement of the Lisbon Treaty, is available at: http://ec.europa.eu/codecision/docs/legal_bases_en.pdf.

of career behavior in context by examining the internal advancement of MEPs within the various positions available in the EP.

According to Strøm (1997), politicians, as well as political parties, have three basic goals: the winning of votes, office, and policy. The office of committee rapporteur is not only linked to prestige, with longer serving MEPs and those holding administrative power in the EP more often receiving reports, but also the main way that an individual MEP can shape EU policy. Thus, for serious MEPs with the professional goal of an extensive career in European politics, the accrual of reports is an important way of contributing to both the power and content of the EP's work. My analysis has shown that these careerist MEPs are indeed more likely to be selected as a rapporteur.

Nonetheless, a key contribution of this chapter has been to show that education also matters for the accrual of rapporteurships. This finding supports the view of the EP as an increasingly specialized legislature—stemming also from the technically complex nature of EU policymaking in general. However, what are the normative consequences for a parliament in which a select clique of legislators are favored in the making of policy, based upon their previous experience in the EP, as well as their individual backgrounds?

Indeed, much of the discussion behind the EP's expanding powers is cast in terms of a perceived democratic deficit in EU politics. If the EP is supposedly the bastion of representative democracy and citizen participation at the European level, is it a favorable finding that a cartel of specialists and careerists wield a disproportionate amount of influence in the formation of the EP's legislation? How much specialization is good for a legislator or a legislature? In the EU's political culture, where a premium is already placed on complicated regulations and where policy outputs are increasingly viewable as either 'right' or 'wrong', one might argue that the EP's role

as a representative institution is to provide popular oversight for such attitudes. Instead, the evidence presented by this chapter suggests that the EP is simply another instance of the EU's premium on technocracy.

The uneven distribution of rapporteurships is also of potential concern for national political parties. In systems such as France, where MEP turnover is quite high, members are handicapped from participating in the report system. Indeed, every single French MEP interviewed, regardless of their ideological background, mentioned their party as the predominant determinant of their future career path. Four of the sitting members interviewed even suggested that while French MEPs would prefer to become more active in EP committee work, the party's overwhelming control over their future in the EP limits their ability to build the individual profile and legacy needed to be selected as rapporteur. Thus, for example, French conservatives are potentially disadvantaged, as compared with their German colleagues from the EPP, in the selection and management of committee work and reports. Political parties, more than any other unit of political life in the EP, must be aware of the externalities of candidate selection with regard to the unique processes of committee work at play.

The selection of quality candidates for the European Parliament should be of major interest to scholars, practitioners, and popular observers of the EU alike. As the main principal for democratic input in the EU institutions, the public has an interest in selecting skilled agents to represent them at the EP. Political parties also stand to benefit via the allocation of rapporteurships, which provide a direct and meaningful input into the policymaking process. For EU scholars, an increase in MEP quality can also lead to a decrease in the sorts of volatility explored by Scarrow (1997). By contrast, however, the growth of an 'elite' cartel of educated MEPs, concentrating the decision-making phase of

the legislative process into the hands of a few, may also serve as a detriment to representative democracy in the EU.

In the following chapter, I shift my attention on the career behavior of MEPs to three major country cases—France, Germany, and Poland—where the variation in patterns of internal and external advancement, as well as party control, is particularly noticeable. The following chapter continues to rely heavily upon original interview and archival data; however, the method of analysis shifts from a large-scale quantitative framework to a selection of qualitative case studies. In so doing, I am able to take the broadly applicable findings of the past three chapters and apply them to specific national instances, providing more nuanced support for my theory of MEP career behavior.

6.0 ILLUSTRATIONS IN FRANCE, GERMANY, AND POLAND

The previous three chapters have presented and tested an institutional theory for the career behavior of members of the European Parliament. Chapter Three demonstrated the positive effect of the legislature's professionalization and expanding institutional power on MEP reelection seeking and careerism, while Chapter Four addressed federalism and policymaking decentralization as two major national sources of variation with effects on the careers of politicians, well beyond the national level. The previous chapter addressed consequences for MEP career behavior on the balance of power within EP policymaking, demonstrating a positive effect for both seniority and MEP level of education on a given MEP's success in procuring legislative rapporteurships.

The empirical chapters provide broad support for changes in the structure of MEP career paths since the initiation of direct elections to the EP in 1979. Although the statistical models offer varying degrees of support for the hypotheses presented in Chapter Two, it is clear that the diverse backgrounds of MEPs, as well as their individual behavioral choices, present difficulties for the efficient estimation of the quantitative models. In particular, country-level fixed effects used throughout the study absorb a great deal of variance in the data. While specific differences in an MEP's country of origin do not detract from the significance or generalizability of the empirical findings across the legislature as a whole, national differences in a multinational

setting such as the EP do suggest the potential usefulness of considering just how the major claims of the study play out in specific country delegations.

Table 15. Hypotheses Illustrated in France, Germany, and Poland

H	Theory	+/-	DV	France	Germany	Poland
H1	Power	+	Reelection	<i>Supported</i>		
H2	Professionalization	+	Reelection			<i>Supported</i>
H3	Federalism	+	Reelection	<i>Supported</i>	<i>Supported</i>	
H4	Education	+	Reports		<i>Supported</i>	<i>Supported</i>
H5	Seniority	+	Reports	<i>Supported</i>	<i>Supported</i>	<i>Supported</i>
H6	Co-decision	-	Reports	<i>Supported</i>	<i>Supported</i>	

To shed additional light on a few of these major national differences, the present chapter considers MEP career behavior within three notable delegations: France, Germany, and Poland. Although the case studies presented in this chapter are selected in accordance with George and Bennett's (2005) advice for developing “structured” and “focused” comparisons, the principal utility of the case studies is not to offer substitute tests for the theory of MEP career behavior, but rather to illustrate how the theory operates ‘on the ground.’ As shown in Table 15, each of the hypotheses tested in the three previous chapters is supported by evidence from at least one of the three countries. I begin by briefly recalling the justification for the case selection, before documenting how the major hypotheses of the dissertation play out in France, Germany, and Poland.

6.1 CASE SELECTION

France and Germany represent the largest delegations to the EP and are both founding members of the European Coal and Steel Community’s General Assembly—the fledgling advisory board

that would one day evolve into the current EP. However, the two major players contain a number of internal differences. Under the Fifth Republic, the French party system has moved towards a majoritarian arrangement with two dominant parties, while post-war Germany has tended to operate under multi-party coalition governments. France remains the epitome of a highly centralized state, although recent reforms have diffused some power to the regions. Germany, with its diverse collection of subnational *Länder*, remains a balanced federal system. By examining differences and similarities in the professional behavior of MEPs from these two systems, we can highlight realities from the two ‘most different’ cases that nonetheless provide the largest delegations to the EP.

However, recent structural changes in the EU necessitate new considerations from beyond the long established members of the EP. The 2004-07 enlargement brought an additional twelve members into the EU, massively reorganizing the EP and other European institutions. Traditional Christian Democratic and socialist party blocs were forced to rethink ideological partnerships within the transnational party groups, positions of power within the EP were reallocated to include representation from new members, and the spirit of debate within the EP policymaking process faced numerous new challenges.

The Polish delegation is not only the largest of these new member states, but also one of the more vocal participants in the enlarged EP. Led by the dominant center-right *Platforma Obywatelska* (Citizens Platform) party in both recent domestic and European elections, the Civic Platform has proven to be a strong new partner within the leading European People’s Party (EPP) at the EU level—even supplying the EP’s president for the first half of the 2009-2014 term. Any consideration of MEP career behavior would be remiss not to consider this largest of the EU enlargement members.

6.1.1 Major findings

In the remaining sections of the chapter, I use country-level data from the French, German, and Polish cases to demonstrate my theory for MEP career behavior in practice. The French case illustrates a challenge for the development of careerist MEPs posited by H3, as the French national parties produce comparatively extreme turnover rates among their MEPs—even removing those from office who would otherwise prefer to stay in the EP. By contrast, the German EP delegation has witnessed much lower levels of volatility and membership turnover since 1979. The strong regional basis for party organization within Germany is suggested as a possible explanation for this low turnover. The benefits of low volatility among MEP delegations are also demonstrated by the two cases: German MEPs have had much higher rates of success at securing committee rapporteurships than the French—findings that are germane to H4 through H6.

Finally, Polish MEPs provide an interesting contemporary illustration of the power of legislative professionalism on the careers of MEPs, as well as their political parties. As compared with the national Polish *Sejm*, the EP provides much higher salaries, better working conditions, and a higher level of prestige and addresses H2. The Polish case asks more questions than the current data can answer, however, and suggests that much of the impact of most recent expansion on the EP's development as a legislature remains to be seen in future sessions of parliament.

6.2 FRANCE: PARIS, PARTIES, AND PRESTIGE

The itinerant European legislature is formally seated in the French city of Strasbourg, although the EP maintains most of its administrative infrastructure in Luxembourg and the majority of usual business is conducted in Brussels. Nonetheless, the country that gave us Jean Monnet is central to any study of EU politics and is therefore worthy of consideration within the scope of the current project. In this section, I examine MEP career behavior within the French delegation. In so doing, I depict French MEPs as the traditional black sheep of the legislature: exhibiting unusually high turnover rates, used by the French political parties as a waste bin for defunct national politicians, and underperforming in EP policymaking, relative to its size. Although the French case is a ‘tough case’ for supporting the broader claims made about MEP career behavior, there may yet be signs of an increased importance accorded to the EP from both its French membership, as well as the central political leadership back in Paris.

I first consider the level of institutional professionalization witnessed in EP for French members, taking time to compare the institution with both the *Assemblée Nationale* and *Sénat*, who have undergone significant processes of professionalization in recent years. Data from each venue illustrates that membership volatility has decreased as the legislatures expand their power and professional capacity, as was also the case with the EP in Chapter Three. In a unitary setting such as France, however, the national political parties remain the major source of influence for MEP career behavior and I next consider their impact on European elections. I also examine how a 2004 decision to ‘regionalize’ formerly national electoral lists for the EP have somewhat decreased the stranglehold of the national parties on candidate nomination practices. Finally, I explore the effect of continued turnover among French MEPs for both the legislature’s seniority, as well as the productivity of the membership in policymaking.

6.2.1 Power and Professionalization (H1 & H2)

The first two hypotheses explored in Chapter Three examined the effect of the EP's professionalization as a legislature and its relative power in the EU policymaking process as determinant of increases in levels of MEP reelection seeking. Because of the notoriously volatile nature of the French EP delegation, it is worth considering whether or not these hypotheses are also supported by data from the French, as well as how the level of EP professionalization and power compares to the national French legislative bodies.

Classic work from Gibel (1981) examines a similar story of legislative professionalization within the *Assemblée Nationale*. Greatly weakened by the constitutions of the Fourth and Fifth Republics, the French lower house did not institute fixed salaries for its members until 1958, nor did it reimburse travel and housing costs from deputies to attend plenary sessions in Paris until the early 1970s. A new administrative complex adjacent to the *Palais Bourbon* provided MPs with much needed office space, only beginning in 1974. Impacted by each of these changes, Gibel demonstrates the effect of the *Assemblée's* professionalization of the face of its membership, which only came to be dominated by a professional class of politicians in the early 1980s. Recent work by Costa and Kerrouche (2009) extends the analysis through the 2007 elections, where a full 82% of current MPs indicated an interest in seeking reelection to the body—citing the legislature's prestige and professional character as a major source of its attraction—and 70% of outgoing MPs were eventually able to successfully defend their seats.

Table 16. Incumbency Rates in Select French and German Elections, 1979-2009

EP Election	% FR MEPs Returned	FR National Election	% FR MPs Returned
1984	38.89	1986	55.29
1989	34.26	1988	66.90
1994	35.85	1993	52.57
1999	34.34	1997	51.99
2004	47.13	2002	57.54

EP Election	% DE MEPs Returned	DE National Election	% DE MPs Returned
1984	66.67	1983	80.38
1989	46.07	1987	75.72
1994	43.14	1994	67.26
1999	67.33	1998	70.85
2004	67.96	2002	65.84

Source: EP election rates from author's own calculations; French national rates provided by the *Assemblée Nationale*; German national rates provided by the German *Bundestag*

Table 16 provides incumbency rates for French and German legislators in national and European contests held between 1979 and 2009.⁴³ An examination of the French politicians shows a fairly modest, yet stable, rate of reelection to the national parliament and routinely lower rates of return for French MEPs—although the percentage did grow from about 35% throughout the 1980s and 90s to just shy of 48% in the 2004-2009 session of the EP. Taking into account the initiation of co-decision and veto powers during the 1990s, the relative incumbency boom among French MEPs in 2004 may indicate the power of co-decision argued by H1—particularly when compared with the steady baseline of incumbency at the national level.

⁴³ The 1990 German federal elections are not listed in the table due to the large influx of new legislators from former East Germany.

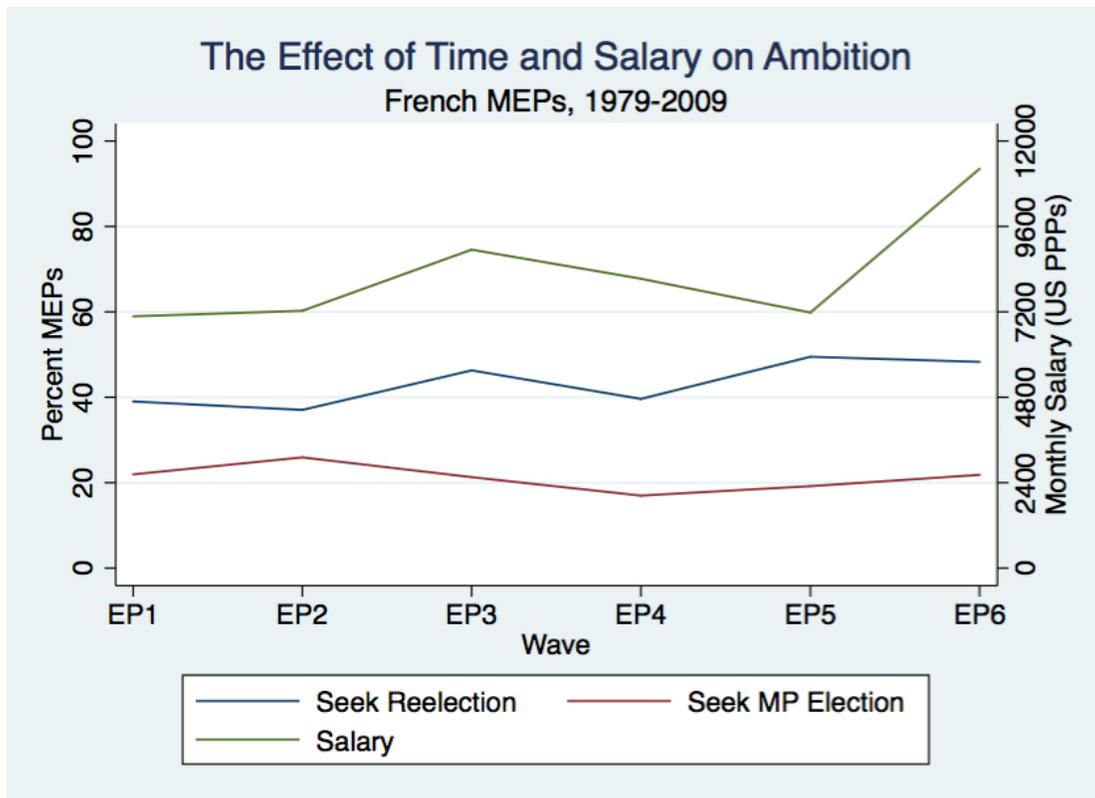


Figure 9. The Effect of Time and Salary on Ambition (French MEPs)

Figure 9 illustrates the relation between reelection seeking to the EP and French MEP salaries. By 1979, both the EP and *Assemblée Nationale* offered identical salaries and similar levels of indirect compensation and support for their members. Nonetheless, the figure indicates that reelection seeking to the EP hovers at around 40% of outgoing French MEPs throughout the bulk of the 1979-2009 period, reaching the 50% mark only in 2004. In fact, data collected on MEP careers indicates that about 20% of French MEPs routinely ran for national office directly following their mandate as an MEP. Although reelection seeking does increase somewhat, it is unclear whether this effect can be attributed to mostly modest changes in French MEP salaries—particularly when compared with a national parliament that Gibel suggests was already well professionalized by the mid-1980s. This may suggest that the professionalization hypothesis put forth in H2 is less useful for understanding the French case. What beyond power, then, do we

attribute the large differences between French incumbency rates at the national and European levels?

Beauvallet (2003) compares the profile of French MPs with their MEP analogues, finding that French MEPs tend to be younger, less politically experienced, and more gender balanced than their national MP counterparts. He attributes this differentiation to the use of the EP by national political parties as a sort of reserve for elected talent. However, he also notes with irony the tension at play in selecting French MEPs. Parties may wish to use the EP in order to groom greenhorn politicians or exile the disgraced, but the expanding policymaking power of the EP makes the wasting of European slots on political featherweights a dangerous enterprise. As Rozenberg (2005) notes, “Today’s MEPs have more power vis-à-vis public policymaking than national MPs, but rare are the French MPs and senators who would trade in their position” for one in Europe (p. 508).⁴⁴ The difference is clearly one of prestige. As one French MP, who had spent some time in the EP after losing her seat in Paris, put it, “After the deputies and some senators, you are just one of the masses.”⁴⁵

6.2.2 ‘Partitocrazia’ à la française? (H3)

If the evolution of the EP’s power has only slightly raised the specter of the possibility of an extensive career in European politics among French MEPs, then one major source of the continued career volatility lies within the political parties, themselves. A number of the major French political parties got off to a bad start with the EP during the initial 1979 elections. The

⁴⁴ Translated from the original French: <<*Un eurodéputé a aujourd’hui plus de pouvoir vis-à-vis des politiques publiques qu’un parlementaire national mais rares sont les députés et sénateurs français qui échangeraient leurs postes*>>.

⁴⁵ French MP, personal interview, November 15, 2011, *Assemblée Nationale*, Paris.

French right was divided on the Europe question and a sizeable number of rightist MEPs ran on the Gaullist RPR (*Rassemblement pour la République*, Rally for the Republic) list, led by a particularly Eurosceptic Jacques Chirac. Once elected, MEPs from the RPR practiced what is known in French as the *tourniquet* system—resigning their seats on a frequent basis, in an order to stunt the possibility of a worthy contribution from the French conservatives to the fledgling legislative body. The French Greens used this practice throughout the 1980s, in order to give more of their members a chance to serve in elected office, and even the extreme right *Front National* cycled multiple MEPs through their seats in the early 1990s—training new recruits for future national runs (Marrel and Payre 2006).

The use of European seats to promote the national parties is exceptionally common in France. Presidents Jacques Chirac, Nicolas Sarkozy, and François Hollande—as well as a number of prime ministers from Lionel Jospin to Edith Cresson—all filled visible positions on EP lists. None fulfilled their term, however, and most abdicated their spot to politicians ranked lower on the list, directly after their election. Other high-ranking French politicians, such as Philippe de Villiers and Charles Pasqua, used their campaigns for the EP in order to protest decisions made by their national parties—in that case, forming their own list, independent of former colleagues in the RPR. Beauvallet (2003) also details uses of the EP elections by small parties, such as *Chasse Pêche Nature Tradition* (Hunting, Fishing, Nature and Tradition), to raise attention to their cause. Whether building enthusiasm for domestic platforms, resolving a political row, or searching for new supporters, it is clear that the French political parties have done little to react in a productive manner to the increased power of the EP.

If the parties are to be held somewhat responsible for their shortsighted usage of European elections for domestic political gain, individual French politicians must also bear some

of the blame. The French system of the *cumul des mandats* is very much responsible for a large portion of the volatility among French MEPs. Under the *cumul des mandats*, French politicians accumulate multiple elected positions simultaneously. Although the office of MEP and French national MP has technically been incompatible with the dual mandate since 1984, a plurality of French MEPs and MPs continue to hold regional and local offices alongside their national and European mandates. By 2003, 91% of French MPs still retained multiple mandates; a whopping 41% of MPs from the 2002-07 *Assemblée* served as local mayors (Costa and E. Kerrouche 2009). Similarly, 44% of MEPs held similar local positions during the course of their European mandate (Navarro 2009).

Historically, the *cumul* was a matter of necessity for poorly paid MPs, as well as a way of connecting national policymakers with local and regional concerns. However, the abuse of the *cumul* in recent years has left the mayors of major urban areas splitting time between running their municipalities and debating national legislation. While somewhat forgivable in national politics, given the *Assemblée* and *Sénat*'s relatively short legislative calendars, the pressure on MEPs to retain local mandates as a way of keeping a foot in national politics, while simultaneously commuting to committee meetings in Brussels and plenary votes in Strasbourg, raises major doubts about the ability of politicians to successfully do their jobs.

The sizeable share of MEPs continuing the exercise the *cumul des mandats* can also shed light on the eventual ambition of these politicians. If we were to examine the life of a French MEP with no other mandate and whose family had purchased a flat in Brussels and was sending their children to school there and contrast her with an MEP who continued to serve as the mayor of a sizeable town in the Atlantic southwest, we might expect one MEP to have different political aims than the other. The tendency for French MEPs to use the EP as a way of saving a spot in

national politics for a later run or as a temporary pit stop outside of the Hexagon is far from anecdotal.

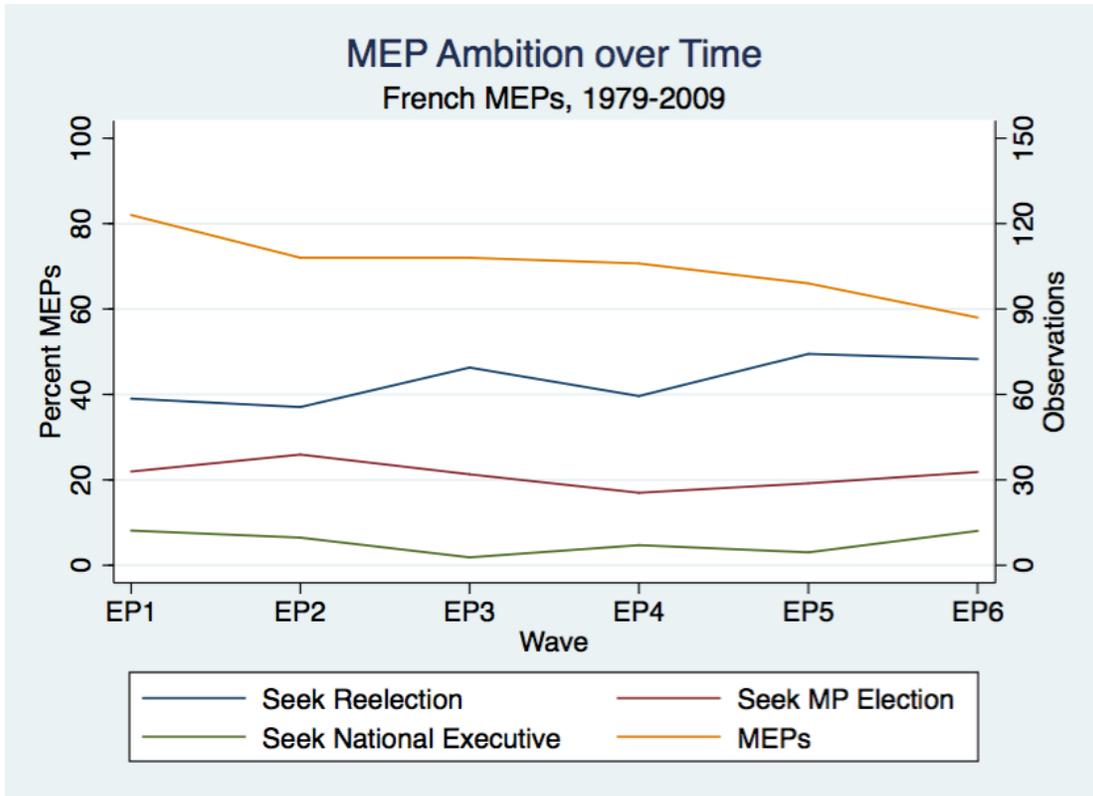


Figure 10. MEP Ambition over Time (French MEPs)

As Figure 10 demonstrates, roughly 30% of all French MEPs since 1979 have made a run for either a national legislative or executive position, following the conclusion of their respective mandates. Although the graph also indicates a decline in the total number of French politicians having served in each term, as systems like the *tourniquet* fall out of favor with party bosses, the news for turnover among French MEPs is far from rosy. As suggested in Chapter Four, the high turnover among French MEPs is likely a combination of political parties, individual politicians, and the French system, itself. In the unitary French system, local politicians accumulate subnational positions as a way of securing bailiwicks for national campaigns.

The funnel to Paris also works from above, however, as the inexperienced French MEPs are groomed by their parties for an eventual national run. Numerous current and recent members of the French cabinet—from Pierre Moscovici to Elisabeth Guigou and Harlem Désir—all built their careers in the EP, before securing positions in the national government. As one French MEP put it, regardless of her own personal ambitions for future service in the EP, a renewal of her mandate in 2014 will likely have more to do with her party's needs than her own.⁴⁶ As Beauvallet and Michon (2009) discuss, the 2004 move to split the national party lists for French MEP elections into smaller regional ones has aided somewhat in releasing the stranglehold of the national party—as MEPs stand a slightly better chance of creating an individual profile and thereby retaining their position. Nonetheless, satisfying the national party—particularly within the UMP—remains a key to retaining ones position in the EP.

In sum, the highly centralized French party system appears to be both a consequence of and continuing factor in France's legacy of centralized, unitary policymaking—offering support for H3. Traditionally used by the national French party as a reserve, a reward, or a punishment, the French delegation to the EP continues to face a tough road to fully utilizing the powers of the institution.

6.2.3 Why High turnover hurts the French (H4 – H6)

So far, I have demonstrated the above average turnover presented among French MEPs, as well as its relation to the structure of French national political parties and party politics. While the incidence of extreme party dominance and persisting *cumul des mandats* system may present

⁴⁶ MEP, personal interview, April 26, 2012, European Parliament, Brussels.

normative concerns for those worried about the quality of representation and the internal dynamics of party democracy, it is also worth noting that high volatility among MEPs also stunts the possibility of seniority within the EP among its membership. As both Costa and Kerrouche (2009), as well as Kerrouche et al. (2011), have shown in their respective studies of the French national legislature, parliamentary professionalization usually correlates with growth in member seniority. This has clearly not been the case among French MEPs.

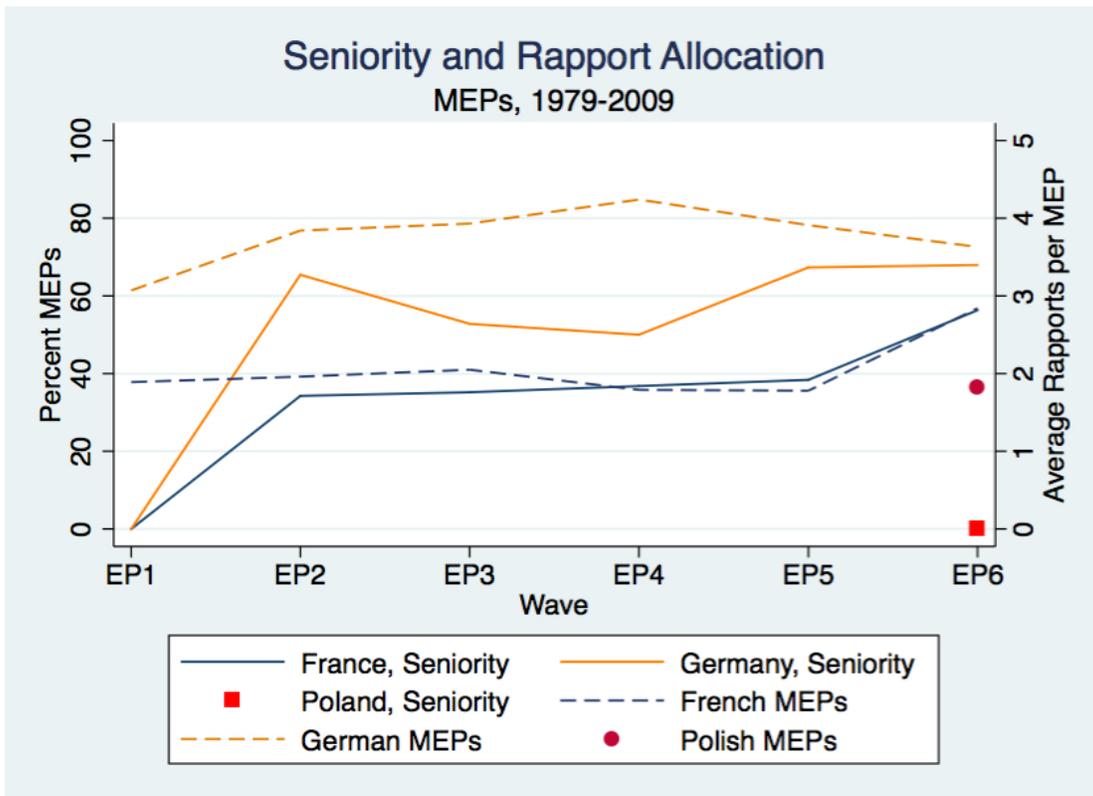


Figure 11. Seniority and Committee Report Allocation

As demonstrated in Figure 11, the percentage of French MEPs having served at least one previous elected term in the EP is much lower than in the German delegation, across all waves of the EP. The result, as support by the empirical analysis in Chapter Five, is a subpar number of reports concluded by French MEPs. Whether or not the European political classes view the EP as a prestigious and worthwhile institution is a matter of personal taste, but it is clear from the

snapshot provided by the first three figures of this chapter that higher turnover among French MEPs comes with the cost of a lack of influence in EU policymaking. As the EP continues to strengthen its legislative power vis-à-vis the other European institutions, as well as the national parliaments, it is imperative that a separate culture of French politicians, both interested and allowed to participate in elected European politics, but permitted to develop. While French MEPs do not show below average levels of education, their comparative lack of seniority and rapporteurships supports the position of H5 and H6.

6.3 GERMANY: JUST ANOTHER DAY AT THE OFFICE?

If the French MEPs continue to be somewhat of the black sheep among the European legislators, then their neighbors across the Rhine are the comparative favored sons and daughters in the EP's rise to prominence. In the current section, I revisit theories of legislative professionalization, federalism, and policymaking power—illustrating that German MEPs have succeeded in creating a distinct class of politicians, interested predominantly in EP service. With their comparatively high rates of reelection seeking to the EP and little exchange between national and European legislative bodies, the Germans have accrued an impressive portfolio of lifelong MEPs who are able to expend their personal political capital in a manner yet unthinkable for the French.

6.3.1 High professionalization, low turnover (H1 & H2)

Unlike in the French case, both the national German *Bundestag* and regional *Landtag* have been relatively well professionalized since the days of the Weimar Republic. Although the

post-World War II era brought a wave of younger politicians into elected politics in the regions encompassed by the former West Germany, volatility in Bonn's *Bundestag* remained low, with a majority of West German MPs seeking multiple terms and 90% above the age of 40 at the time of German reunification in 1990. West German MP salaries were among the highest in Europe and MPs enjoyed an average of six assistants each by the early 1990s—higher than most national MPs still enjoy today (Saalfeld 1997). Even if the challenges of reunification brought in less politically experienced MPs from former East Germany, the German *Bundestag* has been consistently viewed as a highly professional legislature of skilled and experienced politicians (Patzelt 1997). A quick review of Table 16 also indicates the persistence of high incumbency rates at the national and EU levels, aside from a brief dip during German reunification. This may suggest that the theories put forth by H1 and H2 operate somewhat differently across the Rhine.

The institutional complexities of German federalism suggest that these professional realities also exist at other levels of government, such as in the regional *Landtag*. Directly integrated into the national legislative apparatus, the German regional parliaments, in concert with the federal *Bundesrat*, have enjoyed a privileged veto over legislation pertaining to regional policymaking powers since the drafting of the *Grundgesetz* in 1949. The German regions are also privileged in their ability to comment directly on European legislation pertaining to these competences, as detailed in work by Cygan (2001). The result is a national career structure where regional and national political careers are viewed as equally prestigious, if functionally distinct (Müller and Saalfeld 1997; Saalfeld 1997).

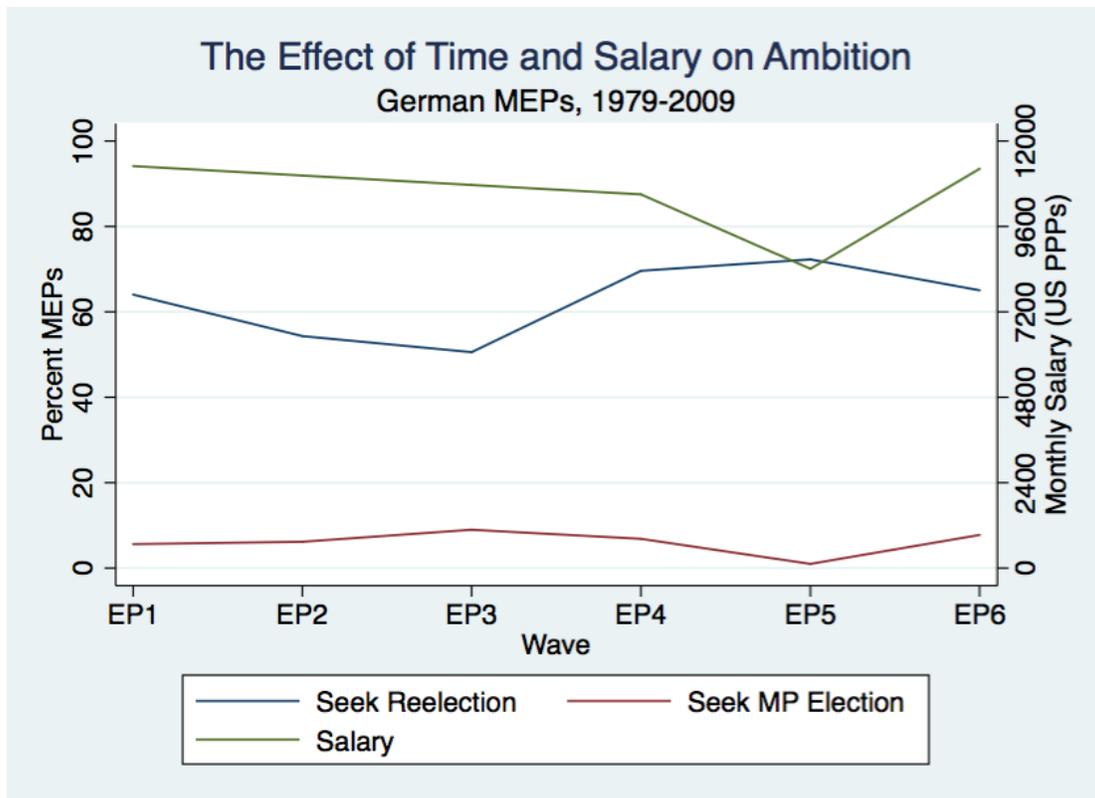


Figure 12. The Effect of Time and Salary on Ambition (German MEPs)

If the nature of German federalism places little emphasis on differing levels of prestige, but rather attempts to differentiate politicians with interests in either regional or national policymaking, then the preexisting ability to self-select into a given professional level may be relevant to our discussion of German MEPs and their comparatively low levels of volatility. As displayed by Figure 12, the salary of both German national MPs and MEPs remained relatively consistent between 1979 and 2009, as did rates of reelection seeking among the delegation, with a majority of German MEPs seeking reelection at the conclusion of each term. Even more striking is the comparatively low number of German MEPs who sought national legislative careers directly following their EP mandate, with numbers well below 10% of German MEPs seeking a national mandate in each wave of the EP.

If we consider the state of affairs present in German national politics, with politicians choosing to specialize at either a local or national level of elected office—both of which containing real power and a cadre of professional politicians—then we might view the stability of German MEP careers as simply evidence of the addition of another level of elected government, able to attract yet another set of politicians—this time, with a specific interest in European policymaking. Further, the existence of multiple levels of elected government in Germany would seem to have diminishing effects of the relative level of prestige associated with national office. Just as Saalfeld’s (1997) work suggests little difference in the level of prestige between the *Landtag* and *Bundestag*, nor is a career in the EP something to scoff at. As one German MEP put it, “the European Parliament and the national parliament are on different levels; not higher than the other, just different.”⁴⁷

6.3.2 All Politics is local? Or, how German MEPs circumvent Berlin (H3)

It would be naïve to assume that all German voters view the prestige of their MEP as equal to that of their MP, just as it would be naïve to assume that all French MEPs yearn only to work in Paris and have no respect for the European project. Nonetheless, an intervening variable seems to have impacted the German political class in such a way that German politicians are more capable than the French at selecting into a level of policymaking most interesting to them. If the French case study demonstrated a situation of extreme dominance by the national parties, with committed MEPs losing seats to party loyalists and EP seats reserved to keep mid-level politicians in the system until their entry into mainstream national politics, then the defining

⁴⁷ MEP, personal interview, June 8, 2010, European Parliament, Brussels.

difference in the German case is a party system in which the national parties have comparatively less direct sway over the lives of their current and aspiring MEPs.

A byproduct of German federalism is the division of EP elections into distinct regional lists, controlled by the selection boards of regional (and not national) political parties. In this way, access to German electoral lists for the EP is comparatively easier—one need only connections and sway with local party bosses. As one MEP without any prior elected experience, but sizeable local business connections, put it, “It would be unthinkable of someone my age with no experience” to run for national office.⁴⁸ While a connection in Berlin would certainly do no harm, each of the German MEPs interviewed told a similar story of having petitioned their local party selection committee for access onto the EP ballot.

Most of the German MEPs interviewed revealed a specific policy interest addressed most directly at the European level. One, an enthusiast of farming and agricultural issues, said that he had “never considered” a run in national politics—petitioning his local party for a spot on the ballot as early as 1979.⁴⁹ Another, having spent considerable time abroad as a child and interested in German politics from the outside, used her foreign language credentials and travel experience to supplement for the lack of a preexisting political resume.⁵⁰ Finally, a former local politician, active in European labor rights in her region’s *Landtag* was identified by her own party as someone better suited for working at the European level and accepted her initial nomination to the EP in that manner.⁵¹ In each case, the combination of interest in European policymaking areas and the support of local party members ensured ballot access and electoral success at the European level.

⁴⁸ MEP, personal interview, March 19, 2012, European Parliament, Brussels.

⁴⁹ MEP, personal interview, March 7, 2012, European Parliament, Brussels.

⁵⁰ MP, personal interview, May 9, 2012, *Bundestag*, Berlin.

⁵¹ MEP, personal interview, June 8, 2010, European Parliament, Brussels.

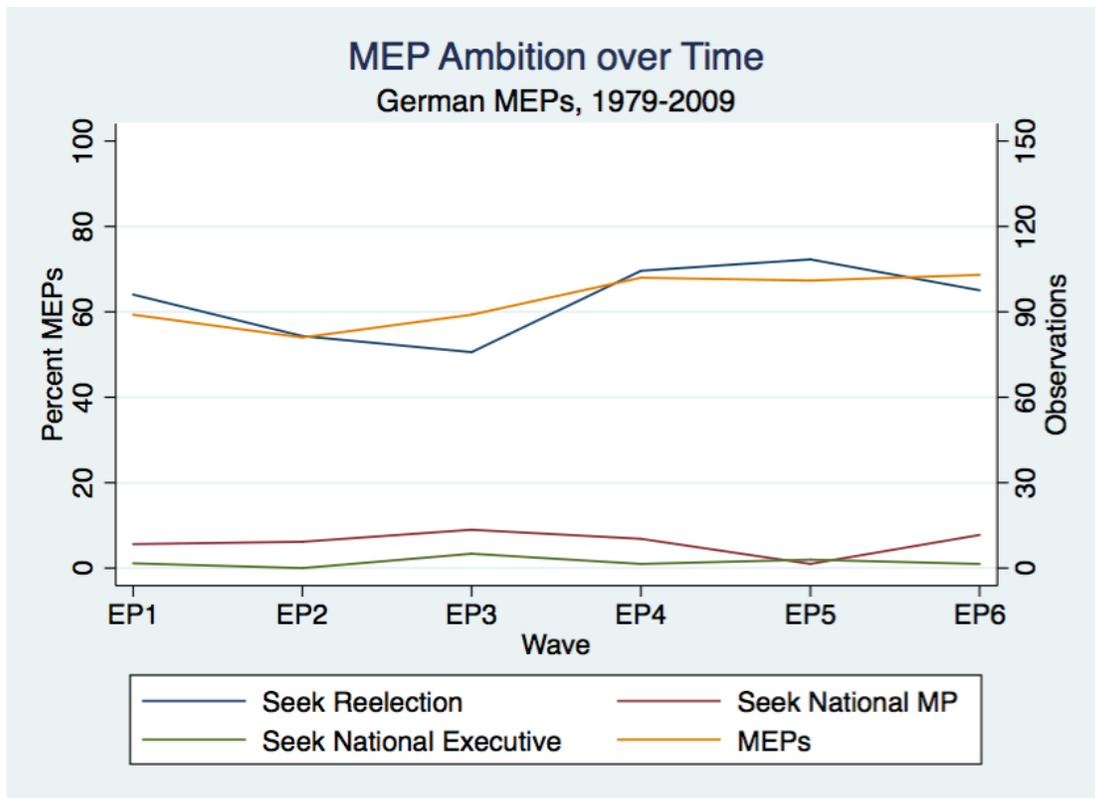


Figure 13. MEP Ambition over Time (German MEPs)

In fact, with few institutional impediments for candidate selection at the European level and an appropriate match between the supply of seats and the career demands of Euro-enthusiast politicians, it is hardly surprising that the German delegation to the EP has seen among the lowest levels of member turnover over time. As suggested by Figure 13, both the number of German MEPs cycling through the EP, as well as the percentage seeking reelection over time, has remained remarkably stable—suggesting that German MEPs wish not only to remain in office for a complete term, but also to seek multiple terms. Also notable are the extremely low numbers of German MEPs who sought a national position, be it legislative or executive, after their time in the EP. With such low levels of MEP turnover among the German delegation, it is worth reminding ourselves of the benefits of seniority.

6.3.3 With Seniority comes power (H4 – H6)

Recall Figure 11, in which German and French reelection seeking were shown to track closely with rapporteurship allocations. In fact, as recently as 1999, German MEPs were receiving twice the number of rapporteurships per session as the average French MEP. Given the similar size and ideological distribution of the two delegations, as well as their virtually identical educational profile, it is likely that considerable difference in French and Germany MEP seniority levels has driven this result. Between 1999 and 2009, roughly 70% of German MEPs had previously served at least one term in the EP. The same can be said for only 46% of French MEPs during the same time period. Recalling from Chapter Five that a majority of freshman MEPs are not granted a rapporteurship, the comparative seniority of German MEPs has placed the delegation in the driver's seat, just as the EP's institutional power is beginning to be fully acknowledged.

When German MEPs were quizzed on why they felt they had been granted so much influence in the drafting of reports in their own committees, one noted the “special kind of person” needed to successfully balance the institutional complexities of the EP, the national party stance, the desires of the transnational party group, and local constituents.⁵² The juggling act calls for a certain degree of pragmatism, experience, and connections to be sure. It is unsurprising, then, that among the most senior of MEPs over time, many were responsible for holding dozens of rapporteurships per session, while their freshman colleagues were barely given any notice in the balance of committee work.

⁵² MEP, personal interview, March 7, 2012, European Parliament, Brussels.

6.4 POLAND: A HINT OF WHAT'S TO COME?

The German and French case studies shed some light on the more interesting findings of the study, particularly with regard to the way that national regime type and party systems can produce tremendously different outcomes in the careers of MEPs. Nevertheless, the most dynamic shifts in the future career behavior of MEPs are likely not to come from established members, but rather from the recently added Central and East European countries. Among this set of new member states, none has made a bigger splash in the EP than the Polish delegation—responsible for nearly as many MEPs in the current EP as Italy and enthusiastic about the possibility of imposing a very different worldview upon the inner workings of the EU. As in Germany, a majority of Polish MEPs (58%) sought reelection to the EP after the conclusion of their first term concluded in 2009. More similarly to the French case, however, is the clear use of Polish political parties to treat the EP as an extension of the national political discourse of Poland, reflecting a lack of understanding as to what the EP is—and what it is not.

6.4.1 Professionalization and matters of scale (H2)

While Polish MEPs would not have had to the opportunity to work in the EP before co-decision, they nonetheless benefit directly from its current high levels of professionalization. It is no secret that the harmonization of MEP salaries in 2004 left a number of its members better off financially than they might otherwise have been. Nowhere is this reality more pronounced than in the Central and East European expansion states, where MEPs have the possibility to make as much as four times the base salary of a national MP back in their home country (as compared with national salary figures in Brans and Peters 2012).

While politicians run for office for a number of noble and altruistic reasons, the material gains of becoming an MEP are especially clear for those hailing from 2004-07 expansion members. To put it bluntly, between untraceable per diem allowances and comparatively high base salaries, MEPs from countries such as Poland “could build an empire with all that money.”⁵³ And many do, as recently told by a British MEP whose Bulgarian colleague bragged over a dinner with colleagues about his newly constructed estate and ability to use EP money on hired car service between the new home and the airport upon each return from Brussels.⁵⁴

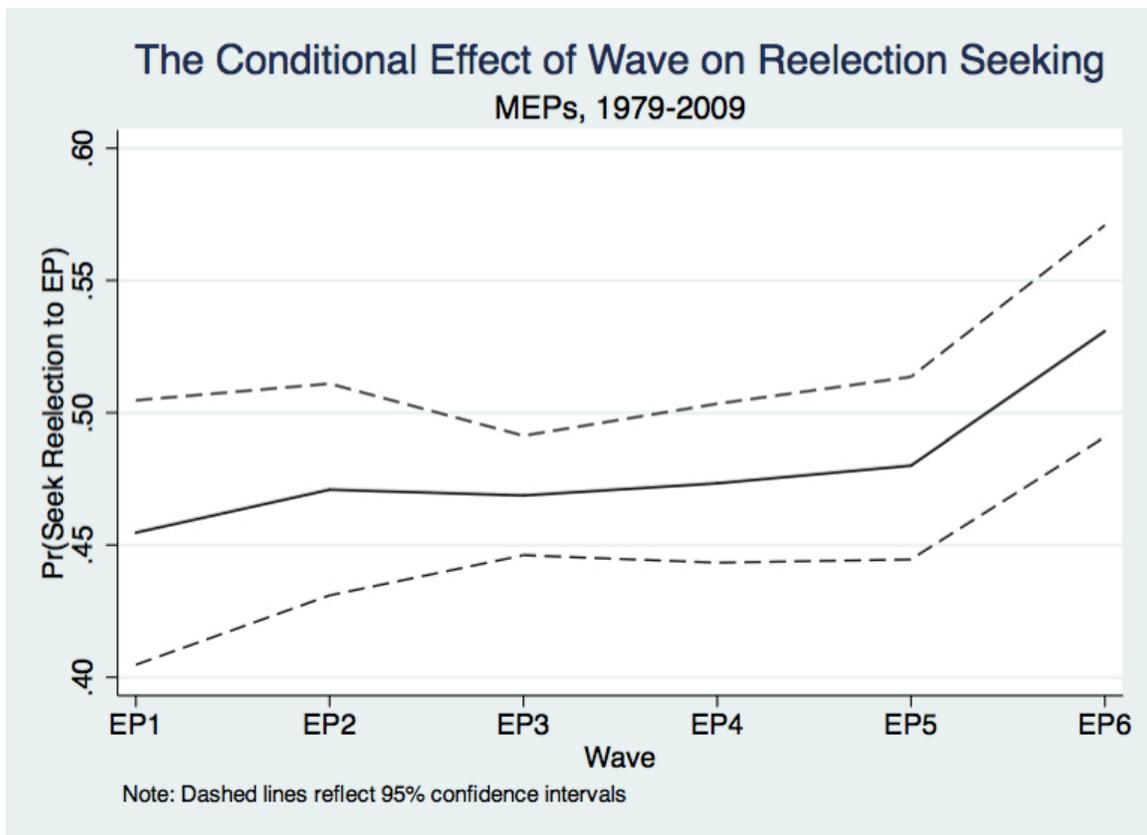


Figure 14. The Conditional Effect of Time on EP Reelection Seeking

If personal anecdotes and popular media accounts of wasteful European spending are to be believed, we might expect that the lavish material benefits offered by the EP would have the

⁵³ MEP, personal interview, March 17, 2011, University of Pittsburgh, Pittsburgh.

⁵⁴ MEP, personal interview, March 22, 2012, European Parliament, Brussels.

strongest effect on delegations from the relatively poorer expansion states, such as Poland. Indeed, the overall predicated likelihood of seeking reelection to the EP for all members, as demonstrated by Figure 14 (reprinted from Chapter Three), does witness its highest jump between the 2004-2009 and 2009-2014 waves of the EP, coinciding with the first reelection wave for MEPs from enlargement countries. Considering the effect of salary increases controlled for by the graph, one might infer that the EP's harmonized salary increases, in concert with the addition of poorer politicians, has had a pronounced increase on aggregate reelection seeking rates.

Beyond differences in their national levels of pay, however, the Polish delegation to the EP doesn't look particularly different from delegations from elsewhere. One finds, for example, a mean age of 55 years among Polish MEPs, between a minimum age of 33 and a maximum of 77. This is virtually identical to the distribution found across all MEPs, with an average of 55, a minimum of 29, and a maximum of 90. As demonstrated by Chiva (2012), both Polish national MPs and MEPs have relatively similar levels of female politicians, at about 20% of total membership. Women represented about 30% of all MEPs during the same time period.

In fact, if anything, Polish MEPs were actually *more* educated than the rest of their EP colleagues between 2004-2009, with more than 80% holding postgraduate degrees, compared to only 43% of all MEPs in the wave. Among the Polish delegation are a number of notable former ministers and academics, as well as historical figures having played key roles in the country's democratic transition in the early 1990s. If the material and professional perks of the EP are enough to have persuaded most Polish MEPs to seek reelection in 2009, then it is certainly incumbent upon Polish political parties that so many of their 'best and brightest' were nominated to the EP to begin with.

6.4.2 Strong parties or confused MEPs? (H4 & H5)

The relatively scant academic literature on Polish MEPs suggests a strong role for political parties in the selection and management of their candidates at both the national and European levels. Killingsworth, Klatt, and Auer (2010) discuss work done by Polish MEPs to commemorate nationally important events—such as the Soviet massacre at Katyn or the creation of the *Solidarność* movement in the 1980s—at the European level. Szczerbiak's (2012) entire volume on Poland in the EU is similarly concentrated on what Poland can bring to the EU, as opposed to what impact the EU has had on Polish politics (see also Szczerbiak and Bil 2009). While Poland's misunderstood and troubled history is certainly worthy of broader understanding and the EU is a suitable forum to initiate a number of these dialogues, it is clear that the use of the EU institutions as a soapbox for Polish national political parties has had a negative effect on the ability of Polish politicians to contribute to EU policymaking as efficiently as they might otherwise hope.

One former Polish MEP and current member of the Polish *Sejm* tells the story of a national delegation “totally unprepared” to work within the EP during the 2004-2009 term, lacking even an “elementary knowledge of Europe... and [its] languages.” According to him, Polish MEPs “thought they were there to fight for Poland,” not to participate in a continent-wide policymaking project for consensus building. The same former MEP discussed with dismay the dozens of Polish MEPs who lined up for selection on the EP's Security and Defense committee—an area in which both the EP and the EU in general have limited power—thus forgoing the possibility of making a valuable contribution on a committee in which the EP has

real possibilities of impacting legislation that would eventually impact Polish law.⁵⁵ Another Polish MEP put the situation somewhat differently, saying that he was glad to be “seen as a diplomat... someone sent by my country to represent Poland’s interests.”⁵⁶

Whether one takes the skeptical view of a misguided delegation, sent to be the mouthpiece of the Polish national political platforms in a forum not designed for such debates, or the more positive imagery of a collection of national political legends and dignitaries, sent to bear witness to Poland’s triumphant return into the heart of Europe, it’s clear that the relationship between Polish political parties, politicians, and the EP is quite different from anything seen among the established members of Germany and France. Polish politicians may not have developed a full grasp on the EP’s power and its abilities (or lack thereof) to help Polish interests in EU debates, but the EU and its institutions do seem to inspire some awe among the Polish political elite, however misattributed in reality.

⁵⁵ MP, personal interview, December 20, 2011, *Sejm*, Warsaw.

⁵⁶ MEP, personal interview, March 17, 2011, University of Pittsburgh, Pittsburgh.



Figure 15. Jerzy Buzek boards a Warsaw-bound jet, to applause

One additional anecdote worth mentioning in support of Poles' enthusiasm for the EU and its institutions arose entirely by happenstance during the interview stage for the data collecting process of this project. On my way to Poland, I boarded a commuter flight in Copenhagen. Before the plane was allowed to take off, it backed away from the gate and reopened the door, allowing one final passenger to board directly from a motorcade brought out

on the tarmac. Much to my surprise, the additional passenger was none other than the EP's outgoing President, Jerzy Buzek, a member of the Polish Civic Platform who itself is a member of both majority center-right EPP bloc in the EP and the majority party within the *Sejm*. Even more surprisingly, my fellow passengers actually recognized President Buzek and broke into a round of applause as he boarded the plane.

I spent the next few weeks in Warsaw keeping an eye on the Polish media's coverage of the EU financial crisis and the fiscal pact negotiations that had just begun to take shape during the many emergency summits held in Brussels that winter. Throughout it all, I was struck by number of the times that a current Polish MEP would appear on the national news broadcast or in the papers, dutifully outlining the need for Poland to participate willingly in the reshaping of the European monetary system. The centrality of Polish MEPs to the dialogue at play in the Polish media was striking in comparison to the characterization that I had already developed for the importance of MEPs in France, sent to professional time-out in Brussels, or for the diligent and highly specialized German MEP, amending complicated policy matters outside of the limelight.

As in France, the Polish national parties have thus far remained supreme in the recruitment and selection of Polish MEPs. One socialist MEP characterized the decision to run as a "compromise between... [him and his party's] wanting him to be there,"⁵⁷ while a member from the center-right said his nomination was a result of the national party identifying him as someone who could raise support for the Civic Platform list in a region where he had already been particularly active.⁵⁸ Evidence from such interviews, as well as the descriptive data presented above, suggests that Polish MEPs may not know quite what it is that they are doing in Brussels, but certainly think that they stand to benefit from it, while their national parties have

⁵⁷ MEP, personal interview, June 9, 2010, European Parliament, Brussels.

⁵⁸ MEP, personal interview, June 8, 2010, European Parliament, Brussels.

aims well beyond the scope of the institution, although successful to the extent that both the EU and EP are pervasive in the lives of at least some Poles. More similar to the French case, in which strong national parties dominate political careers, the jury remains out on just what impact the Polish parties will have on the careers of their MEPs, as well as their productivity and power within the legislature.

6.5 CONCLUSION

This chapter has provided descriptive data, as well as some qualitative illustrations for the claims made by the empirical chapters, as it applies to the cases of MEPs from France, Germany, and Poland. France was presented as a case in which strong national parties dominate the selection and advancement strategies of their politicians, even at the expense of a clear loss of influence for the legislating capacity of the delegation, both of which are the byproduct of a heavily centralized and unitary political system. The German case, among the EP's most productive in terms of rapporteurships, was presented as an example of how national systems, already used to working across multiple levels of representative government, can adapt to the addition of new layers of governance to the mutual benefit of national parties and individual political careers, alike. Finally, the Polish case foreshadowed what might be yet to come in the development of MEP careers, as emerging national party systems in Central and Eastern Europe clash with the aims and capacity of the EU, creating yet another potential mismatch for individual ambition and institutional capabilities.

If we return to an examination of the dissertation's hypotheses, as summarized in Table 15, we see a patchwork of support for each of the six major hypotheses from among the three

selected countries. Yet, 24 additional countries were not mentioned by this chapter and may have additional support for the hypotheses if examined at a similarly national level. Although the case selection used in this chapter was certainly nonrandom, the variation in the systems explored can be viewed as a serious illustration of just how diverse the national political systems of Europe still remain.

While some of the empirical claims made in the previous chapters—such as increases in EP power of and its impact on reelection seeking or correlations between advanced degrees and legislative productivity—may seem trivial, it is remarkable that any empirical evidence can be found for institution-wide change in a relatively new legislative body that unites so many differing national and political traditions. In the following and final chapter, I summarize the major findings of the project, before discussing a number of new research venues that this study has provoked.

7.0 TOWARDS A BROADER APPRECIATION FOR POLITICAL CAREERS

The central aim of this dissertation has been to ask how institutions and institutional changes shape the behavior of individuals. Within this very broad and general framework, I have specifically examined the effect of developments in the institutional structure of the European Parliament and its constituent units on the career behavior of individual members. Individual politicians are the foot soldiers of powerful political institutions, yet their professional movements have been most overlooked by the literature.

By examining the careers of MEPs, however, I have offered concrete evidence of the EP's growing institutional and professional capacity, as well as examined the fingerprints of the EP's many component parts that also impact the professional decisions of its members: 27 institutionally diverse member states, each with a richly varied national party system, contributing individuals to serve in the rapidly evolving EU legislative institution. In the remaining pages of the dissertation, I briefly review the major findings and contributions of the project, before suggesting how these findings might contribute to further research.

7.1 REVIEW OF MAJOR FINDINGS

The project set out in Chapter Two to craft a tripartite theory for the career behavior of MEPs: the development of careerist politicians within the EP, the use of the EP within the broader array

of national and European offices, and the benefits of stable membership within the EP for the balance of legislative power. The six key hypotheses posited by the study stem from specific aspects of these three parts. The theory is derived and tested using assumptions from rational choice—that is, MEPs are individual actors who make a rational decision to further their professional careers, given the constraints and pressures of the institutions in which they are embedded—as well as a respect for claims made by historical institutionalism that institutions change over time in response to exogenous historical developments.

Chapter Three tested the first two hypotheses of institutional power and professionalization. H1 posited that an increase in the EP's institutional power will lead to growth in reelection seeking ('static ambition') on the part of its membership, as politicians are attracted to work in a meaningful policymaking institution and not simply a 'talk shop' parliament. Multi-level logistic regression techniques using new data on the EP's elected membership, 1979-2009, clearly indicate that the advent of co-decision—whereby the EP gained veto power over proposed legislation—led to a sharp increase in reelection seeking on the part of MEPs, even when various demographic and institutional factors were controlled for.

H2 posited that an increase in the EP's level of professionalization as a political institution should also lead to increased rates of reelection seeking, as Weberian MEPs seek out professional opportunities that allow them not only to live 'for' politics, but also 'from' it. Here, the quantitative results were somewhat mixed. The diverse salary structures offered to MEPs based upon their country of origin mean that MEPs from historically low-earning countries are more likely to respond to salary increases favorably and seek reelection at higher rates. However, the majority of EP members were already presented with a high level of professionalization in

their work as an MEP as early as 1979 and were accordingly less affected by modest changes in their salaries, benefits, and working demands between 1979 and 2009.

Chapter Four offered empirical evidence for H3, which posited that MEPs from either formally federal or functionally decentralized countries will be more likely to seek reelection to the EP (and less likely to quit the EP for a job in national politics). The mechanism explored by this chapter assumes that political parties in federal and decentralized systems have adapted their candidate selection and management practices to acknowledge the varying demands and purviews of each level of representation. Conversely, highly unitary and centralized contexts should have party systems more accustomed to funneling candidates from the local to the national level. The addition of the EP as a supranational level of representation likely only serves as an extra layer of work on the way to the goal of national political office. Logistic regression analysis confirmed H3, using a variety of measures for both federalism and decentralization, and multinomial logistic regressions showed the comparative likelihood that an MEP from a unitary (federal) system would be more (less) likely to quit the EP in favor of a variety of possible national offices.

Chapter Five addressed the consequences of professional pathways taken by MEPs on the balance of power within the EP's committee legislation process. H4 posited that MEPs with higher levels of education will be more likely to be granted committee rapporteurships—uniquely valuable in their ability to direct the course of EU legislation from the Commission's proposal to the EP's acceptance or rejection. The proposed mechanism suggests that more educated MEPs will either work more effectively with technically complex topics in specific areas and be more generally inclined to researching and assembling a balanced position on a given issue. H5 posited that seniority will also provide MEPs with additional rapporteurships, as

the institutional complexity of the EP favors contributions from politicians accustomed to the particular demands of the EP policymaking process.

Regression analysis using negative binomial logistic regression techniques indicates clear support for education and seniority to positively impact the individual accrual of rapporteurships across all waves and specifications, although the effect of co-decision serves only to make report allocation even more selective than before. This confirms the relationship posited by H6 that education and seniority should matter more since the advent of co-decision and is explored in more detail at the conclusion of the chapter, using qualitative data from the balance of committee reports under both the consultation and co-decision procedures between 2004 and 2009.

Finally, Chapter Six attempted to clarify the main findings of the dissertation as they pertain to the selected case studies of France, Germany, and Poland. While France and Germany are both founding members of the European Coal and Steel Community, they diverge on everything from federal organization to the dynamics of their political party systems and represent the consequences of two ideal types of MEP career behavior. French MEPs are shown to seek reelection to the EP at routinely lower rates than German MEPs, with the major consequence of reduced importance in the committee report allocation process relative to country size. The Polish case study offers yet another glance of what may be to come from the EP's continued development, illustrating the enthusiastic—if somewhat misunderstood—nature of EU support among the new member states of Central and Eastern Europe.

7.2 KEY CONTRIBUTIONS OF THE STUDY

The dissertation has provided a number of findings that are immediately relevant to our understanding of the European Parliament and its membership. Particularly useful is the development of a fully comprehensive body of quantitative data on MEPs, themselves, containing information of individual backgrounds, career choices, and professional involvement within the EP. The creation of the dataset, alone, will hopefully further work on the EP and its members for many years to come and is formatted in such a way that will allow researchers to add additional information on future waves of the EP, as it becomes available.

The study also contributes to the growing body of work on individuals that comprise political institutions, far beyond the EP. Scholars interested in the study of individual behavior and its pertinence to topics ranging from candidate selection, federalism, legislative and committee behavior, political ambition, and institutional development will all find something of use in the findings taken from this particular political venue. The EP, with its legacy of thousands of current and former elected members from nearly 30 separate political histories and traditions, is shown to develop and behave in a way that will ring familiar to devotees of scholars from all regional contexts—even within the bounds of this most eccentric of legislatures.

For as much as the dissertation provides new sources of data and methodological innovations for future analyses both the EP and other political institutions, it also is meant to connect and complement existing—yet often isolated—research agendas in comparative politics more broadly. It provides the first comprehensive analysis linking the institutional evolution of the EP with generalizable changes in the career pathways of European politicians. It provides the first comprehensive analysis linking sources of national institutional variation with observable differences in elected career paths at the EU level. Finally, the analysis of committee report

allocation is the first to link new data with existing questions on the balance power within the EP. It is particularly this last point that opens the gate for future research on the career paths of MEPs and their consequence for the EP's institutional development, national party election and candidate selection strategies, and even the importance of national systemic variations. For as many questions as the dissertation has attempted to answer, it has also sparked possibilities for further research.

7.3 FUTURE LINES OF INQUIRY

Further work on the topic can take place in a number of ways. Work on the EP itself might examine the recruitment strategies of all EP parties in a more systematic way, which will further our understanding of why some party systems have been more quick to adapt to the growing power of the EU institutions than others. A more thorough examination of movement between committees can provide us with evidence of how power and membership volatility varies within specific committees, themselves, which may help us to better understand the impact of MEP seniority and education on rapporteurships. Finally, future analyses of other EU and national institutions can examine how the EP fits into the array of professional opportunities in European politics in greater detail.

Beyond extending the dataset to further waves of the EP, I propose that we can also analyze the individual backgrounds of politicians from other domestic and international institutions in similar ways. Such research will provide us with key insights on individual policymaking behavior, as well as the interpersonal networks constructed across multiple levels of elected government in Europe. I have already completed some exploratory coding in this area

for the Austrian *Nationalrat*, German *Bundestag*, and French *Assemblée Nationale*, and I look forward to expanding my coding of these institutions to a more diverse set of time periods and venues. Indeed, any historical study of a political organization would be remiss not to consider the power of the individual elites that have comprised its previous iterations.

The European Parliament remains somewhat of an enigma among the comparison of global legislative bodies. Its specialized committee system closely resembles that of the US Congress, yet its extreme partisan variation—even at the transnational group level—is more reminiscent of the Italian *Camera dei Deputati* or French Fourth Republic. Its lack of initiation powers and difficulty overruling the agenda-setting powers of the European Commission might lead one to think of the UK House of Commons, whereas the technical nature of policymaking and amending might lead us to believe that MEPs would be best left to the windowless, faceless bowels of a government bureaucracy. Nonetheless, MEPs remain the only directly elected members of the EU apparatus and provide the crucial function of democratic oversight for at least some of the decisions made for the EU's more than 500 million residents.

Figure 1 of the dissertation displayed three ideal pathways for MEP careers. The first column indicates what the EP was and might have always been: a klatch of politicians relegated to a second order legislature—banished or retired from a life of national political prestige. Yet, the previous pages ought to have suggested a different reality for the careers found within Europe's legislature. While some MEPs might use the EP as a steppingstone for a tour of duty in national office (and some parties might even encourage this via candidate selection practices), a growing number of MEPs do want to remain in Europe, do seek reelection to the EP, and do contribute to the amendment and passage of the EU's growing body of legislation and regulation.

While scholars of electoral behavior and public opinion may be quick to insist that the EP and its elections are still of secondary importance to the average EU citizen, one can't help but step back from the findings of this project with the impression that the EP and its members won't always be viewed as less important than their colleagues in national political life. In fact, it seems that at least a non-negligible set of MEPs already view their role in EP life as important enough to merit the dizzying professional commitment that a five-year mandate in Brussels and Strasbourg entails. Either that or there is a surprisingly high number of European politicians obsessed with collecting miles from frequent flyer programs.

APPENDIX A

HISTORICAL PARTY GROUPS BY PARTY FAMILY

Table 17. Historical Party Groups by Party Family (EP abbreviations)

Variable	Historical Groups
Christian Democrat	EPP, ED, Forza
Socialist	S, PES, S&D
Liberal	LD, LDR, ELDR, ALDE
Green/Regional	RBW, Greens, Verts, ERA, EFA
Communist	CG, EUL, LU, NGL/GUE
Conservative	ER, DR, UEN, ITS, RDE
Euroskeptic	IND/DEM, EFD, EDD
Non-Inscrit	no group, CDI/TGI

APPENDIX B

NEW MEMBER STATES ADDED TO EP, BY WAVE

Table 18. New Member States added to EP, by wave

EP Wave	New Members
1979-84	Greece
1984-89	Portugal, Spain
1989-94	(none)
1994-99	Austria, Finland, Sweden
1999-2004	(none)
2004-09	Bulgaria, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Poland, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia

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