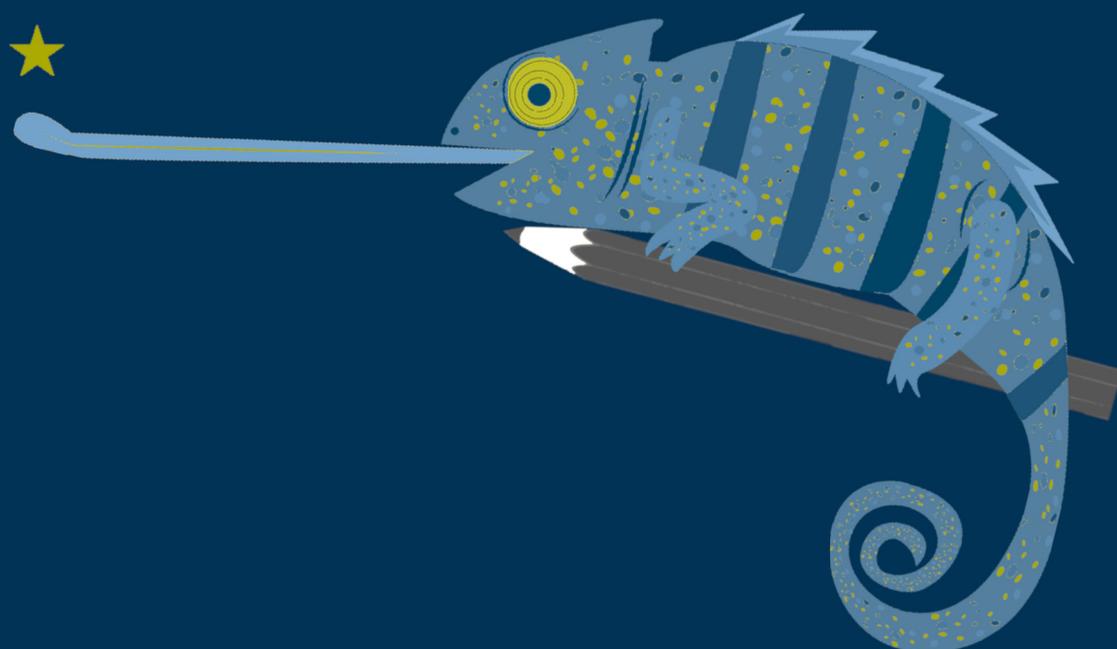


# VERSATILE LEGISLATORS

## *Explaining How Members of European Parliament Amend and Represent*

Proefschrift voorgelegd tot het behalen van de graad van  
Doctor in de sociale wetenschappen: politieke wetenschappen  
aan de Universiteit Antwerpen te verdedigen door

**Inger Baller**



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Faculteit Sociale Wetenschappen  
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Antwerpen 2018

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## List of abbreviations

7 <sup>th</sup> EP	The 7 <sup>th</sup> legislature of the European Parliament (2009-2014)
ACI	Interinstitutional Agreement procedure
AFCO	Constitutional Affairs Committee
AFET	Foreign Affairs Committee
AGRI	Agriculture & Rural Development Committee
AIC	Akaike Information Criterion
ALDE	Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe
APP	Consent procedure
BIC	Bayesian information criterion
BUD	Budgetary procedure
BUDG	Budgets Committee
CNS	Consultation procedure
COD	Ordinary legislative procedure
CONT	Budget Control Committee
CULT	Culture & Education Committee
DEC	Discharge procedure
DEVE	Development Committee
ECON	Economic & Monetary Affairs Committee
ECR	European Conservatives and Reformists
EFD	Europe of Freedom and Democracy
EMPL	Employment & Social Affairs Committee
ENVI	Environment, Public Health & Food Safety Committee
EP	European Parliament
EPG	EP Party Group / European Parliamentary Group / European Political Group
EPP	European People's Party
ERGM	Exponential Random Graph Model
EU	European Union
FEMM	Women's Rights & Gender Equality Committee
GAL-TAN	Green-Alternative-Libertarian vs. Traditional-Authoritarian-Nationalist
Greens/EFA	Greens–European Free Alliance
GUE/NGL	European United Left–Nordic Green Left
IMCO	Internal Market & Consumer Protection Committee
INI	Own-initiative report procedure
INL	Legislative initiative procedure
INTA	International Trade Committee
ITRE	Industry, Research & Energy Committee
JURI	Legal Affairs Committee
LIBE	Civil liberties, Justice & Home Affairs Committee
MEP	Member of European Parliament
MP	Member of Parliament
NLE	Non-legislative enactments procedure
OLP	Ordinary legislative procedure, abbreviated as COD in EP documents
PECH	Fisheries Committee
PETI	Petitions Committee
REG	Procedure for changing the EP Rules of Procedure
REGI	Regional Development Committee
S&D	Progressive Alliance of Socialists and Democrats
TRAN	Transport & Tourism Committee



## Preface

Over the years, I have told the students: the process of doing research is not to be put on paper. Instead, the only things we want to pass on into history are where we found our ideas, the choices we made, and the results we obtained. Yet, this dissertation would not be here without the process. Looking back, I found that processes take time, human intervention, and detours.

Time is elusive. The only things I know for sure: the past six years at times flew by as quickly as beer at a Christmas party, while at other times every minute felt like our ‘city jungle’ in Charleroi. And I will look back, in time, on a challenge and experience I would not have wanted to miss a second off.

Human intervention in the process of my dissertation was very welcome. Peter, thank you for believing in me; for your invaluable advice; for always trying to understand what I was saying, even when I did not know what I wanted to say; for your patience while I was trying to collect my thoughts, time, or words; for instinctively knowing when to challenge me and when to free me from self-inflicted burdens; for correcting my wildly long sentences; and for your insanely funny sense of humor. Sadly, sarcasm is not contagious, fortunately we were always on the same wavelength.

Jan, thank you for always wanting to make me perform better and for your insightful comments on my ideas: your broad expertise took my work to another level. Also thank you for pushing me: while first stubbornly hesitant, in the end I explored other methods and literature than I would have imagined. And your ‘write that down in a memo’ forced me to look at every decision from multiple angles, making me more confident in the path I have taken.

Kris, thank you for finding time to read and comment on my work. Luckily, you encouraged me to think about parties, representation, and broadening the horizons beyond the EU. Peter, I got here, one straight line to the finish, thank you. I could not have made it through the final year without you reminding me of the goal and the way to get there. And of course, thanks for the valuable comments on the content.

Nathalie and Peter, thank you for joining the jury at the end. Our paths crossed at conferences and in the Meerminne, so I can confidently say: I trust your judgement, value your knowledge, and fear your questions. As it should be.

I am eternally grateful to Sharon for the coding effort and for keeping research into the EP alive in the research group; to Annelieke for writing me that script, and accepting payment in socks and games of WhatsApp-Boggle; to the students that tested my initial codebook, failed, and showed me the way forward; to Vidar, Iskander, Evelien, Frederik, Edwin and Patrick for our discussions and attempts at ‘fancy statistics’; to Dirk for our conversations, my memories of the Research Design course, and your ‘what is this a case of?’; to Dorothy, Marcel, Bert, Marsida, Bas, Matti, Sarah, Vlad, Aydin, Tom, Frederic, Matthias, Kris, Julie, and everyone else who read and commented on my work: it got there because of you.

Detours. Yes, the process of my dissertation explored several methodological and substantive paths, but the most important and rewarding detours were those little, insignificant moments I cherish. First, I shared office space with four wonderful colleagues, for which these words are not enough to repay my debts. Danny, thank you for being the beacon in my first Flemish year. Chiara, for showing me what work ethic is, how to deal with doubt, and finding your own path. Babette, for listening, invisible signs above your head, your ‘I have no clue what you just said’-face, your trust in me, ‘echo’, and advice on everything, always. Kirsten, going through the final phases of our dissertations together made it all so much easier and I must thank you for every time you honestly commented ‘wat een draak!’

Second, my other fellow ‘monkeys’ (Anne, Jorg, Kristien, Brecht, Shirley, Hanna, Zeger, Job, Samira, Maarten, Elias, Sam, Clemens, Olivier), all colleagues, the secretariat, and all professors I tried to help out with teaching support: you made me feel like a “functioning cog in some great machinery serving something beyond me.”<sup>1</sup>

Third, I can call myself lucky having met some amazing people who joined me on adventures. Margaux, thank you for changing conferences from barely bearable to marvelous memories, not seeing the Eiffel tower, and nightly walks across Antwerp. Aydin, thank you for being the ‘British’ brother I never had, Glasgow, the cupboard, and our lingering digital conversations. Shirley, for Queen songs and Christmas decorations: DFTBA. Frederik, may we always find benches to share the view and thoughts. Evelien, fiery roomie, it’s been an honor to annoy you. Mischief managed. Sabine, thank you for the music. Patrick, for always being there and the fun of teaching together. Harmen, for keeping me on my academic toes. The ladies of Pol & Sjottina, Pol & Smash & Knut, de Bende van Oz, de Brunch Babes, de Diner Crew, thanks for all the fun.

All of this was only possible because of my life outside of academia. Mijn muzikale vrienden die vele avonden, ‘kerstdagen’, optredens en vakanties een groot plezier maakten: Ine, Nadia, Ro, Do, Kurt, Saar, Fiona, An, Lynn, Nick, de rest van Kør en Hanne. Hester en Kilian, dat we maar nooit echt volwassen worden. V.E.T.O., mijn geduldige vriendinnen die altijd weer leuke dingen in het vooruitzicht stellen: Iris, Hiltsje, Ilona, Miek, Jocelyn, Lisah, Lisa, Marthe, Cuny, en Barbara.

Familie. De ruggengraat van mijn verhaal. Oma, bedankt voor de genen die woorden zo makkelijk doen vloeien. Mijn bizar grote en hechte familie, voor de gezelligheid. Vethaakjes, voor de bijzondere avonden. Miekie, Meike, Sietske, om mijn zomers op te luisteren. Menke, Sem, Yannick, voor de aandacht, het luisterend oor, en het plezier van jullie ontdekkingstocht. Annelieke, om samen met mij mee te hobbelen langs letterlijke en figuurlijke bergen en dalen: we hebben het toch allemaal maar gedaan.

Mams en Paps, ik vind bij jullie altijd een warm nest vol advies en rust. Jullie aandacht en wil om te begrijpen hoe mijn ‘embryo’ eruit ging zien was zo fijn! Dank om me los te laten, op te vangen en bij me te zijn, zelfs op afstand.

<sup>1</sup> And quoting my favorite song for you means something.

## Chapter 1

### Introduction

‘Who or what do Members of European Parliament represent?’ sounds like a trivial, descriptive question to which the answer can easily be found. No need to dig deep, no need to find explanations for variations. Article 10 of the Treaty on European Union is very clear about it: “Citizens are directly represented at Union level in the European Parliament.”

Representation at any level is a complex given as legislators have multiple roles and varying pressures to adapt their behavior. Yet, the multi-level structure of the European polity provides even more incentives to deviate from this line. Members of European Parliament (MEPs) are born and raised in a Member State, elected to the European Parliament (EP) by voters in that Member State or even by voters of a region within that country, and are up for re-election at a sub-European level. They are grouped in EP Party Groups, but also still affiliated to national level political parties, which decide over re-selection onto party lists for the next elections (Yordanova, 2009: 262). The powers of the EP have expanded over the years, making it “a decisive target for lobbyists” (Earnshaw and Judge, 2002: 61). Furthermore, for a long time, citizens hardly paid attention to the EP, treating European Parliament elections as second-order national elections (Schmitt, 2005). Therefore, MEPs have had the incentives and freedom to broaden the scope of who or what is represented.

Even though this provides opportunities for a diverse European Parliament representing the diverse population of the European Union, it has also created a lack of clarity about in whose interest the EU is governing. This is part of a problem commonly referred to as the ‘democratic deficit’. Although scholars differ on the problem definition (Bowler and Farrell, 1993; Follesdal and Hix, 2006; Majone, 1998; Moravcsik, 2002; Piattoni, 2013; Sorace, 2017), the basic premise is that the EU has a legitimacy problem. In the conventional view on democratic legitimacy, representative institutions, like the EP, can only enable legitimacy if the MEPs are able and motivated to “track the interests of the represented” (Hayward, 2009: 131). Scharpf (1999: 167) argued that this is problematic, because of the lack of a European public sphere.

There are good reasons why European citizens should care about how MEPs take up their role and contribute to the legitimacy of the EU. In particular because the powers of the European Parliament (EP) have expanded gradually over the past few decades. From an assembly consisting of delegated national level Members of Parliament (MPs), the EP was transformed into a directly elected parliament in 1979. In 1992, the Maastricht Treaty on European Union changed the role of the parliament by introducing the ‘co-decision procedure’, which gave the EP more legislative power. Recently, the 2009 Lisbon Treaty expanded this procedure to more policy fields and thus established the EP firmly within the European framework. MEPs thus potentially have a large impact on our lives, while aggregating our interests and knowing what the represented want is no easy feat.

Despite the problems MEPs face in tracing the interests of the represented, they can still contribute to the legitimacy of the EU via these extended powers. Using their legislative powers, MEPs may strengthen the output legitimacy of the EU. Output legitimacy can be seen as the ability of an institution to create effective solutions for collective problems (Scharpf, 1999: 22), that are efficient and of high quality (Lindgren and Persson, 2010: 457), and resonate with citizens (Schmidt, 2013: 7). Looking at who or what MEPs represent in their legislative behavior can thus help to shed new light on if and how MEPs contribute to the legitimacy of the EU.

Who or what is represented is in the literature known as the ‘focus of representation’. Yet, that description does not fully cover reality. My starting point is that representation is not a question of either-or, as one representative can defend the interests and promote the views of more than one constituency. They can have more than one focus simultaneously (Wahlke et al., 1962: 270), or switch depending on the context (Andeweg, 1997; Miller and Stokes, 1963). Therefore, the aim of this dissertation is to *explore and explain who and what Members of European Parliament represent in their legislative behavior*.

MEPs have a multitude of activities available they can use for representation. For example, they can ask parliamentary questions to put certain interests on the agenda (e.g. Sozzi, 2016b), refer to their constituency in speeches (Lord, 2013: 255), organize meetings in their electoral constituency to foster responsiveness (e.g. Busby, 2013), or defend the interests of their constituency via amendments (Burns, 2005). Yet, most these activities have limited legislative impact, as parliamentary questions and plenary speeches are largely symbolic and merely used as a communication tool towards fellow MEPs and the national party (Ringe and Wilson, 2016: 766; Slapin and Proksch, 2010). However, MEPs can attempt to affect the content of legislation directly via legislative amendments (Ringe and Wilson, 2016: 766). While plenary amendments are quite restricted via the Rules of Procedure (Brack and Costa, 2018: 13), all MEPs may table committee amendments during first reading (European Parliament, 2009b, rule 195(1)). These committee amendments may be accompanied by justifications to underpin the proposed change (European Parliament, 2009b, rule 156(1)) and are tabled under circumstances of relatively limited party discipline (Kreppel, 2002b: 207). Therefore committee amendments are the legislative behavior central in this dissertation.

So, I not only explore who and what MEPs represent, but the first part of this dissertation also explores the use and characteristics of committee amendments. One particularly interesting aspect of amendments is that MEPs may cooperate in tabling the amendment. With whom MEPs co-sponsor is expected to be associated with the interests put forward. However, we know little about this co-sponsorship behavior in the setting of the EP. Therefore, the first half of this dissertation dives into the question: how can we explain (variation in) co-sponsorship patterns?

Furthermore, to capture ‘who and what’ is represented in one measure, I develop the concept of a ‘distribution of foci’. Explanations for focus of representation are traditionally sought in the characteristics and previous experiences of the representative and strategic

incentives shaped by the electoral system (e.g. Wessels, 1999). Yet, as MEPs are expected to switch between foci of representation, these characteristics alone will not suffice to explain the distribution of foci. Therefore, in this dissertation, characteristics of the amendments, the formal relation of the MEP with the legislative proposal, and the legislative context are taken into account as well.

The remainder of this introduction is structured as follows. The next section provides an introduction in the literature on representation, legislative roles, and representative claims. In this section, I trace both the historic development of certain concepts, and I highlight how my approach is similar or different to other studies in this realm. The second section explicates scientific contributions of this dissertation. Finally, an overview of the other chapters of this dissertation is given.

## **1.1 Representation, (representational) roles, and representative claims**

How political representatives (should) take up their task has been an important question guiding scholarship in several strands of literature over the last sixty years. More specifically, I draw on three strands of literature: 1) the (normative) literature on what representation is and should be, 2) literature on roles of legislators, and 3) the literature on representative claims. As the first two strands play a more important role in the dissertation than the third strand, these are discussed more in depth.

### *1.1.1 Representation*

In the ‘standard account’ of representation (Rehfeld, 2006: 3), Pitkin explains different views on representation. Central in her approach are the ‘substantive views’ on representation, which capture the content of representation (Pitkin, 1967: 59): descriptive ‘standing for’, symbolic ‘standing for’, and ‘acting for’ the represented. In the ‘standing for’ views, a representative is not acting on the behalf of others, but literally representing the represented “by virtue of a correspondence or connection between them, a resemblance or reflection” (Pitkin, 1967: 61). In the descriptive view, this connection is established by the likeness of the representatives and the represented (Pitkin, 1967: 111), this likeness can be physical or in terms of information conveyed as a messenger (Pitkin, 1967: 83–84). For symbolic representation, the belief that a representative represents the represented makes him the representative (Pitkin, 1967: 111). While the ‘standing for’ view has been influential in describing the representativeness of legislatures (e.g. Mansbridge, 1999), it has only an indirect relation with what happens during representation.

The ‘acting for’ view on representation pays attention to exactly that: “representing here means acting in the interest of the represented, in a manner responsive to them” (Pitkin, 1967: 209). Interests here are broadly defined, as they can be unattached or attached interests (Pitkin, 1967: 156). Attached interests are ‘of someone’, meaning that there is a group of people who have wishes. This group can be consulted about correspondence between their interests and the way in which their interests are represented. Attached interests are

subjective in nature, meaning that it is the represented who define which interests they have (Pitkin, 1967: 210).

In contrast, unattached interests are abstractions, where something is objectively at stake, but “there is no particular person or group whose interests it is” (Pitkin, 1967: 158). Therefore, there is also no group or person that can be consulted to assess whether the representation is done well. These interests are determinable by the representative and thus objective in nature (Pitkin, 1967: 210). The approach towards representation in this dissertation resembles the ‘acting for’ view, with attention for what goes on in between formal moments of authorization and accountability and the distinction between the two types of interests.

Pitkin contrasts the three substantive views on representation with formalistic views on representation, in which the representative is defined by criteria “outside the activity of representing itself – before it begins or after it ends” (Pitkin, 1967: 59). Within the formalistic views, someone becomes a representative via the authorization given by represented to the representative, or via being held to account by the represented (Pitkin, 1967: 55–57). The representative knows this and anticipates on this moment by taking the desires of the represented into account.

Since her seminal work, many scholars have attempted to assess which view on representation is better than others and whether representatives do a good job (Mansbridge, 2003: 515). Within this realm, new types and typologies have been developed (Mansbridge, 2003; Rehfeld, 2009). Mansbridge (2003: 515, 526) sought to bring normative theory up to par with empirical findings on the types of relationships between constituents and representatives, i.e. to develop normative criteria to make judgements about the quality of representation. Rehfeld (2009) reshaped the discussion by arguing that representation has three important elements: whose good representatives aim at (the whole or the part), who decides on what the good is (self-reliant or dependent judgement), and the role of responsiveness (gyroscopic or induced, i.e. less or more responsive to electoral sanctions). This results in eight types of representatives instead of the four types sketched by Mansbridge (2003).

The role of responsiveness is also central in the ‘dynamic’ critique on ‘static’ definitions of representation. Even though Pitkin’s ‘acting for’ requires responsiveness of the representative to the wishes of the represented, the critics argue that the formal moments of authorization and accountability make Pitkin’s interpretation of representation a one-way principal-agent relationship between represented and representative (e.g. Kröger and Friedrich, 2013: 161). Furthermore, Saward (2006: 301) argues that this relationship requires interests of the represented to be stable and known, while we know that interpretations of what is in someone’s interest are partly constructed by those who make claims about it (Severs and Dovi, 2018: 310).

The argument of ‘dynamic’ scholars is that one should take both the representatives and represented into account to assess the quality of representation by looking at the congruence

in opinion or ideology between represented and representatives (e.g. Jacobs and Shapiro, 1994; Schmitt and Thomassen, 2000; Vasilopoulou and Gattermann, 2013). However, this means that it should be clear who the (intended) represented are. In other words, knowing the 'focus of representation' of a representative is a prerequisite in order to study responsiveness. What does the representative consider to be his/her constituency, what/whose interests does he/she represent?

Until recently, constituency was, without questions asked, equated with the geographical units in which legislators are elected (Rehfeld, 2005: 4; Urbinati and Warren, 2008: 397). Although Rehfeld (2005) explores the history and reasoning behind a territorial or geographical definition of constituencies, he does limit himself to electoral constituencies. However, in the European context, the electoral connection of representatives to territorial districts is weaker, as MEPs are mostly elected on party lists in multi-member districts (Yordanova, 2009: 262).<sup>2</sup>

Other interpretations of constituency have, for example, been social class (historic France), religion (Bosnia-Herzegovina), ethnicity (New-Zealand), and most notably: votes cast (Rehfeld, 2005: 37). With votes cast, Rehfeld means that under proportional representation, the votes cast determine how many seats each party list receives. This interpretation of constituency as the party voters is commonplace in the policy congruence literature (e.g. Walczak and Van der Brug, 2013). However, in the EP the electoral connection is also weaker between MEPs and parties, as MEPs are elected via national party lists and subsequently organized in EP Party Groups (EPGs)<sup>3</sup>. Thomassen and Schmitt (1997) did research policy congruence between party voters and EPGs, however as these voters never voted for those EPGs, it is questionable whether they were assessing a representational relation or merely mapping policy preferences that coincidentally coincide.

To summarize, because of the weakness of the electoral connection, both to territorial constituencies and EPGs, MEPs have more leeway in defining whom they represent. In other words, expressed foci of representation (Wahlke et al., 1962) and thereby constructed constituencies (Saward, 2006) are an open question instead of something pre-defined in the context of the European Parliament. Thus, if one assesses the responsiveness of MEPs by comparing the policy positions of representatives with the policy positions of a certain territorially or ideologically defined group without researching whether that group was indeed the focus of representation, one might be comparing chalk and cheese. We need more knowledge about the variation in who or what is represented by MEPs and why we find differences in order to feed scholars interested in the quality of representation in the

<sup>2</sup> The German-speaking constituency in Belgium is the only single-member district.

<sup>3</sup> Throughout the literature the abbreviation 'EPG' is referring to the same phenomenon, but the initialism is claimed to stand for EP Party Group, European Parliamentary Group, and European Political Group.

European polity. This drives the main question of this dissertation: how to explain who and what Members of European Parliament represent in their legislative behavior?

### *1.1.2 Legislative roles*

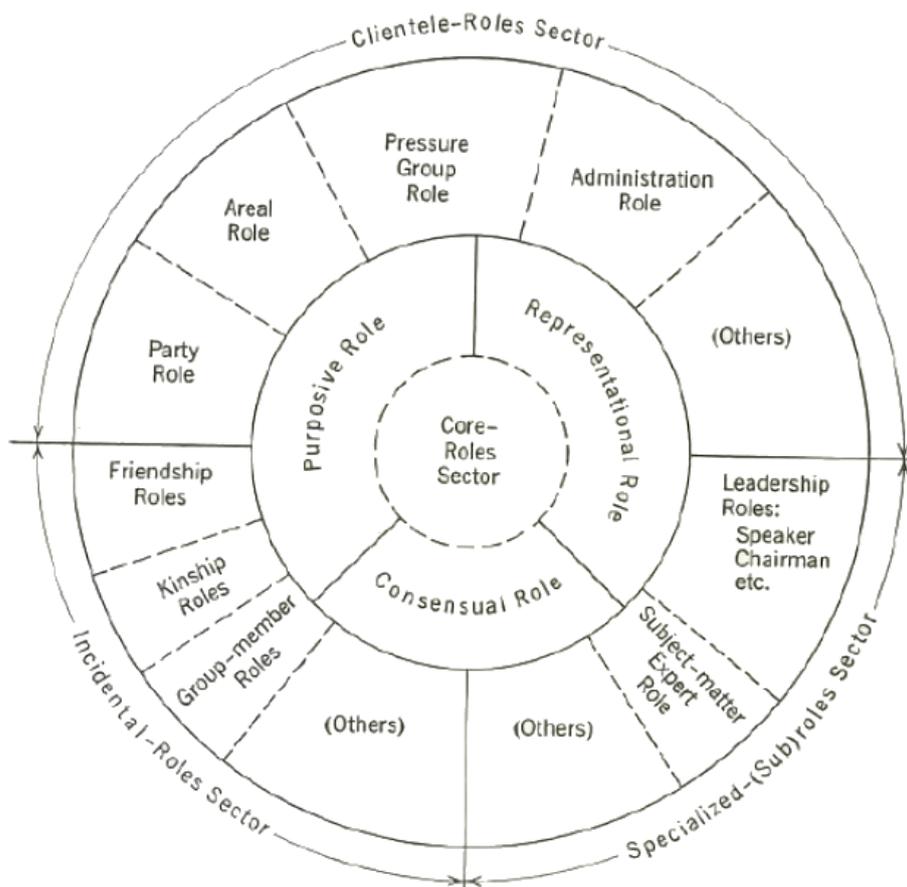
The same issue of what a representative should be has surfaced in the study of roles in legislatures (Andeweg, 2014: 267–268). How legislators take up their task and perceive the norms to which they have to adhere in their parliament is central in the theory on legislative roles. The study of legislative roles is rooted in the general role theory, which is focused on the interplay between three concepts: patterned social behavior, identities assumed by the participants in the behavior, and “expectations for behavior that are understood by all and adhered to by performers” (Biddle, 1986: 68). More specifically, the legislative role has been defined as “composite patterns of goals, attitudes and behaviours” (Searing, 1994: 369), that are “shared by MPs, [that] enable MPs to be distinguished or identified as a group, and enable us to distinguish between them” (Blomgren and Rozenberg, 2012: 8–9). Since these composite patterns are shared by MPs, they turn into norms that legislators can adhere to. These norms include “expectations about what constitutes appropriate behavior given the actors' position” (Beyers, 2005: 902), and are shaped in interaction with the environment in which an actor takes that position. Moreover, roles are not only shaped in the current environment of an actor. “Most versions of role theory presume that (...) expectations are learned through experience” (Biddle, 1986: 69).

Within the study of legislative roles, a distinction can be made between four approaches: the functionalist approach of the 1960s, the interactional approach of the 1970s, the motivational approach since the late 1980s, and the strategic approach since the 1990s. While I draw mostly from the literature on the representational core-role from the functionalist approach for this dissertation, an overview of the development of the literature is warranted to show why I do not follow the currently dominant path. To put more clearly, I do not claim to study the legislative or representational roles of MEPs, but rather I study one aspect of the representational role: the focus of representation. Nevertheless, to underpin this choice, provide a broader picture, and set the stage for explanations explored in subsequent chapters, the literature on roles of legislators is introduced here.

The tradition of researching legislators using the concept of roles starts with what Blomgren and Rozenberg (2012) have coined 'the functionalist tradition'. Wahlke, Eulau, Buchanan and Ferguson (Eulau et al., 1959; Wahlke et al., 1962) argue that in studying the legislative role of a representative one can make a distinction between multiple roles that legislators fulfil at the same time. They placed purposive roles, representational roles, and consensual roles at the core of a model of the role of a legislator (see Figure 1.1). The consensual role refers to the role that the formal rules of the parliament and the informal norms or rules-of-the-game require from the legislator (Wahlke et al., 1962: 11). The purposive role is shaped by the expectations the legislator holds about the goal of the parliament and the legislator's activities (Wahlke et al., 1962: 12). In other words, it is the

legislator’s perception of the “kind of behavior they ought to exhibit in the performance of their duties” (Wahlke et al., 1962: 246). The norms governing the process of individual decision making, mostly in relation to the legislator’s voters, is captured by the representational role (Wahlke et al., 1962: 12, 267–286). The outer layer of the model is divided into three sectors: relations with actors outside the legislature (Clientele-Roles Sector at the top), interactions and positions within the legislature (Specialized-(Sub)roles Sector), and non-political roles (Incidental-Roles Sector) (Andeweg, 2014: 273).

Figure 1.1 Model of the role of a legislator (Figure 1.1 in Wahlke et al., 1962: 14)



For each of these roles, they deductively designed classifications. The representational role consists of two dimensions: the *focus* and the *style* of representation (Wahlke et al., 1962: 269). The focus of representation refers to which interests are represented. Wahlke et al. do not limit this focus to geographical units, but explicitly add a party, a pressure group and an administrative organization to the possible foci. Style on the other hand refers to the way in which a representative represents these interests: as a free agent “following his own convictions” (a *trustee*), as a *delegate*, bounded by instructions, or as a *politico*, who tries to balance the trustee and the delegate orientation by switching between them or by trying to reconcile them.

The focus and style of representation surfaced in the public debate as early as in the 1774 speech of Edmund Burke (Burke, 1774: 96 [italics in original]):

“Parliament, [...] is not a *congress* of ambassadors from different and hostile interests; [...] but Parliament is a *deliberative* assembly of *one* nation, with one interest, that of the whole - where, not local purposes, not local prejudices, ought to guide, but the general good, resulting from the general reason of the whole. You choose a member indeed; but when you have chosen him, he is not a member of Bristol, but he is a member of *parliament*.”

Yet, in this statement he combined the focus and style of representation, of which Wahlke et al. (1962: 269–270) argue that it should be kept separately for analytical purposes. According to their analysis of the statement, Burke connects a ‘local’ focus to a delegate style, while the ‘national’ focus is equated with a trustee style. This kind of intertwining of focus and style is omnipresent in the literature on representational roles.

Wahlke et al. (1962: 245–247) deliberately kept the representational role separate from the purposive role: while the former refers to the relationship between the legislator and his constituents, the latter is shaped by the goal of, activities in, and power structure of a parliament. The representational role captures how constraint legislators are by their ‘constituency’ (style) and who they consider their ‘constituency’ to be (focus). While this may be correlated to the role they take up within the parliament, purposive roles capture another part of their role conception. Within the purposive role, five classes were defined: tribune, inventor, broker, ritualist, and opportunist. The *tribune* focuses on being a “discoverer, reflector, advocate, or defender of popular needs and wants” (Wahlke et al., 1962: 252), while the *inventor* focuses on solving the big problems to achieve general welfare and better government. The *broker* is concerned with finding the balance, compromise and coordinate conflicting interests within the legislature. This resembles the *ritualist*, who just wants to make good legislation and attempts to do so by mastering the rules of the legislature, by always having an informed opinion based on facts and by being present to vote (Wahlke et al., 1962: 251–252). The *opportunist* is hardly addressed by Wahlke et al., because they have a lack of information on this type of legislator. This is caused by his attitude towards office: he is passive and using the status to play non-legislative roles (Wahlke et al., 1962: 249).

Since their seminal work, representational roles have received considerable attention in the scholarly literature. In the seventies the ‘interactionist approach’, most notably used by Fenno (1977, 1978) became more prominent than the functionalist tradition (Blomgren and Rozenberg, 2012). Fenno did not use a theoretically inspired framework like Wahlke et al.<sup>4</sup>, but used ethnographic methods in order to understand the ‘home style’: what being a representative meant and how the relationship between congressmen and the constituency worked (Searing, 1994: 8). He mainly reported on how representatives gained and retained support using strategic behavior and how that is influenced by the specific context of the

<sup>4</sup> Wahlke et al. (1962: 3) explicitly claim not to have started or ended with a theory, but compared to later research traditions in the study of representational roles, their framework was theoretically guided.

constituency (Blomgren and Rozenberg, 2012: 16–18). The description of what representatives did for their constituency largely influenced the ‘pork barrel literature’ focusing on that specific form of constituency service (e.g. Cox, 2006; Cox and McCubbins, 1986; Dixit and Londregan, 1996). The focus of representation is clearly present here, but limited to the geographical unit. After these advancements, the attention for analysis of legislative roles ceased due to conceptual confusion, null-findings when attempting to connect roles and behavior, and new trends in political science (Searing, 1994: 2).

A revival of attention for representational roles amongst political scientists was mainly inspired by Searing (1994). Searing introduced the ‘motivational approach’ in which the representative’s perception of the role is central (a good summary can be found in Saalfeld and Müller (1997)). Searing (1994) made the distinction between position roles (the formal function of the representative in the institutional structure) and preference roles (allowing representatives to use their own perception to shape the role interpretation). Searing argued that the leadership roles (like minister and whip) limit the room for preference roles. Backbenchers – like *constituency members*, *policy advocates*, and *parliament man* – had more freedom to choose their role interpretation. The leadership roles were also briefly addressed by Wahlke et al. (1962: 170–192), but they did not consider them to be a core legislative role: the focus of their study.

Following Searing’s example, common practice is that a typology of roles is drawn up for every institutional context individually. The reasoning for this is that every institution provides its own power structure, rules, procedures, and context. Therefore, the room for comparative research in this field is limited (Costa and Kerrouche, 2009: 220). This has led to seemingly non-overlapping classifications for France (Costa and Kerrouche, 2009), Norway (Heidar, 1997), Germany (Patzelt, 1997; Zittel, 2012), New Zealand and Australia (Gauja, 2012), Austria (Jenny and Müller, 2012), Hungary (Chiru and Enyedi, 2015; Ilonszki, 2012), and Romania (Chiru and Enyedi, 2015). Although most scholars label their role of interest the ‘representative role’, they mix Wahlke et al.’s purposive roles, representational roles, areal roles and leadership roles in the definitions of their types of MPs.

This approach has also spread to the European Parliament, leading to at least four different classifications (Bale and Taggart, 2006; Brack, 2015; Navarro, 2012; Scully and Farrell, 2003). In the first three of these classifications, the focus of representation is intertwined with purposive roles, which are concerned with the goal of a legislator, while in the last three classifications attitudes towards European integration come into play.

Both Navarro (2012) and Scully and Farrell (2003) looked at the EP as a whole, while Brack (2015) only studied Eurosceptic MEPs and Bale and Taggart (2006) looked at newly elected MEPs. Nevertheless, some of the roles they identify resemble each other to a large extent, like the *outsider/absentee* who does not really participate in legislative work and takes an anti-EU stance. Furthermore, the *interest articulator/constituency representative/intermediary* pops up in three out of four classifications: an MEP who caters to the interests of a ‘constituency’. This constituency has broad definitions, like ‘a combined Europe-wide, national, and

constituency focus' for the *interest articulator* of Scully and Farrell (2003: 273) or "country, electoral district or a particular interest group" for Bale and Taggart's (2006: 10) *constituency representative*.

Yet, there are also distinct differences between the classifications. While Scully and Farrell (2003) included a *party orientation*, focusing on the national level party, the European parliamentary group, and party voters, this is absent in the other three studies. The *policy advocate* of Bale and Taggart (2006: 10) resembles the *specialist* of Navarro (2012), who focusses on promoting policy preferences in a few policy fields. There is some overlap of these two roles with Brack's (2015) *participant*, but the latter is more driven by the "desire to be influential" than the desire to achieve particular policies. This shows that no clear classification of role orientations has surfaced over the last fifty years, not even when studying the same parliament. Furthermore, the identified roles demonstrate that empirically the clear distinction between the purposive roles, and focus and style as part of representational roles has disappeared over time.

Moreover, while the definition of legislative roles above summarized roles as "composite patterns of goals, attitudes and behaviours" (Searing, 1994: 369), recently Blomgren and Rozenberg (2012: 8–9) established as new definition:

"comprehensive patterns of attitudes and/or behaviour shared by MPs, [that] enable MPs to be distinguished or identified as a group, and enable us to distinguish between them, and, [the patterns] have to do with MPs' own conception of their job overall, and their vision of their voters in particular."

It is exactly the 'and/or' part of the definition that causes additional confusion, because this definition provides the opportunity to label studies that only focus on representational behavior as 'studies into representational roles' (e.g. Jenny and Müller, 2012: 145).

The slight shift in definition is caused by the fourth approach to the study of legislative roles: the strategic approach (Strøm, 1997, 2012). While the strategic considerations of legislators in the choice of their representative role already surfaced in the side-lines of the interactionist approach of Fenno (1977, 1978), Strøm put this in the center of his theory. According to Strøm, legislators have four, hierarchically ordered strategies: reselection, re-election, party office, and legislative office. These strategies "are not directly observable, but instead we infer them from the patterned behavior that parliamentarians display" (Strøm, 2012: 88). The updated definition of Blomgren and Rozenberg (2012) thus accommodates the studies that use the strategic approach.

The strategic approach posits that the first hurdle for incumbents is assuring nomination to stand for re-election. Therefore, depending on the way reselection occurs, Strøm expects legislators adapt to the wishes of those with power over the ballot, like adapting to the party line in case of nomination by the party leadership (Strøm, 2012: 93). Second, in order to secure re-election, a parliamentarian may gear behavior towards the electoral constituency. The importance of this is conditional upon the electoral system, as in closed-list systems with

proportional representation the legislator has little incentive to portray this kind of personal vote-seeking behavior (Strøm, 2012: 94).

Third, when reselection and re-election are secured, ambitious legislators will try to climb the ranks. In order to do that, parliamentarians will have to please both their fellow party representatives and the party leadership (Strøm, 2012: 96). Legislative office, like a non-partisan speaker position (Strøm, 1997: 160), stands slightly above party office in the hierarchy, Strøm (2012: 98) argues, because it becomes particularly desirable for legislators when the opportunities for party office decline. Yet, what kind of behavior legislative office seeking politicians would exhibit remains vague, as it depends on the particular circumstances of each parliament.

Even though the approach of Strøm sounds convincing, as it is an easy ordering of goals, the conditionality in every step makes it hard to apply empirically. For example, while one representative may put the party line central to secure reselection via internal party primaries, another representative may behave similarly to aim for party office. Therefore, they only address a part of the legislative roles as defined by Wahlke et al. (1962): the strategic approach sketches no clear rationale for the focus of representation.

To summarize, even though the study of legislative roles set out in an analytically clear fashion, over time lines have blurred with roles being interpreted as attitudes, norms, strategies, and/or behaviors. To stay clear from conceptual confusion, I refrain from claiming that I study legislative or representational roles in this dissertation. I do apply some of the reasoning behind role theory in Chapter 7, by taking into account how experiences may shape how a parliamentarian takes up representation.

In addition, in the tradition of the motivational approach it has become common ground to intertwine the purposive and representational roles. This raises the question whether we should attempt to capture all different roles in one framework with a limited number of types of legislators, or return to disentangling the constituent parts? The danger in the former aim is that one forgets that there are constituent parts of which many combinations could be possible. While Wahlke et al. (1962: 384–413) systematically went through all conceivable combinations of roles to assess ‘interpenetration’, the inductive strategies common within the motivational approach do not require this. This is the case, because the observations tell you which combinations are empirically present in the legislature at hand for the legislators studied. However, an aim of this dissertation is to build an explanatory framework for who and what is represented that is not limited to the European Parliament. Therefore, I have chosen to put one constituent part of legislative roles central: the focus of representation.

### *1.1.3 Representative claims*

Two separate, but similarly named movements took the study of representation in a new direction. On the one hand, as a critique on both protest event analysis and discourse analysis, Koopmans and Statham developed ‘political claims analysis’ (Koopmans and Statham, 1999, 2010a: 55). Their aim was to content code discursive representational claims more

systematically. On the other hand, with the constructivist or systemic turn in the study of representation, a new conceptualization of 'representation as claims-making' has been put forward by Saward (2006). Though rooted in different literatures, both approaches overlap some points (De Wilde, 2013), but neither completely fits with the approach in this dissertation. Therefore, these approaches are only briefly introduced here.

According to Saward, representation is constituted by the act of making a representative claim: "A maker of representations (M) puts forward a subject (S) which stands for an object (O) which is related to a referent (R) and is offered to an audience (A)" (Saward, 2006: 302). In this definition the maker can be an elected politician, but it can also be any other actor that makes claims, like an NGO or other interest groups (Lord and Pollak, 2013: 521). The subject may be identical to the maker (as in an MEP who offers him/herself as the representative), but someone can also make a claim about who another actor represents (as in an MEP who claims that an interest group only represents the consumers from the wealthier Member States). The object in the definition refers to whose interests are claimed to be put forward, like constituency interests or "the needs of debt-ridden societies" (Saward, 2006: 309). The referent is "a materially existing group or entity" the object aims to capture (Saward, 2006: 315). Finally, the audience are those that receive the claim (Saward, 2006: 303).

Severs and Dovi (2018: 310) point out that the conceptualization of representation as claims-making entails that the representative creates the constituency, which does not need to exist in a recognizable form before the claim is made. This is a sharp difference with previous conceptualizations of representation, where the constituency is defined externally from the representation process as the people who authorize the representative or hold him/her to account. This is in line with the broader conceptualization of possible foci of representation I use in the dissertation: the focus of representation can be more than an interpretation of the geographical level of the constituency.

Even though I use the label 'representative claims' throughout the dissertation, I do not use the full definition of Saward (2006) or the adapted definition of Lord and Pollak (2013) for four reasons. First, because the 'maker' is limited to (one or more) MEPs in this dissertation. By introducing this limitation, I have a more restricted notion of whose representative claims I research. Second, because I assume the subject to be the maker. The claims made in amendments and their justifications do not lend themselves to make claims about other subjects than the maker, as they are meant to defend the position taken by the MEP(s). In the empirical application of claims-making (Koopmans and Statham, 1999), the maker and the subject were also combined into the 'claimant' (De Wilde, 2013: 286).

Third, by using the concept of 'unattached interests' from Pitkin (1967: 156), I have included foci where by definition no referent can be present. Fourth, the audience is difficult to identify (De Wilde, 2013: 284), especially in the context of amendments and their justifications. We may assume that the audience is the fellow MEPs, foremost those in the committee. Nevertheless, the argumentation for successful amendments may have a wider inter-institutional audience including the Council (Lord and Pollak, 2013: 527). In addition, as

amendments are publicly available, in the end the audience may also be the public. Yet, solely from the amendment with the claim(s) we are unlikely to find information about the audience.

In summary, the representative claims approach (re-)opens the door to a broader interpretation of 'constituency'. Furthermore, this approach creates a bridge between more abstract notions of representation and the possibility to measure representational behavior (De Wilde, 2013). However, not all elements from representative claims analysis are applicable to the claims made in amendments and their justifications. Therefore, I sometimes use the label 'representative claim' in the dissertation to refer to the 'object', but with that I do not claim to have performed representative claims analysis in the tradition of Saward and/or Koopmans and Statham.

## 1.2 Contributions

While the major aim of this dissertation is exploring and explaining who and what Members of European Parliament represent in their legislative behavior, more gaps in the academic literature are addressed along the way. Six aims of my dissertation are highlighted here: theoretically, I aim to contribute (1) by combining 'focus' and 'role switching' into the new concept 'distribution of foci' and (2) by applying congressional theories on legislative organization to explain co-sponsorship in the European Parliament. Empirically, the aim is (3) to move from representational attitudes to representational behavior in amendments, (4) to include attention for the legislative context, and (5) to explore scope conditions of studying amendments. Finally, methodologically, I borrow from party systems literature to analyze how many foci of representation a representative holds (6).

### 1.2.1 From 'focus' and 'role switching' to a 'distribution of foci'

When Eulau, Wahlke, Buchanan, and Ferguson (Eulau et al., 1959; Wahlke et al., 1962) introduced the concept 'focus of representation', they explicitly stated that foci are not mutually exclusive, may occur simultaneously, or "activated *seriatim* as circumstances require" (Eulau et al., 1959: 745). This last hypothesis was empirically supported by Miller and Stokes (1963) who found that representatives behaved differently across policy fields. Nevertheless, in the decades that followed attention for this idea ceased.

Andeweg (1997) and Van Vonno (2012) renewed attention for the issue while observing that Dutch MPs 'switch roles' to some degree. They found that although there is some specialization in roles, MPs may switch roles when moving from government to opposition. Costa and Kerrouche (2009), observed a similar pattern with French MPs holding two roles: at the local and national level.

In this dissertation, I aim to build upon the original idea of Eulau et al. that representatives may have multiple foci of representation depending on the circumstances. In order to capture this idea empirically, I will bring the concepts of 'focus of representation' and 'role switching' together to develop the 'distribution of foci'. The 'distribution of foci' aims to provide a picture of the constellation of foci of MEPs (Chapter 6), which can subsequently be used to serve as

one phenomenon to be explained (Chapter 7). With the ‘distribution of foci’ I thus aim to provide a more nuanced measure of who and what are represented by MEPs.

### *1.2.2 Congressional theories on legislative organization to explain co-sponsorship*

When trying to explain co-sponsorship relations between MEPs, no theoretical framework is directly available. Empirical studies of EP committees have indicated that conflict structures itself along partisan and national lines (Neuhold and Settembri, 2007: 165). The coherence of European party groups also surfaced in empirical observations regarding voting behavior along partisan lines (e.g. Hix et al., 2005; Raunio, 1999: 190–191). Yet, we know that in amending behavior, MEPs have more freedom to build coalitions within their EP committee or across party lines (Finke, 2012). Furthermore, party discipline is much weaker in committee setting compared to roll-call voting in plenary. Therefore, the partisan perspective is not the only possible explanation for co-sponsorship to be explored in this dissertation.

To provide a more theoretical rationale for the empirically focused debate on national or transnational MEPs and gain new insights in the functioning of the EP, I will draw from theories on legislative organization that were developed in the context of the US Congress. This set of theories does not only contain a partisan perspective, but also the informational and distributive perspectives.<sup>5</sup> Although these theories were originally developed to explain committee formation in the US Congress, the mechanisms are not necessarily limited to that context (e.g. Fujimura, 2012; Jensen and Winzen, 2012; Strøm, 1997). Previously, scholars applied the theories to analyze other aspects of the EP, including rapporteurship allocation (Kaeding, 2004), rapporteur influence over the plenary (Costello and Thomson, 2010), amendment success (Hurka, 2013), informal cooperation between MEPs (Jensen and Winzen, 2012), and changes in the Rules of Procedure (Brack and Costa, 2018). By using the incentives embedded in these theories, the applicability of the theoretical framework can be expanded to other activities, like co-sponsoring of amendments.

Yet, using the theories of legislative organization in the European context is not without scholarly criticism (Martin, 2014; Martin and Mickler, 2018; Yordanova, 2011). Therefore, simultaneously with applying the theories of legislative organization to generate new insights in co-sponsoring of amendments and the functioning of the European Parliament, I will also

<sup>5</sup> Additionally, Groseclose and King (2001) introduced a fourth perspective: the bicameral-rivalry theory, which posits that committee members are driven by power vis-à-vis other institutions and money. In Chapter 5, I argue that this theory tells us more about if MEPs will co-sponsor than with whom, therefore it is not taken into account. Adler and Wilkerson (2007, 2012) introduced a fifth perspective: the governing theory (2007) or problem-solving perspective (2012) on legislative organization. Yet, with an emphasis on lowering information gathering costs and increasing problem-solving capacity, this approach first merely extends the informational theory of legislative organization, while the second element – why some issues end up on the agenda – is not of interest in this dissertation. Therefore, I do not take this perspective into account.

explore the scope and limitations of the ‘Congressional theories’ in the setting of the European Parliament.

### *1.2.3 From representational attitude to representational behavior in amendments*

Throughout the history of research into the focus of representation, scholars have looked mostly at attitudes towards representation and self-reported behavior (Martin, 2011a). Scholars have also tried to explain time spent in the constituency or roll call voting using role conceptions. But, it has often been stated that only a weak relation was found between attitudes and behavior (e.g. Searing, 1994: 12; Van Vonn, 2012). However, as Van Vonn (2012: 120) pointed out, linking representational attitudes to voting behavior is overly ambitious in systems with strong party systems. Moreover, studies of division of time implicitly assume that contact is necessary to have a representational relation. This fits with a delegate interpretation of representation, but does not need to be the case.

Luckily, with the development of representative claims analysis, we have the tools to move beyond self-reported behavior, and measure representational behavior directly. Previously, this approach has been applied to parliamentary questions (e.g. Martin, 2011b; Papp, 2016). However, amendments are a different type of behavior than asking parliamentary questions. While parliamentary questions are mainly used for parliamentary oversight (Corbett et al., 2011: 315–316) and symbolic signaling (Ringe and Wilson, 2016: 766), amendments tabled in committee phase have the potential to directly affect the content of legislation (Ringe and Wilson, 2016: 766). Studying the focus of representation using parliamentary questions thus does give us insight in symbolic acts of representation. Yet, I propose that if we want more insights in who or what is represented when legislation is being made, we should look at legislative amendments.

Amendments in the European Parliament have previously been studied in the context of specific dossiers, to study position taking and consensus building, as a measure of parliamentary activity levels, and as a measure of influence of the EP in interinstitutional perspective (see Chapter 3 for a concise overview). Yet, committee amendments under the Ordinary Legislative Procedure (OLP/COD) have the specific feature that MEPs may add justifications to their amendments. These explanations contain representative claims about in whose or what interest the proposed change is. This dissertation thus aims to use a novel data source on representational behavior: representative claims in amendments.

### *1.2.4 Including attention for the legislative context*

Traditionally, analysis of representation within the field of legislative studies takes place at the level of the legislator (e.g. Wahlke et al., 1962; Wessels, 1999). The main point of interest has been to explain differences between legislators. Empirically, this makes sense, because most scholars worked with attitudinal data or had to rely on the recollections of legislators about their behavior (Martin, 2011a: 264). Yet, as highlighted above, several studies have shown that politicians are not stable in their representational attitudes and behavior

(Andeweg, 1997; Costa and Kerrouche, 2009; Miller and Stokes, 1963; Van Vonno, 2012). Therefore, we should not only expect differences ‘between’ legislators, but also variation ‘within’ an individual MEP depending on the circumstances.

A major opportunity to study this was created with the surge in research on parliamentary questions. As Martin (2011a: 263–264) argues, studying these individual instances of behavior has a number of advantages over earlier approaches. Yet, most studies on the focus of representation in parliamentary questions still ignore how circumstances like policy field or timing may affect the representational behavior of the legislator (Martin, 2011b; Papp, 2016; Raunio, 1996; Russo, 2011; Saalfeld, 2011), though Blidook and Kerby (2011) and Chiru (2018) are notable exceptions.

Compared to parliamentary questions, amendments have even more characteristics that may affect the foci of representation addressed. For example, a major difference is that amendments are tabled in relation to a pre-existing dossier. This means that policy field and the formal relation between the MEP and the dossier (like shadow rapporteur) are pre-determined, which may affect the foci of representation present. While policy field may also affect parliamentary questions (Blidook and Kerby, 2011), the author of the question has no pre-determined formal relationship with the field or the question. Furthermore, compared to written parliamentary questions, amendments may be tabled by more than one MEP (European Parliament, 2009b). With whom an MEP co-sponsors may be associated with the content of the amendment and therefore I aim to take co-sponsorship coalition into account in order to explain variation within and between MEPs in focus of representation.

In summary, while the main focus in the literature has been on explaining variation between legislators, assuming the possibility of within-legislator variation and therefore including the amendment level in analysis will be the strategy to study representational behavior in this dissertation. This implies that attention will not only be paid to the amendment-level of analysis, but also to typical characteristics of the legislative context that are expected to affect behavior of MEPs.

#### *1.2.5 Exploring scope conditions of studying amendments*

While there is currently a surge in attention for legislative activity in the EP (e.g. Hurka et al., 2017; Sorace, 2018; Staat and Kuehnhanss, 2017), this is partly driven by the easy availability of the data. Instead, I aim to create a new dataset containing all committee amendments from the 7<sup>th</sup> legislature. I will apply web scraping tools to obtain all available documents with committee amendments from the digital archives of the European Parliament. As the EP took a next step into the digital era by constructing these documents from a database, the amendments were semi-structured. Using a script, I transform these documents back into a dataset.

These advancements in data collection create the opportunity to explore all committee amendments to assess scope conditions (Chapter 3). Furthermore, it enables me to apply random sampling of amendments (see Chapter 2), while previous large-n studies sampled

based on a selected number of legislative dossiers (e.g. Kreppel, 1999) or one policy field (e.g. Burns et al., 2012). As a by-product, the dataset will be available for analysis beyond this dissertation. This could, for example, be used to study plenary amendments based on failed committee amendments, to explore further under which circumstances MEPs tend to amend (more), or to learn more about the amending behavior of rapporteurs.

### *1.2.6 Borrowing from party systems literature to analyze the foci of representation*

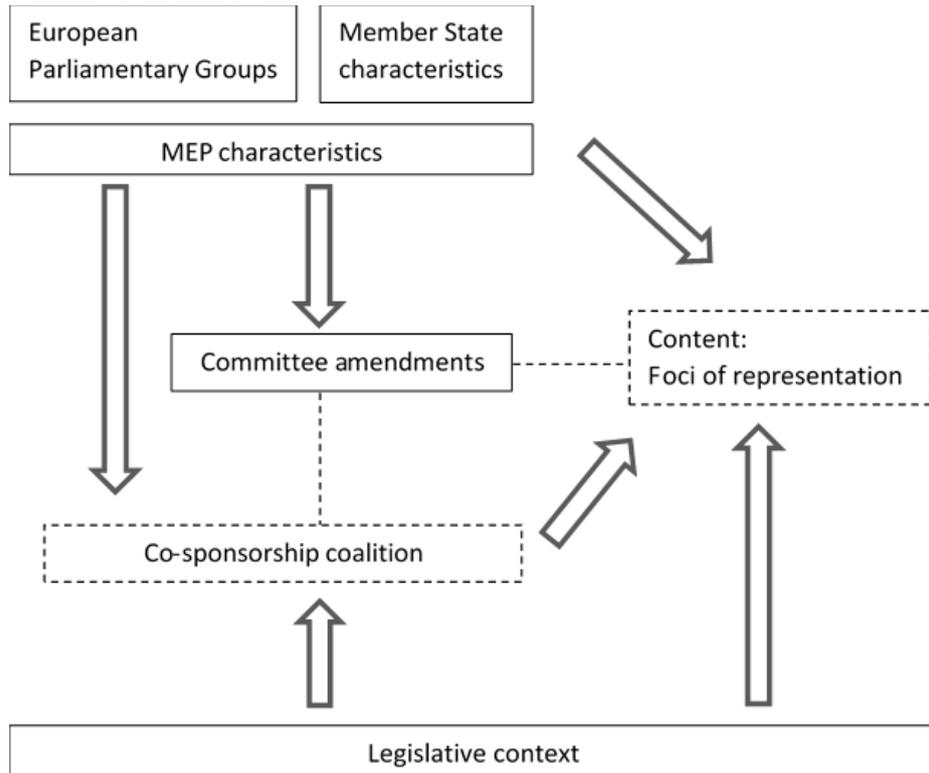
The introduction of the concept 'distribution of foci' has one methodological disadvantage: the fractions for the different foci cannot be assumed to be independent. Not only may it theoretically be possible to combine foci (Wahlke et al., 1962: 270), also empirically this kind of data poses a particular dependency. As the fractions add up to one, an increase in skewness towards one focus must mean a decrease towards at least one other focus. This 'compositional data'-problem limits the possibilities for data analysis. Even though the compositional data problem is extensively discussed in multiple scientific disciplines (e.g. Aitchison, 1982; Aitchison and Egozcue, 2005; Katz and King, 1999; Pawlowsky-Glahn and Bucciatti, 2011), solutions are so far only found for specific analyses and types of compositional data.

While methods for regression with compositional data as dependent variables are readily available (see Chapter 2), I will draw from the party systems literature to find a measure to describe the data. In describing party systems, scholars encountered the problem that more parties compete in elections than we consider relevant to characterize the party system (Lijphart, 1968: 33; Sartori, 1966: 139). Laakso and Taagepera (1979) developed a formula to deal with this problem, which was recently updated by Golosov (2010). By drawing from the party systems literature, this dissertation thus will bring a measure to the literature on representation that can capture how many foci of representation a legislator holds.

### **1.3 Outline of the dissertation**

This dissertation combines chapters written for this dissertation (this introduction, Chapters 2, 3, and 8), and articles written for separate publication (Chapters 4, 5, 6, and 7). As a result, there may be some overlap between chapters. The interplay of the different characteristics of amendments and explanatory factors is schematically shown in Figure 1.2. This dissertation proceeds as follows. **Chapter 2** starts with an introduction of the data and methodology. Amendments were content coded and the first part of this chapter outlines the sampling strategy, coding scheme, and process of coding. In the second part, the composition of and coding process behind the dataset of MEP-characteristics is sketched. Third, I introduce how committee membership was handled and I summarize the considerations behind the used classification of EP committees. The fourth part reflects on the way co-sponsorship of amendments could have been analyzed, on the choices made, and how the method of Exponential Random Graph Modelling works.

Figure 1.2 Research model



**Chapter 3, *Who amends?***, provides a descriptive overview of the use of committee amendments in the European Parliament. I first outline the rules and regulations governing amendments, before summarizing the body of literature on amendments in the European Parliament. Based on the literature there are two important notes on the use of amendments as a data source. Subsequently, it is empirically shown how the use of amendments is distributed over time, legislative procedures, and formal roles of MEPs. In order to grasp the limitations introduced by studying amendments, I explore how MEPs who do not amend differ from those that do amend. Finally, amending behavior is put in perspective with other types of parliamentary activity.

The maker(s) of the representative claim are assessed in Chapters 4 and 5. In **Chapter 4, *Specialists, party members, or national representatives***, the theories of legislative organization are used to develop hypotheses about with whom MEPs would be likely to co-sponsor on more than one dossier. Analysis of the network of co-sponsoring MEPs shows that being affiliated to the same EP Party Group, Member State delegation and EP committee all contribute to the likelihood of cooperation in the tabling of amendments. Diving deeper into the within- and across EPG co-sponsorships shows that especially the European United Left–Nordic Green Left (GUE/NGL) has strong within-party co-sponsorship bonds, while the Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe is a pivotal link in cross-party co-sponsorship.

**Chapter 5**, *Different committees, different logics for co-sponsorship?*, explores to what extent the explanations found for co-operation in tabling amendments vary across types of parliamentary committees. As some committees deal with more dossiers that have distributive effects, while other committees deal with dossiers that are regulatory, different committees have different incentives for co-sponsorship. Furthermore, not all committees are equally powerful. The results indicate that the rationales for co-sponsorship of amendments have different levels of explanatory power across committees. However, this variation cannot be explained by the kind of externalities produced by the committee or the relative power of the committee.

Subsequently, the focus shifts from the maker(s) of the amendments to the content of amendments. **Chapter 6**, *The distribution of foci of representation among MEPs*, is built around one central argument: we can better describe the representational behavior of MEPs using a new concept: the distribution of foci. This notion is based on the combination of the old concept 'focus of representation' with empirical insights on 'role switching'. I first trace the development of the concept throughout the decades, before a step-by-step empirical underpinning of the distribution of foci using hand coded committee amendments is provided.

*Pursuing who you are or responding to where you are?* is the final empirical chapter. This co-authored **Chapter 7** seeks to explain variation in who or what is represented by MEPs. In a first step, previously developed models with characteristics of MEPs and attributes of their Member States are tested as explanations for the distributions of foci. Just like in previous studies, these models have limited explanatory power. Therefore, we expand the analysis to the foci of representation at the amendment-level and show that *responding to where you are*, i.e. the legislative context of the amendment, provides new insights in the underlying dynamics rooting the distributions of foci.

Together these chapters provide insight in how MEPs balance the different incentives of the multi-level structure of the EU polity. The concluding **Chapter 8** summarizes the findings, explicates the limitations of the study, and suggests avenues for future research. But most of all, it aims to provide an answer to the question how we can explain who and what is represented in the legislative behavior of Members of European Parliament.



## Chapter 2

### Data & Methodology

This chapter provides a detailed outline of where the data used in the subsequent chapters has come from and how the data was analyzed. Since amendments are only distributed in a semi-structured text format, some explanation of how the data was gathered and transformed is due. While amendments and their characteristics form the empirical basis of my dissertation, this data was connected to other sources containing information about the tabling MEPs and their parties. In terms of research methods, I used web scraping, quantitative content analysis and access to secondary sources to collect the data. Besides well-established statistical analyses, data analysis was performed using Exponential Random Graph Modelling (ERGM) and fractional multinomial logit modelling. The reasons for opting for these techniques, the alternatives that were not selected, and the practical considerations are discussed below.

In summary, data was collected on 1) the content of committee amendments, 2) the background and activity levels of MEPs of the 7<sup>th</sup> legislature (2009-2014), 3) categorizations of EP committees, and 4) co-sponsorship of committee amendments. This was supplemented with data available from external sources, which enriched the information available in the ‘MEP-dataset’. An overview of which data is analyzed in which chapters is presented in Table 2.1.

*Table 2.1 Overview of data used per chapter*

	<b>Content coded amendments</b>	<b>MEP dataset</b>	<b>Categorized committees</b>	<b>Co-sponsorship data</b>
<b>Chapter 3</b> Who amends?		X		
<b>Chapter 4</b> Specialists, party members or national representatives		X		X
<b>Chapter 5</b> Different committees, different logics for co-sponsorship?		X	X	X
<b>Chapter 6</b> The distribution of foci of representation	X			
<b>Chapter 7</b> Pursuing who you are, where you are from, or responding to where you are?	X	X	X	X

This chapter proceeds as follows: first, the collection and content coding of amendments is introduced. Second, the composition of the ‘MEP-dataset’ - based on content coded CVs and external data - is elaborated. Third, the classification of EP committees is explained. Fourth, the choice of network analysis and particularities regarding Exponential Random Graph Modelling are addressed. Finally, some remarks are made considering the challenges of analyzing compositional data.

## 2.1 Committee amendments

Committee amendments are disseminated by the EP via the Public Register of Documents (*Page for Search by document type*, n.d.) and via the Archives of the EP Committees (European Parliament, n.d.) in both pdf and word-format. However, not all files are available in both sources in both formats, so a dual strategy was used to obtain all files from the 7<sup>th</sup> legislature (2009-2014). Such a document on average contains 108 amendments, but the distribution is positively skewed (skew=1.01). In 15% of the dossiers, the amendments are archived using multiple files. The files were extracted using a web scraping script in the programming language ‘MATLAB’. Subsequently, the remnants of XML-tags in the word-files were used to transform the raw text into datasets containing information about the original proposal, the draft report, and the amendments (see Example 2.1).

*Example 2.1 Amendment to 2011/0288(COD) (European Parliament, 2012a)*

<p>&lt;Amend&gt;Amendment &lt;NumAm&gt;465&lt;/NumAm&gt;          &lt;RepeatBlock-By&gt;&lt;Members&gt;Julie Girling, James Nicholson, Richard Ashworth, Anthea McIntyre&lt;/Members&gt;          &lt;/RepeatBlock-By&gt;          &lt;DocAmend&gt;Proposal for a regulation&lt;/DocAmend&gt;          &lt;Article&gt;Article 71 – paragraph 1&lt;/Article&gt;</p>	
<p><i>Text proposed by the Commission</i>          The identification system for agricultural parcels shall be established on the basis of maps or land registry documents or other cartographic references. Use shall be made of computerised geographical information system techniques, including aerial or spatial orthoimagery, with a homogenous standard guaranteeing accuracy at least equivalent to cartography at a scale of 1:5000.</p>	<p><i>Amendment</i>          The identification system for agricultural parcels shall be established on the basis of maps or land registry documents or other cartographic references. Use shall be made of computerised geographical information system techniques, including aerial or spatial orthoimagery, with a homogenous standard guaranteeing accuracy at least equivalent to cartography at a scale of 1:10,000.</p>
<p>Or. &lt;Original&gt; {EN} en &lt;/Original&gt;          &lt;TitreJust&gt;Justification&lt;/TitreJust&gt;  <i>The current accuracy of maps is already very high, the proposed change to 1:5000 would mean substantial re-mapping work and cause disruption to farmers.</i>          &lt;/Amend&gt;</p>	

Example 2.1 also shows a typical example of an amendment under the Ordinary Legislative Procedure. This case was proposed by four co-sponsors from the UK, all affiliated to the European Conservatives and Reformists (ECR), and representing two national level parties: the ‘Conservative Party’ and the ‘Ulster Conservatives and Unionists-New Force’. The bolded text is the part of the original article that is amended. Although the change seems small (one character is changed, two are added), the justification reveals that (according to the tabling MEPs) the Commission’s proposal entailed substantial costs and would be against farmer’s interests. Two elements of the amendments have been used throughout this dissertation: the names of MEPs that (co-)sponsored the amendments<sup>6</sup> and the content of the proposed change and its justification.

In total, the dataset contains 213,236 amendments, extracted from 1,977 documents. After removing amendments where information on the procedure type and procedure identifiers was incomplete, 211,289 amendments related to 1,523 dossiers were found to be suitable for analysis. Only 14 of these amendments were tabled in third reading and 2,279 in second reading, but the large bulk of 98.9% was tabled in first reading. Most amendments are tabled in relation to proposals under the own-initiative report procedure (43.5%) and the ordinary legislative procedure (48.4%). Under the OLP, 32.1% of the amendments contains a justification, while due to the constraints from the Rules of Procedure this was only the case for 0.1% of the amendments under INI.

*Table 2.2 Descriptive statistics per MEP*

	<b>Observations included</b>	<b>Mean value</b>	<b>Std. Dev.</b>	<b>Min</b>	<b>Max</b>
Number of amendments	857	367	362	0	3,104
Number of amendments with justification	798	68	102	0	1,117
Number of different EP committees with amendment	798	5.4	3.3	1	23
Number of co-sponsored amendments	798	194	196	0	1,306
Number of reports amended	798	32	25	1	166

Not all MEPs are equally active in tabling amendments and the use of justifications. Summary statistics are presented in Table 2.2. A total of 59 MEPs never tabled any amendment during the 7<sup>th</sup> legislature (hence the drop in the number of observations), while another 45 MEPs tabled less than 20 amendments. In contrast, 234 MEPs tabled more than 500 amendments per person in the same time frame. If you look at amendments with

<sup>6</sup> As note 1 in Chapter 4 addresses: co-sponsorship data was originally not complete, as Stata12 could not handle strings longer than 244 characters. The data was re-scraped after Stata14 was installed to complete the data. I found that this affected co-sponsorship information for 224 amendments out of 51,043 amendments analyzed in Chapter 6.

justifications specifically, 542 MEPs tabled 10 or more amendments with justifications and 182 of them tabled even more than 100 amendments accompanied by this extra explanation. These descriptive statistics are further explored in Chapter 3.

Table 2.3 shows to what extent the amendments were single-sponsored by one MEP, EPG, or Committee or co-sponsored by a combination of these. As the first row of the table shows, most amendments are regular amendments tabled by at least one MEP. Compromise or consolidated amendments are less prevalent. EPGs and entire committees also only tabled amendments to a limited number of dossiers. Strikingly, the bottom half of Table 2.3 shows that for sponsors 'on behalf' of an EPG or committee were more prevalent in co-sponsored amendments than in single sponsored amendments. EPGs co-sponsored 139 amendments together, while they co-sponsored with MEPs for 380 amendments. Co-sponsored amendments on behalf of committees were only found in conjunction with MEPs.

*Table 2.3 Distribution over type of amendment<sup>7</sup>*

	Total Dossiers	Single sponsored		Co-sponsored		
		Dossiers	Amendments	Dossiers	Amendments	
Regular amendment by MEPs	1,521	1,459	158,776		1,132	51,022
Compromise/consolidated amendment by MEPs	54	47	965		12	154
On behalf of EP Party Group	32	13	231	With MEP	13	380
				With EPG	13	139
				Subtotal	22	519
On behalf of Committee	3	1	2	With MEP	3	55

### 2.1.1 Sampling strategy

In order to select amendments for content analysis (presented in Chapters 6 and 7), I employed a multi-stage sampling procedure via four steps. In the first phase, only amendments were retained that adhered to a number of criteria. Firstly, the sample was limited to amendments with justifications tabled under the OLP in first reading. Amendments with justifications were selected, because of the importance of the justification for interpretation of the proposed change and which/whose interests were represented. Limiting the sample to one specific procedure was done because justifications are only allowed for amendments to documents of a legislative nature, because most amendments were tabled under the OLP, and to limit the impact of slightly differing rules, procedures, and processes. First reading amendments were retained, because the rules and procedures governing amendments are the most lenient in that reading in terms of who may table amendments. Amendments single sponsored by the rapporteur were also excluded from the sample, because it is hard to distinguish between the amendments that were compromise

<sup>7</sup> As co-sponsored amendments may be co-sponsored by a combination of MEPs and EPGs/Committees, these numbers do not add up to the mentioned totals in other chapters.

amendments or those reflecting the individual intentions of the MEP. After these selections, 30,232 amendments related to 663 different MEPs were left in the subpopulation.

Second, in order to have enough observations per MEP, it was decided that only MEPs with at least ten amendments in the subpopulation should be retained. As a result of this convenience sampling, 145 MEPs and 565 amendments were excluded from the sample. This de facto excluded all MEPs from Croatia, since they only became MEPs with full rights on 1 July 2013. In the third and the fourth stages, I used random sampling to first select 200 MEPs from the remaining 518 MEPs.<sup>8</sup> Subsequently, a maximum of 20 amendments per MEP was randomly sampled. In cases where the MEP sponsored more than 10, but less than 20 amendments fitting the selection criteria, all selected amendments of that MEP were retained. This led to a sample of 3,791 amendments.

To see what kind of bias might have been introduced by this sampling strategy, the resulting sample was compared to the subpopulation after the first stage of selection. On the MEP level, no significant differences were found. It must be noted though, that three small Member States (Estonia, Malta, and Slovakia) are not represented in the sample. This is not surprising given their small delegation sizes in the EP. At the amendment level, statistically significant differences were found. Co-sponsored amendments were slightly undersampled (43.7% vs. 46.5%), the year 2010 was slightly undersampled (-1.2%), and 2011 oversampled (1.6%). Furthermore, a number of committees with a relatively small number of amendments were oversampled (AFCO, CULT, DEVE, EMPL, INTA, JURI) together with the ‘big’ LIBE-committee, while three other ‘big’ committees (ECON, ENVI, TRAN) were undersampled. Since I do not expect a substantial difference in content between 2010 and 2011, the difference is not expected to have any impact. The division over co- and single-sponsored amendments is quite balanced, therefore no resampling was conducted. For the committees, most of the over- and undersampling might have had a positive impact on avoiding that the ‘big’ committees will be driving the results of the analysis. Overall, the over- and undersampling was not extreme in size and if there is any impact of the differences between the sample and the subpopulation, it is likely to have balanced the sample more instead of less.

### *2.1.2 Content coding of amendments*

The primary goal of content coding of amendments was to capture the attached and unattached interests that were represented by the MEP(s). Studying amendments with their justifications implicates that I have not looked for the ‘real interest or intention’, since there is no way to interpret that from the text. Instead, one can only see the claimed interests, ideals, norms or intentions. This is relevant and important in its own right, since representation can be seen as “to make present something that is *not* in fact present” (Pitkin, 1967: 92 [*italics in original*]). Thus the claim that it is in someone’s or something’s interest, is

<sup>8</sup> Using the ‘sample’ command in Stata14 with the seed set to a number randomly generated in Excel 2010.

in itself an act of representation. As when making “claims, claimants present themselves to an audience as the legitimate representatives of a certain cause and/or constituency” (De Wilde, 2013: 278). Therefore, going with the claimed interest is a more objective way of measuring the represented interest compared to interpreting who the intended represented could have been. As a result, the coding instructions were to interpret what was written, but to not think too creatively what else could have been intended.

By looking at claimed representation, I do not look at descriptive representation or a match between descriptive and substantive representation directly. Most research on the focus of representation assumes that voters are the central element of the focus and that the question is: on which level? Research for example zoomed in on the local constituency, the regional level, or federal/national level (e.g. Brouard et al., 2013; Martin, 2011b; Russo, 2011; Sozzi, 2016a). In the European context, this is often expanded with or contrasted to a party focus (Andeweg, 1997; Blomgren, 2003: 223; Chiru and Enyedi, 2015; Converse and Pierce, 1986: 675). However, in this codebook, this is explicitly broadened to also include the possibility to represent something or someone that can never be part of your voter base. It is assumed that everyone can represent anything, as long as they make the claim. Nevertheless, I do look at how certain descriptive characteristics of the MEP increase the probability of a more skewed distribution of foci in one direction or the other (Chapter 7). Thereby, the descriptive characteristics of the MEP are connected to representation, without including a specific code for whether there was a direct match between descriptive and substantive representation.

The codebook (see Appendix 2A) for content analysis was established combining a deductive and inductive approach. The major categories of the codebook were derived from a combination of the foci identified by Wahlke et al. (1962), and the ‘self-regarding’, ‘other-regarding’, and ‘ideal-regarding’ justifications identified by Naurin (2007: 52–53). The self-regarding, other-regarding, and ideal-regarding justifications were used to capture framing in the INTEREURO project (Boräng and Naurin, 2015). The minor categories were mostly established during the second phase of coding (see elaboration below). In total 97 minor categories were included in the coding form.

The geographical foci refer to the option of representing geographical units. These units had to be clearly identified to receive the code, either via a specific name or via clear boundaries.<sup>9</sup> The codebook distinguishes between seven foci. Empirically, these foci were found less often than anticipated (combined: 15.8% of the amendments), therefore, categories were combined in a limited number of geographical foci: subnational, Member State and European. References to the interests of non-Member States and the whole world (Global) were problematic to recode and affected only a limited number of cases (69 amendments), therefore these codes were not included in analysis. As I assume that one

<sup>9</sup> These strict instructions might have been the reason why I find less references to the European geographical level than other studies (Brack and Costa, 2013: 8; Lord and Tamvaki, 2013: 45).

amendment can have multiple foci of representation simultaneously, this means that if a code was not taken into account in analysis, it does not necessarily result in a loss of cases: 17 amendments were excluded at this point.

Following the 'self-regarding' and 'other-regarding' justifications identified by Naurin (2007: 52–53), a distinction was made between societal segments that can be part of the voter base (public regarding) and those that can't (solidarity regarding). This focus was not included in the work of Wahlke et al. (1962), but has been central in studies of descriptive representation. Studies on underrepresentation mostly focused on women, 'blacks', and lower educated, while De Winter (1997: 135) renamed these segments 'socio-demographic categories' and added youth, underprivileged, disabled, migrants and the 'aged' to the list. Following his more detailed coding, examples of public regarding codes are elderly, women, minorities, disabled, and consumers. References to 'citizens' in general without referring to a geographic unit are also included in this category. Solidarity regarding codes referred to animals, children, the incarcerated, and migrants. Yet, the distinction between groups that could be part of the voter base and those that are not is subjective, as it is not observable from the MEP's behavior whether what one can see as potential voter base, is actually the (aimed at) voter base. Therefore, this distinction was eliminated in analysis and the public regarding and solidarity regarding categories were merged into 'societal focus'.

Wahlke et al. (1962: 270) highlighted that a 'modern representative' has to deal with many publics, among which the organized pressure groups. Likewise, De Winter (1997: 134) isolated socio-economic interests (like farmers or workers) from socio-demographic categories. In the codebook, these specific interests combined with pressure groups were split over three subcategories: specific socio-economic interests, business interests, and organized non-business interests (like NGOs).

Grouping these three together under the header of 'specific interests' may raise questions, especially since business interests and NGOs are presented as diametrically opposed in interest group literature (e.g. Beyers et al., 2015). Nevertheless there are three reasons to do so. First, socio-economic interests are grouped together with business interests as they are more narrowly defined than societal interests: socio-economic interests refer to the economic interests of employees and independent professions. Empirically, over 60% of the references to socio-economic interests referred to farmers. Second, NGOs are distinctly different from societal interests, since the former are organized and mostly have a clearly delimited interest they defend or promote, while the latter is not organized and has multiple, diverse interests. Third, one can wonder whether focusing on an NGO means focusing on the interest that the NGO represents or focusing on the NGO as organization that has organizational interests. Lowery (2007) argued that it is a common misconception that interest groups lobby to influence policy. Instead he posits that interest groups are motivated by organizational survival. When an MEP proposes, for example, to adapt the legislative proposal

to guidelines of an NGO, both potential influence<sup>10</sup> and organizational survival are facilitated. Organizational survival is facilitated in this instance, because it confirms ‘insiderness’, which is negatively associated with the fear of mortality among interest groups (Heylen et al., 2018). The MEP thus represents more than the interest the NGO represents. Therefore, the subcategories of NGOs and specific socio-economic interests are combined with business interests in the category of specific interests.

The administrative focus is often not included in analyses. Wahlke et al. (1962: 12) write about “executive or administrative officers and agents” and that “legislators will, in some sense, be alert to their possible views and wishes”. What exactly this entails remains quite vague, as they excluded the administrative role due to survey length (Wahlke et al., 1962: 13). They do refer back to this in their list of representational roles as ‘Views of administrative agencies’ (Wahlke et al., 1962: 283), but do not explicate what they would look like. However, in that discussion, they omit the ‘Ritualist’ from the purposive roles from their analysis (Wahlke et al., 1962: 400 note 6). This type does put forward administrative interests of executable, perfect laws (Wahlke et al., 1962: 249–252). A ritualist is mostly preoccupied with executing the rules and procedures of the legislative process and being a “cog in the legislative wheel” (Wahlke et al., 1962: 250). A ritualist focused on committee work is not so much interested in the “policy content of a bill, but with its technical perfection” (Wahlke et al., 1962: 251).

In the codebook, there are two major codes where the administrative focus is captured: when norms of technical perfection are used as rationalization and when defending the position of the EC, the Council or agencies is explicitly included. In the follow up questions, not only the norm, but also who would benefit from applying that norm is coded: the executive or the actor/sector that would be regulated. Norms of technical perfection (labelled ‘administrative norms’ throughout the chapters) include norms of feasibility, consistency, and clarity, but also the legally entrenched norms of proportionality, subsidiarity, and legal certainty. In total the code for norms was assigned 1705 times, while the interests of the administrative were mentioned 332 times. In Chapters 6 and 7, these two codes are combined in the ‘administrative focus’. As robustness checks, the analyses were replicated with only administrative norms and with only the attached interests (excluding the administrative and idealist foci).

The administrative norms are included here as a possible focus, as they fall in the category of ‘unattached interests’ of Pitkin (1967: 156–158). For 51.4% of the norms, we seemed able to code to which actor these norms were claimed to be attached: the executive and/or the actor/sector to be regulated. Yet, intercoder reliability was not sufficient on this item (percent agreement of .57). Therefore, it was decided to treat administrative norms as unattached throughout the chapters.

<sup>10</sup> Potential, as an amendment does not necessarily make it to the final text.

The party focus is a dominant focus in the literature (Converse and Pierce, 1986: 675). However, in the context of the European parliament, party discipline is very limited (Kreppel, 2006: 260) and elections are not competed with the EPGs, but with national level parties. Therefore, references to European parliamentary groups or European party federations are not to be expected. Instead, I expect defenses of the second kind of unattached interests: ideals. One might attempt to ‘attach’ these ideals to party labels or dimensions in a second step. Yet, Bressanelli (2012: 749) showed that when elected in 2009 the EP consisted of 161 national parties and that at least six policy dimensions are relevant in understanding the party structure in the EP. This makes assessing whether an ideal would be in line with the ‘party’ a complex endeavor. Like with the administrative focus, the choice was made to treat the ideals as unattached interests instead and group them in an ‘idealist’ focus. The codebook contained a list of examples of ideals, but intentionally the exact list of empirically present ideals was left open. During the coding process (outlined below) the list was standardized, but kept open for additions.

The codebook contained additional codes, which are not analyzed here. References to ‘politics’ were excluded, i.e. vis-à-vis which European institutions the MEP(s) take position. These were deemed to have little to do with the representational focus, but rather with the interinstitutional political game. The codebook also contained instructions to code if additional issues were added. Yet, this code was rarely used (64 amendments) and a wide variety of policy dimensions were introduced. Therefore, this is not included in analysis. Kreppel (1999: 534) argued that amendments to recitals are vitally different from amendments to articles of the proposal. Therefore, we also coded the ‘goal’ of the amendment: blocking (part of) the proposal<sup>11</sup>, making major changes, shape part of the proposal, or supporting the proposal. This last category seems counterintuitive, as amendments are necessarily changes to the Commission’s proposal. Yet, some of these changes follow the reasoning and goal of the Commission, but want to make a small improvement (like a spelling error). Despite elaborate coding instructions, the reliability of ‘goal’ was found to be low, therefore this measure for size of proposed change is not used in any of the chapters.

Pilot coding of 213 amendments with the renewed codebook showed that the coding scheme works quite well for amendments with justifications, but not so well for amendments without justifications. The justifications highlight why the proposed amendment is introduced, which provides more clues for interpreting the amendment without extensive knowledge of the original proposal and the topic. This finding guided the sampling outlined above.

<sup>11</sup> Blocking the entire proposal is not allowed under the rules of procedure, see Chapter 3. Yet, some instances of blocking the entire proposal were found.

### 2.1.3 *The process of coding*

In the first phase of coding, 750 amendments were single coded. In the codebook, the major codes were established, but minor codes and all possible values were deliberately left open using string-fields. This was done, because information about the range of possible values across all policy dimensions was lacking. A note was left in the appropriate field if there was any doubt about the correct coding. Subsequently the strings were analyzed and standardized in categories that could be selected. This led, for example, to a list of 50 ideals. Despite standardizing the coding, we kept this list open for extra categories if new policy dimensions warranted additions. All cases from the first phase with notes and all strings were revisited to check and repair the coding and bring the coding in line with the new, standardized codebook.

In the second phase, coding was divided over two coders. The new coder was trained in five steps. First, via individual reading of the codebook, introduction into the project and getting to know Access. Second, via a collective reading of the codebook, explanation of how to code, and how to find ancillary documents. Third, a set of 42 amendments purposively selected amendments from the 750 already coded amendments was used as a training sample. These amendments were selected for their diversity in policy dimensions and ranging from easy to harder to code. The training sample was quite small given the expected level of agreement and the total sample of amendments to be coded (Lacy and Riffe, 1996).<sup>12</sup> However, with the steep learning curve in mind and the amount of time available for the (test) coding, a lower number was selected.

Intercoder reliability was calculated per variable using percent agreement, 'expected percent agreement'<sup>13</sup>, Cohen's Kappa and Krippendorff's Alpha (Lombard et al., 2002). For the former two measures, a coefficient of .80 is considered acceptable, while .90 is preferred (Lombard et al., 2002: 593). For the latter two, a coefficient of .70 or higher is regarded an acceptable level of reliability (Lombard et al., 2002: 596). However, the skewed distribution per variable creates the risk of entering the "paradox of high agreement but low reliability" (Feinstein and Cicchetti, 1990; Feng, 2014: 1804), which is caused by the marginal distributions that are used for calculating the reliability statistics. Therefore, Zhao et al. (2013: 476) have argued not to rely on Cohen's Kappa and Krippendorff's Alpha in this situation. In practice, indeed, Kappa and Alpha were below acceptable levels for almost all variables, while simple percent agreement indicated better intercoder reliability. For 70% of the variables, acceptable levels were reached (between 0.81 and 0.98), while five variables scored worse (geographical level: Europe; references to ideals; references to the public; administrative norms; and goal).

<sup>12</sup> With a quite a low expected agreement of .85, the ideal sample size for test-coding would be somewhere between 125 and 139 amendments (Lacy and Riffe, 1996: 968).

<sup>13</sup> For the 'expected percent agreement' a correction for chance was conducted via the 'kappa'-algorithm in Stata14.

To increase reliability, the coding instructions and all coded amendments were discussed. As a result, the assigned codes for ideals were reassessed and the options for the follow-up string coding for geographical levels and the administrative norms were described in more details and standardized (using the already existing strings, with the possibility to add extra values or combine multiple values). Furthermore, we established that in case of doubt, we would discuss the coding. This was organized by keeping lists of case numbers that needed reassessment. Due to the iterative, interactive coding process that followed, intercoder reliability could not be assessed again.<sup>14</sup>

The third phase of coding consisted of thoroughly checking the cases: 1) all cases that had the goal 'unclear' were double checked; 2) all cases with the word 'check' in the note field were reassessed; 3) all cases by the second coder with a note were checked; 4) all cases with a code for one of the five variables that scored low in the intercoder reliability tests were checked. As a result approximately 500 cases were corrected or checked. During this third phase multiple explanations for the differences surfaced: 1) the list of ideals was too fine-grained: often a closely related ideal was selected; 2) unreported technical problems hindered the coding of multiple administrative norms; 3) the lists of standardized codes were not consistently applied. The mistakes that occurred due to the 2nd and 3rd reason have been corrected, while the 1st problem is addressed by using the major codes instead of the fine-grained minor codes. Of the 3,791 sampled amendments 200 were excluded from analysis. In these amendments either no focus could be coded, or the justification field was used for other purposes than providing a justification.

## **2.2 MEP dataset**

A dataset was constructed containing the socio-demographic and political background of all 857 MEPs that served during the 7<sup>th</sup> legislature. The list of MEPs from the EP website formed the backbone of this dataset.<sup>15</sup> This dataset was extended via content coding of the Curriculum Vitae of the MEPs, their personal webpages on the EP website, the lists of committee membership, by connecting to the Chapel Hill expert survey (Bakker, Edwards, et al., 2015; CHES; Bakker, Vries, et al., 2015), the MEP Career Behavior dataset (Daniel, 2015), and the dataset of Sorace (2018).

<sup>14</sup> The extra coder coded 892 amendments, out of which 277 were checks or corrections on amendments coded in the first phase. We met up four times to go over the list of case numbers. I coded the remaining 2426 amendments. The division of cases was based on committees, to make use of policy knowledge of the extra coder, and on language (quite some Spanish and French cases were not translated by the EP).

<sup>15</sup> Before the end of the 7<sup>th</sup> EP, downloading the list of MEPs in XML-format gave you MEP's id-numbers, member state affiliation, EPG, and national party. Since the end of term, this list can only be downloaded without the extra information on national and party affiliation.

### 2.2.1 Characteristics of MEPs

The CVs of the MEPs were self-reported on the EP website during the 7th legislature.<sup>16</sup> For MEPs that were missing in the data or had entered incomplete data on their page, additional sources were identified. If available, (archived) personal, party, or institutional websites were preferred over news sources, since these websites mirror the self-reporting procedure of the EP the closest. As the maximum size of the EP was 766 MEPs in this time frame, this means that not all MEPs in the dataset were a member for the full five years. Data was especially hard to find for those MEPs that served less than a month, and MEPs who deceased during or since their time in Brussels.

I used an adapted version of the codebook of Braendle (2015) to content code the field of study, previous political experience, and previous occupation of the MEPs. The educational level was also coded to serve as a check for the Career Behavior data on that characteristic. The codebook differs from Braendle (2015) in terms of expanded coding instructions, two extra categories of political experience (party and union experience), and the added occupation of a 'political activist'. The complete coding instructions can be found in Appendix 2B. The results of the content coding of CVs are shown in tables 3 to 6. Especially striking are the high level of education - 89.4% of the MEPs is very highly educated – and the share of MEPs that was a fulltime politician before joining the EP.

For educational level (Tables 2.4 and 2.5), the highest achieved level was coded. Data on the educational level of MEPs was mostly used as a control variable in Chapters 4, 5, and 7. The codes for field of study are not mutually exclusive: an MEP can both hold a degree in Law and in Economics. The 'no studies' field captures MEPs that were trained via internships or on-the-job training, while the 'missing' field means that no information about the field of study was retrieved. In total 597 MEPs or 70% had one field of study, while 163 MEPs were assigned to two fields and 18 MEPs to three fields of study. Data on the field of study was used in Chapter 7.

*Table 2.4 Descriptives of Educational level*

<b>Educational level</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Low-middle	22	2.6%
High: college/applied	63	7.4%
High: Ba/Ma degree	361	42.1%
PhD or MD	405	47.3%
Missing	6	0.7%
<b>Total</b>	<b>857</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

<sup>16</sup> Due to technical problems with the website of the EP, a part of the CVs were lost (asktheEU.org, 2014). A pdf-file with all remaining CVs was published as a result of a 'right of access' request (asktheEU.org, 2016).

Table 2.5 Descriptives of Field of study

Field of study	N	Frequency	Percentage
Law	857	195	22.8%
Economics	857	193	22.5%
Social Sciences	857	238	27.8%
Other studies	857	351	41.0%
No studies	857	38	4.4%
Missing	857	41	4.8%

Table 2.6 shows that many of the MEPs had political experience before becoming an MEP. In total 603 MEPs had held an elected position at another geographical level before becoming an MEP in the 7<sup>th</sup> legislature. Taking seniority in the EP into account, only 157 MEPs (18%) never served as an elected representative.

Table 2.6 Descriptives of Political experience before becoming an MEP

Political experience	N	Frequency	Percentage
Local	857	392	45.7%
Regional	857	217	25.3%
National	857	335	39.1%
Party	857	589	68.7%
Union	857	87	10.2%
Missing	857	91	10.6%

Following Braendle, the occupation before becoming an MEP was coded. These codes are mutually exclusive. For senior MEPs the last held occupation before becoming an MEP (so not before 2009) was used. For MEPs that are senior, but did not serve in the 6<sup>th</sup> EP (2004-2009) the occupation in that time frame was used. Again, Table 2.7 paints the picture of a highly educated and politically active EP: 682 MEPs (or 80%) held a highly skilled occupation, a lobby/activist occupation or a fulltime political position. When looking at the sample of 200 MEPs, the numbers for the distinct occupations drop below what can be included in statistical models. Aggregating to more abstract categories leaves us with 'political/activist positions', 'highly skilled occupations', and 'other occupations'. Including this in a model simultaneously with educational level and political experience creates a multicollinearity risk. Therefore this data was used as controls, but not presented in any of the chapters.

The personal webpages of the MEPs<sup>17</sup> were used to retrieve data on activity levels for speeches, motions for resolutions, written declarations, written questions, oral questions,

<sup>17</sup> <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/meps/en/directory.html?filter=all&leg=7> (last accessed: 27 February 2018)

number of reports amended, rapporteurship, and shadow rapporteurship. These data were scraped using the 'rvest' package in R. Furthermore, the EP procedure references for rapporteurship and shadow rapporteurship were gathered. To connect these EP procedure references (in the shape 'A7-aaaa/yyyy') to the official procedure reference (in the shape 'yyyy/bbbb(procedure\_type)') the A7-numbers were used to create URLs referring to the Documentation gateway.<sup>18</sup> Subsequently, the official procedure references were scraped from the documentation gateway and a connection could be made between which MEP served as (shadow) rapporteur on which dossier.

*Table 2.7 Descriptives of Occupation before becoming an MEP*

<b>Occupation</b>	<b>Frequency total</b>	<b>Percentage total</b>	<b>Frequency in sample</b>	<b>Percentage of sample</b>
<i>Political positions</i>				
Politician	290	33.8%	61	30.5%
Party	71	8.3%	19	9.5%
High-level civil servant	60	7.0%	20	10%
<i>Lobby/activist positions</i>				
Union	12	1.4%	1	0.5%
Activist	16	1.9%	5	2.5%
<i>Highly skilled occupations</i>				
Academia	67	7.8%	12	6%
Senior manager	67	7.8%	16	8%
Liberal profession	67	7.8%	22	11%
Entrepreneur	32	3.7%	9	4.5%
<i>Other occupations</i>				
Low/middle civil servant	42	4.9%	12	6%
Media profession	51	6.0%	11	5.5%
Farmer	20	2.3%	4	2%
Employee in the private sector	22	2.6%	1	0.5%
Engineer	11	1.3%	5	2.5%
Other occupation	20	2.3%	2	1%
Missing	11	1.3%	1	0.5%
<b>Total</b>	<b>857</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>200</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

<sup>18</sup> For example:

<http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?type=REPORT&mode=XML&reference=A7-2014-0088&language=EN> (last accessed: 27 February 2018)

Additionally, the number of months spent in the EP during the 7<sup>th</sup> legislature was derived from Sorace (2018). Identical id-numbers for MEPs based on the id-numbers on the EP website made connecting the datasets straightforward. However, for unknown reasons 50 MEPs were missing from that dataset. The missing information was hand-coded based on the same personal webpages. Descriptive statistics for these characteristics can be found in Chapter 3. As the information on ‘staff size’ is not available anymore, these missing values could not be replaced and this indicator was not used in analyses.

*Table 2.8 Size and number of MEPs served on EP committees during the 7<sup>th</sup> legislature*

<b>EU code</b>	<b>Abbreviation</b>	<b>Full name</b>	<b>Size 2009</b>	<b>Members Frequency</b>	<b>Substitutes Frequency</b>
C01	AFET	Foreign Affairs	76	89	95
SC01A	DROI	Human Rights	30	36	25
SC01B	SEDE	Security and Defence	30	32	39
C02	DEVE	Development	30	36	39
C03	INTA	International Trade	29	39	43
C04	BUDG	Budgets	44	53	64
C05	CONT	Budget Control	29	36	40
C06	ECON	Economic & Monetary Affairs	48	55	70
C07	EMPL	Employment & Social Affairs	50	59	65
C08	ENVI	Environment, Public Health & Food Safety	64	74	96
C09	ITRE	Industry, Research & Energy	55	64	78
C10	IMCO	Internal Market & Consumer Protection	39	50	59
C11	TRAN	Transport & Tourism	45	53	63
C12	REGI	Regional Development	49	61	64
C13	AGRI	Agriculture & Rural Development	45	48	58
C14	PECH	Fisheries	24	27	35
C15	CULT	Culture & Education	32	39	40
C16	JURI	Legal Affairs	25	29	33
C17	LIBE	Civil liberties, Justice & Home Affairs	55	62	83
C18	AFCO	Constitutional Affairs	25	32	38
C19	FEMM	Women's Rights & Gender Equality	35	37	43
C20	PETI	Petitions	35	44	41
Temp1	SURE	Sustainable EU / Policy Challenges Committee	50	49	48
Temp2	CRIS	Financial, Economic & Social Crisis	45	44	41
Temp3	CRIM	Organised Crime, Corruption & Money Laundering	45	45	42

### 2.2.2 Committee membership

Every month the EP secretariat publishes an overview of committee membership and substitute status. Officially, committee membership is established at the start of term in 2009 and at half term in January 2012, but minor mutations occur to accommodate MEPs that leave or enter the EP. The committee composition of the 7<sup>th</sup> legislature was established in September 2009. Therefore, that edition of the list plus every February edition was used to code committee membership.<sup>19</sup> The size of the committees was derived from the report on 'Numerical Strength of the Committees' (European Parliament, 2009a) and the official decisions setting up the temporary committees (CRIS: European Parliament, 2009c, SURE: 2010b, CRIM: 2012d). The difference between size and Membership status in Table 2.8 gives an indication of the within-term turnover. Not shown in Table 2.8 are the joint-committees which consist of two or three of the standing committees. During the 7<sup>th</sup> EP eleven joint-committees were established, which adopted 16 dossiers in total (DG IPOL - Unit for Legislative Coordination, 2014).

### 2.2.3 Classification of committees

To ease analysis across policy fields, scholars have sought to classify parliamentary committees (e.g. Cox and McCubbins, 2007; Whitaker, 2005; Yordanova, 2009). The basis of all classifications starts from the logic of Lowi (1964, 1972), who made the distinction between distributive, regulatory, redistributive, and constituent policies. He argued that 'characteristic political structures' would arise surrounding these types of policies, which he labelled 'arenas' (Lowi, 1964: 690–692). He understood distributive policies as individualized decisions of patronage, while redistributive policies aim to restructure ownership with equal possession in mind. Regulatory policies are, like redistributive policies, general rules that affect the regulated in a similar way. Yet, while redistributive policies are about property and possession, regulatory policies affect behavior by expanding or decreasing the options the regulated have available. As Wyszormirski (1998: 513–514) showed, Lowi did not define constituent policies clearly and the term has been used in various ways in the literature. Yet, I follow Wyszormirski's logic that constituent policies affect the working of the political system, aiming for 'system maintenance', as Lowi (1972: 310) called it.

Following a similar logic, Cox and McCubbins (Cox and McCubbins, 2007: 179–186) used external effects to distinguish three types of committees in the House of Representatives. Committees with jurisdictions of which the external effects affect all equally are labelled 'uniform', while committees with jurisdictions that affect some and leave others unaffected are called 'targeted'. A rest category of committees with 'mixed externalities' fall somewhere in between. They claim that characteristic of committees with uniform externalities is how what happens in those committees has little electoral impact as it affects electoral districts

<sup>19</sup> Document numbers: P7\_LMEP(2009)10-26\_XL; P7\_LMEP(2010)03-15\_XL; P7\_LMEP(2011)03-14\_XL; P7\_LMEP(2012)03-19\_XL; P7\_LMEP(2013)03-20\_XL; P7\_LMEP(2014)03-17\_XL

similarly. This means that the ‘uniform’ committees contain both the ‘regulatory policies’ and the ‘redistributive policies’ of Lowi, while the ‘targeted’ committees deal with the ‘distributive policies’. Constituent policies are included in the ‘uniform’ category (Cox and McCubbins, 2007: 182).

A second characteristic they use to distinguish between categories, is the composition of the set of lobby groups active in committee hearings, which they label ‘extramural effects’ (Cox and McCubbins, 2007: 186–187). This measure serves as a proxy for the number of issues addressed in a committee, with the expectation that a more homogeneous set of interest organizations would mean that a limited number of issues falls in the committee’s jurisdiction. This second element of their classification has received no following in the literature.

In the context of the European Parliament, Whitaker’s (2005) classification of EP committees followed the approach of Cox and McCubbins. Broscheid and Coen (2007) instead followed Lowi and make a distinction between distributive and non-distributive Directorate-Generals (DGs) of the European Commission. Rasmussen (2011) translated this to EP committees. In addition, Broscheid and Coen (2007: 363) grouped ‘redistributive policies’ together with ‘distributive policies’ as they both affect the “distribution of material values”. Hence, some committees were very differently classified (like DEVE) than in other classifications.

In the context of Congress, Adler and Lapinski (1997: 899) followed the approach of Cox and McCubbins (2007), but relabeled ‘uniform’ committees as those providing ‘public goods’, and ‘targeted’ committees as those providing ‘private goods’. Yordanova (2009, 2013: 38–39) attempted to bridge the different classifications available in the literature. She made the distinction between ‘information-driven committees with predominantly regulatory output’, ‘interest-driven committees with predominantly distributive output’, and ‘mixed committees’. Like Cox and McCubbins, she placed committees with ‘constituent policies’, like Constitutional Affairs (AFCO), in the ‘information driven’ category. Yordanova (2009: 256) added ‘power’ as a second dimension, measured via the impact of the committee on the budget and the share of co-decision reports dealt with. This classification has since been used by Frech (2016) and Van Geffen (2016).

Table 2.9 presents the classifications present in the literature, while the last two columns show the coding as used in Chapters 5 and 7. As the ‘coding’-column shows, the labels of Lowi, Whitaker, and Cox and McCubbins are preferred to avoid confusion over the meaning of ‘distributive’. In Chapter 5, the coding of Yordanova is used. However, with more in-depth knowledge of the data, the coding for the Transport and Tourism committee (TRAN) was adapted for Chapter 7. Whitaker (2005: 13–14) already pointed out that some transport policy is distributive, as was the case in the 7<sup>th</sup> legislature with the proposal for the Trans-European Transport Network (TEN-T). Therefore, the coding of Whitaker is followed here. The power measure is directly derived from Yordanova (2009).

Table 2.9 Classifications of EP standing committees<sup>1</sup>

EU code	Abbreviation	Whitaker (2005)	Yordanova (2009)	Rasmussen (2011)	Coding	Power Yordanova
C01	AFET	Uniform	Information	Other	Uniform	Low
C02	DEVE	<sup>1</sup>	Information	Distributive	Uniform	Low
C03	INTA	<sup>2</sup>	Information	<sup>2</sup>	Uniform	Low
C04	BUDG	Uniform	Information	Distributive	Uniform	High
C05	CONT	Uniform	Information	Other	Uniform	Low
C06	ECON	Uniform	Mixed	Regulatory	Mixed	High
C07	EMPL	Uniform	Interest	Distributive	Targeted	High
C08	ENVI	Uniform	Mixed	Regulatory	Mixed	High
C09	ITRE	Mixed	Mixed	Regulatory	Mixed	High
C10	IMCO	<sup>2</sup>	Information	<sup>2</sup>	Uniform	High
C11	TRAN <sup>2</sup>		Information	<sup>2</sup>	Mixed	High
C12	REGI <sup>2</sup>	Mixed	Interest	Distributive	Targeted	Low
C13	AGRI	Targeted	Interest	Distributive	Targeted	Low
C14	PECH	Targeted	Interest	Distributive	Targeted	Low
C15	CULT	<sup>1</sup>	Mixed	Distributive	Mixed	High
C16	JURI	Uniform	Information	Regulatory	Uniform	High
C17	LIBE	Uniform	Mixed	Other	Mixed	High
C18	AFCO	Non-legislative	Information	Other	Uniform	Low
C19	FEMM	Uniform	Mixed	Regulatory	Mixed	Low
C20	PETI	<sup>1</sup>	Information	Other	Uniform	Low

<sup>1</sup> For the purpose of his question, some committees were excluded by Whitaker;

<sup>2</sup> The EP of Whitaker and Rasmussen looked slightly different: from 1999 to 2004 TRAN and REGI were briefly one committee: Regional Policy, Transport and Tourism committee (RETT); INTA was merged into ITRE; and IMCO was only established in 2004 .

A critique on this way of classifying committees is that it is a crude measure: each committee may deal with several policy dimensions, which are dominated by different types of policies. Therefore, alternative ways of capturing policy dimensions were explored. Yet, none of these were found to be superior to the pre-existing classifications from the literature. For example, topic modelling did not lead to sufficient dimension reduction. And using the EuroVoc codes from EUR-Lex in combination with the Comparative Agenda's Project (CAP) codebook (Sevenans and Vliegenthart, 2016: 193) introduced an endogeneity problem. As the EuroVoc codes are assigned to the final text, assigned policy dimensions may be the result of a successful amendment. Furthermore, the CAP codebook contains 21 major topics, which hindered inclusion in the models. In summary, while the classification of EP committees has its flaws, for analytical purposes it is still superior to alternative measures.

#### *2.2.4 Adding additional information from external data sources*

Because of the use of identical id-numbers for the MEPs, linking to the Career Behavior dataset was straightforward. To add data from the CHES dataset, the national party affiliation of MEPs in 2014 was used. For national parties missing in the 2014 edition, the 2010 estimates were used. For national parties not present in either version, that were established as a split from a pre-existing party present in the data, I used the position of the pre-existing party. The datasets were linked manually using information on the Member State in which the MEP was elected and the name of the national party list retrieved from the EP website and the codebooks of CHES. For 24 MEPs no link to the CHES dataset could be established either because their national party list was not included in the CHES-survey or because they were truly elected as independents, therefore the mean position of their EPG was used to impute the missing data points.

### **2.3 Analyzing co-sponsorship**

Co-sponsorship data creates particular challenges for analysis: the observations are not independent and the distribution of ties of networks are commonly found to be positively skewed (Harris, 2014: 5, 16–17). Originally, scholars analyzed co-sponsorship ignoring the lack of independence (e.g. Krehbiel, 1995).<sup>20</sup> However, over the last decades multiple methods of analysis that attempt to solve this problem surfaced in the literature: dimension reduction methods (Alemán et al., 2009; Proksch, 2012; Talbert and Potoski, 2002), analysis at an aggregated level (Finke, 2012), analyzing dyadic data with a multilevel model (Louwerse and Otjes, 2015), and different forms of (social) network analysis (Fowler, 2006a, 2006b; Kirkland and Gross, 2014; Kirkland and Williams, 2014; Micozzi, 2014).

The dimensional reduction methods, for example using the NOMINATE procedure like Talbert and Potoski (2002), allows for the detection of a dimensional structure of co-sponsorship. However, while regressions have been applied to aid interpretation, a substantial amount of subjective interpretation of the dimensions is required to be able to make claims about which policy dimensions or factors might be shaping the co-sponsorship patterns. Analysis at an aggregated level (like EPGs in the case of Finke (2012)) has the advantage that a picture of co-sponsorship can be sketched with descriptive statistics and graphs. However, by focusing on one characteristic of co-sponsors (EPG affiliation), other influencing factors can easily be overlooked.

The multilevel method has the advantage that interpretation of the models is relatively easy, data preparation is straightforward, and the method resembles the previous practice of multiple regression. While this method does solve the problem of the lack of independence of the cases by including random intercepts, it cannot take endogenous network patterns

<sup>20</sup> Although this practice has not disappeared completely, like in Baumann et al. (2015).

larger than the dyadic tie into account. Endogenous network patterns are for example triangles of three MEPs that are all connected to each other.

In contrast, social network analysis can both take the lack of independence into account and control for the effects of network processes and endogenous structures. Inferential social network analysis has three commonly used procedures available: quadratic assignment procedures (QAP), stochastic actor-oriented models (SAOMs), and exponential random graph models (ERGM) (Robins et al., 2012). QAP regression is like the ‘multilevel method’ well equipped to take interdependence of observations into account. However, Robins et al. (2012: 385) pointed out that the multiple regression application of QAP is controversial, while Borgatti et al. (2018: 159) highlight that QAP is not that well equipped to deal with endogenous network structures.

SAOMs are especially suitable to analyze network panel data (Borgatti et al., 2018: 166). The amendment co-sponsorship data can be perceived as panel data: for subsequent reports MEPs decide to co-sponsor an amendment or not. However, SAOMs are computationally intensive and therefore not suited for networks of the size in Chapter 4 (Robins et al., 2012: 396).

Exponential<sup>21</sup> Random Graph Models start from the idea that networks are the result of various micro-processes. The unit of analysis is therefore the connection between two actors in the network instead of the entire network structure. As in ERGM it is assumed that the connection between two actors may affect the likelihood of a connection between two other actors, these ‘ties’ can both be the outcome to be predicted and the predictor for other ‘ties’ in the network (Robins et al., 2012: 386–387). The result is that different endogenous structures can and should be included in the model specification. The possibility to include external characteristics of MEPs and their relation as predictors, while also including endogenous structures, and the possibility to analyze larger size networks, makes ERGM the most appropriate procedure to analyze co-sponsorship patterns.<sup>22</sup>

### *2.3.1 Illustrating network terms and endogenous patterns*

To make the endogenous network structures more tangible, 2.1 shows an example of a randomly generated small network of seven ‘nodes’ (points, and in this research: MEPs). A network drawn like this is called a graph (not to be confused with the more common use of the word graph in the meaning of ‘chart’). Four specific phenomena are useful to understand the models used in Chapters 4 and 5:

- Edges: in total this network has 9 edges (lines, connections, co-sponsorships), while the maximum potential number of edges was 21. The density of this network is thus 0.43. When one would not take the characteristics of the actors or other endogenous

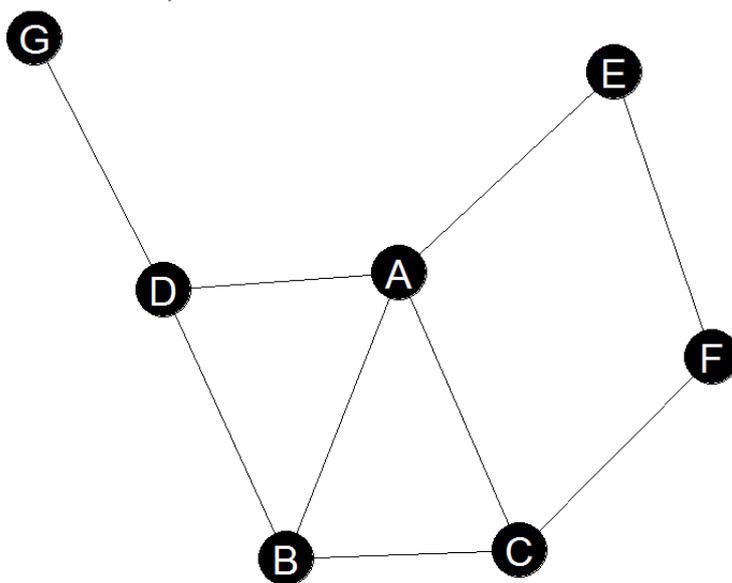
<sup>21</sup> ERGMs are a type of model from the exponential family, hence the first part of the label.

<sup>22</sup> Using the Statnet package in R (Handcock et al., 2008, 2016)

network patterns into account, the expected probability of tie formation between two randomly chosen actors in the network would be equal to the density, thus 0.43.

- Degree: one can see that A is connected to more other actors than G. A has a degree of four, G has a degree of one, while the maximum potential degree in this network is six. In the literature the degree of A is sometimes referred to as a 4-star, while the structure of G is then referred to as a 1-star.
- Triangles: In the network A is connected to B and C, while B is also connected to C. As a result A, B and C form a triangle. One can see that A and B are both partners in two triangles (with D and with C), while A and D are only partners in one triangle. As a result A and B have two edgewise shared partners, while A and D have one edge-wise shared partner.
- Two-paths: many actors in the network are connected to each other via another actor: you could 'travel' from A to F via C or E. A and F thus share 2-two-paths, while B and F only share 1-two-path.

Figure 2.1 Randomly constructed small network



When estimating an ERGM, the characteristics (or 'attributes') of the nodes can be used as explanatory factors. Nodal attributes are known to increase the probability of tie formation compared to random chance (Harris, 2014: 16). First of all, by including them as main effects. In that case, the effect of an attribute on the probability of tie formation of a node is estimated. For example, by including seniority in the EP as a factor that could make an MEP more likely to co-sponsor in general, without looking at with whom the MEP would co-sponsor. Just as common is the inclusion of nodal attributes in interaction terms. The most used form is 'homophily': what is the effect on the probability of tie formation when two nodes have exactly the same value on an attribute? Two MEPs representing the same Member

State is an example of homophily. This is seen as an interaction term, since characteristics of both actors are combined in one model term (see Lusher et al. (2012: 95–96)). Slightly less common is the inclusion of nodal mixing patterns (taking all logical combinations of values on an attribute into account) or including the difference between two variables as an edge-covariate (like the difference between two MEPs on the left-right scale). Note that in ERGMs one does not include both the main effects and the interaction effects. This is due to the limited degrees of freedom (Harris, 2014: 55).

### 2.3.2 ERGM, how does it work?

ERGM uses a different shape of data entry and a different type of optimization algorithm than traditional regressions, which most often use a simple database structure and maximum likelihood optimization. In contrast, ERGM analyses matrices: symmetrical for undirected networks and asymmetrical for directed versions. Since in the analysis of EP committee amendments there is no clear information about whether there is one author of amendments with several co-sponsors, all co-sponsors are treated equally and hence undirected network analysis is used. The cells of the matrix of a binary network analysis contain per pair of MEPs whether they co-sponsored or not. As a result, the number of actors in the network is exponentially related to the number of cells in the matrix and thus the number of ‘dependent variables’.

Not only the number of cells is large, but including endogenous network patterns in the analysis that can account for complex dependencies is also warranted. As a result, the dependence structure requires too much computational power to estimate the model using maximum likelihood (Cranmer and Desmarais, 2011). As a solution, Markov Chain Monte Carlo (MCMC) parameter estimation is used. In this estimation procedure, in every simulation, one or more randomly selected cells are switched from 0 to 1 (or the other way around) to assess the impact of that change on the overall network (Harris, 2014: 71). A series of networks, each fitting equally or slightly better to the observed empirical network is generated in this way. This process continues until the pre-specified length of the MCMC chain is reached (Morris et al., 2008: 1563).<sup>23</sup> The output of the model provides information on model fit using the Akaike information criterion (AIC) and Bayesian information criterion (BIC). However, these should be interpreted cautiously, since the assumption of independence is not met. Therefore, one combines these goodness-of-fit statistics with a visual inspection of diagnostic plots (Borgatti et al., 2018: 160).

As mentioned before, it is well established in the literature (see Harris (2014: 16)) that observed (undirected) networks differ from random networks in terms of these endogenous

<sup>23</sup> ‘Burnin’ and ‘interval’ have been used to influence how many simulated networks should be ignored at the beginning of the chain and between sampled networks. This is done to free up memory space and reduce autocorrelation (Morris et al., 2008: 1563). Furthermore, three processor cores were used simultaneously to increase robustness.

structures. First, not all members of the network have the same tendency to form ties. As a result there are more actors with a low degree and less actors with a high degree in empirical networks compared to random networks. This leads to different degree distributions. Since ERGM relies on comparison of the observed network with simulated networks; the algorithm needs to be informed about the density of the model (hence the inclusion of an 'edges' term in virtually all ERGMs) and how the simulated networks are expected to be different from randomly generated networks in order to reach a good model fit.

The literature mentions different generations of model terms that can be included to account for the dependencies, all based on gradually more limiting assumptions about dependence in the networks (see Harris (2014: 19–32) for an elaborate discussion). The newest generation are the 'geometrically weighted' terms. By including 'geometrically weighted degree' (GWDegree) in the model, the simulated networks will be generated with a degree distribution that will resemble the observed network more than the degree distribution of a random network would. The choice of alpha influences how much correction takes place (Harris, 2014: 27–28).<sup>24</sup>

The second characteristic is that transitivity is larger in observed networks than in random networks (Harris, 2014: 16). Transitivity is also known as the "friend-of-my-friend-is-my-friend property" (Harris, 2014: 18). This means that more two-paths and triangles will be present than expected based on chance (Harris, 2014: 19). This leads to different distributions of the number of edgewise shared partners (ESP) and dyadwise shared partners (DSP). I include a term for the Geometrically Weighted Edgewise Shared Partners (GWESP), which controls for triadic closure and thus captures the effect of the ties between A–B and B–C on the probability of a tie between A–C. Furthermore, I also include Geometrically Weighted Dyad-wise Shared Partners, which captures via how many two-step routes – with another actor in between – A is connected to B (i.e. alternating two-paths). By including GWESP and GWDSP terms in the ERGM models the simulated networks will resemble the observed network more.

A third characteristic of observed networks is that shared characteristics of actors (exogenous from the network) - like representing the same member state in this article –. This aspect of observed networks is the main focus of interest in Chapters 4 and 5: which characteristics have this effect and to what degree.

## **2.4 Analyzing compositional data**

When analyzing the content coded amendments, a problem surfaced: there were not an equal amount of measurements per MEP. To be able to compare MEPs, the relative frequency of a focus had to be used instead of the absolute number to account for this. However, by calculating the relative frequency of a focus being mentioned divided by the number of

<sup>24</sup> It is also possible to estimate alpha, turning the models into Curved Exponential Models, but this proved computationally too invasive. Therefore Hunter's (2007) advice on fitting several models with different values of alpha and comparing the model fit has been followed.

amendments coded per MEP, those MEPs that tend to combine multiple foci in one amendment get higher scores compared to MEPs that do not combine foci. Alternatively, the relative frequency can be calculated by dividing the number of time a focus is mentioned by the total number of foci mentioned. Yet, this introduces the compositional data problem.

Using the latter method, all fractions add up to 1 and the fractions are not independent from each other (in fact, they should be negatively correlated). Therefore, the assumptions of the most often used statistical tests are violated and cannot be used (Aitchison and Egozcue, 2005). Most normally used tests are either not available or make to stringent assumptions about zero's. In the data from the content analysis there are two kinds of zero's, which are not distinguishable from each other: essential zero's (the MEP never intended to refer to these foci) and count zero's (the MEP refers to these foci so rarely that I failed to observe it). However, most available methods to analyze compositional data assume that zeroes are the result of measurement, rounding, or sampling errors (Martín-Fernández et al., 2011: 55–56). This means that none of the available tests for difference or correlations is perfect for the data at hand. In Chapter 6 Wilcoxon signed-rank tests are used to provide some indication anyway, but these should be interpreted cautiously.

Luckily, it is easier to explain a series of compositional fractions than to describe it. In Stata14, the 'fmlogit' package can be installed, making it possible to fit a fractional multinomial logit model by quasi maximum likelihood. This kind of model can handle essential and count zero's. The package was developed by Maarten L. Buis (2008) as a multivariate generalization based on the fractional logit model of Papke and Woolridge (1996). The coefficients resulting from these models are hard to interpret as they refer to the effect of A on B compared to the effect of A on the base category without providing information about whether the effect of A on the base category was significant. Therefore, average marginal effects are presented instead.

## *Chapter 3*

### **Who amends?**

*Mapping the use of committee amendments in the European Parliament*

*Chapter written for inclusion in this dissertation.*

#### **Abstract**

Members of the European Parliament (MEPs) have a multitude of tools at their disposal to execute their task of representing the European citizen in the legislative process. The “quantitative turn in legislative studies” (Louwerse et al., 2018) is visible with a surge in attention to the level of parliamentary activity in the EP (Sorace, 2018; Staat and Kuehnhanss, 2017). However, this attention has largely been towards plenary activities, while the committee stage is often claimed to have a larger impact in the legislative process. In addition, despite case studies into the content of amendments and large-n studies into amendment success, little is known about the scope of amending behavior. Therefore, this chapter descriptively explores the use of committee amendments.

### 3.1 Introduction

Members of the European Parliament (MEPs) have a multitude of tools at their disposal to execute their task of representing the European citizen in the legislative process. The digital availability of information about these activities has led to a “quantitative turn in legislative studies” (Louwse et al., 2018: 150). In the context of the European Parliament (EP), this has led to scholarly attention for activity levels of MEPs (e.g. Sorace, 2018) and analyses of particular activities, like parliamentary questions and speeches in plenary (Proksch and Slapin, 2011; Slapin and Proksch, 2010). This is fostered by the EP, which publishes indicators for several activities on the MEP’s parliamentary webpages (European Parliament, n.d.), and VoteWatch (*VoteWatch Europe*, n.d.), which presents this data in a more accessible and visual format. Yet, as a result, many studies limit themselves to the activities for which figures are readily available: speeches, written declarations, motions, written and oral questions, and the number of reports amended.

Strikingly, most of these activities are plenary activities, while the legislative output of the EP relies heavily on the work done in committees (Farrell and Héritier, 2004: 1196). Previous research showed that the rapporteur is influential in setting the initial position of the EP (Costello and Thomson, 2010), especially when early agreements are made. However, shadow rapporteurs, fellow committee members, and all other MEPs also get to opportunity to weigh in via committee amendments (Hurka, 2013: 274; Whitaker, 2011: 8).

Amendments, both those tabled in committee and plenary amendments, have received some attention in the literature (e.g. Tsebelis et al., 2001). Some of these studies have taken a sample of between 3,000 and 8,000 amendments to explore the effects of amendments, while others have zoomed in on a limited number of legislative dossiers. Yet, it is not clear from which population these samples were taken. The EP does not provide information on the number of committee amendments tabled. The best estimates available are the activity statistics for the number of reports MEPs amended and the summary information on adopted and rejected plenary amendments from the European Parliamentary Research Service (EPRS, 2014).

Therefore, this chapter seeks to explore the use of amendments in committees. How many dossiers were amended? How many amendments were tabled? Under which procedure? Furthermore, special attention is paid to what descriptive statistics can tell us about in which role MEPs are more likely to get involved in a procedure: rapporteur, shadow rapporteur, affiliate of the EP committee, or from the outside. As about 7% of the MEPs did not table any amendment, characteristics of MEPs are used to explore how MEPs that table amendments differ from those that do not table amendments. Finally, amending activity is put in perspective with the other activities explored in previous studies.

This chapter proceeds by first introducing the rules of the game: who may when table<sup>25</sup> what? Second, an overview of the literature on amendments in the EP is given. This synopsis shows that amendments have been analyzed in different ways to answer varying questions, but that scope conditions are hardly explored. Third, attention is paid to two important warnings in the literature about the study of amendments. Subsequently, the data are introduced and an overview of the use of committee amendments is provided. The data used consists of 211,289 committee amendments from the 7<sup>th</sup> legislature of the EP (2009-2014) related to 1,523 different dossiers. Finally, a merely exploratory analysis is provided to sketch about which kind of MEPs claims can be made based on analyses of committee amendments.

### **3.2 Amendments in the European Parliament: the rules of the game**

The EP uses, broadly speaking, three types of amendments: committee amendments, plenary amendments, and compromise amendments. How these amendments may be tabled, by whom, and with which type of content is regulated by the EP's Rules of Procedure. As this study looks at the 7<sup>th</sup> legislature of the EP, unless stated otherwise, all references to the Rules of Procedure are to the version of December 2009 (European Parliament, 2009b). Committee amendments in first reading are tabled under an open rule (Thierse, 2016: 224), which means that all MEPs may introduce amendments, regardless of their membership status in the responsible committee (Rule 195(1)). In second reading, the admissibility of amendments is restricted to committee members and substitutes (Rule 63(4)). Furthermore, committee amendments need at least one signature to be admissible, which leads to both single-sponsored and co-sponsored amendments.

Committee amendments are submitted in response to a draft report or draft opinion of the rapporteur(s). As a result, committee amendments are situated in the legislative process after referral of a proposal to a responsible or opinion giving committee and subsequent allocation to one or more rapporteurs. Amendments are to be tabled before a deadline set by the President (Rule 156(3)) and the President should allow for "sufficient time" (Annex IX, article 7). Notably, committee amendments are usually tabled before interinstitutional negotiations between the EP, the Council and the European Commission are started (i.e. 'trilogues').<sup>26</sup> In the Rules of Procedure, it was specified that the committee responsible should "adopt a mandate" (Rule 70(2)). In Annex XX of the Rules of Procedure, the EP specified the guideline that "the amendments adopted in committee or in plenary shall form the basis for the mandate of the EP negotiating team". In practice, the vote to enter into trilogues was often combined with the vote on amendments (Corbett et al., 2011: 242). Corbett et al. (2011)

<sup>25</sup> Note the use of the verb 'to table'. While in the United States this verb in connection to amendments denotes the act of withdrawing an amendment, in the context of the EU this means introducing an amendment (see for example rule 156(1) of the 2009 Rules of Procedure (European Parliament, 2009b)).

<sup>26</sup> Sometimes spelled as trialogue, but the inter-institutional terminology database of the EU indicates that 'trilogue' is the preferred spelling (Translation Centre for the Bodies of the European Union, n.d.).

sketch three ways to enter into interinstitutional negotiations: 1) after an orientation vote on the committee amendments, 2) after the formal vote on committee amendments, and 3) after a plenary vote on the amendments. This means that trilogues in principle take place after the initial tabling of committee amendments, but that plenary amendments can be the result of the negotiation process (Corbett et al., 2011: 242–244). This changed slightly in 2012, when an adaptation of the Rules of Procedure made it possible to hold a plenary vote to enter into negotiations before the adoption of the committee report (Pittella et al., 2014: 20–21). This ‘exceptional procedure’ was used only seven times in this legislature (Pittella et al., 2014: 22). Note that the committee may also decide to not vote on the amendments, but instead let the rapporteur redraft the report taking the proposed amendments into account (Rule 195(5)).

At the start of the 7<sup>th</sup> legislature, committee amendments could be tabled both in writing and orally in the committee meeting (Rule 156(1) subparagraph 2 and the interpretation appearing after Rule 156 (6)). In 2010, the parliament introduced a digital tool for the drafting of amendments (AT4AM, Authoring Tool for Amendments) (European Parliament, 2013). These amendments should subsequently be printed, signed and tabled via fax or internal mail.<sup>27</sup> Digital signatures were introduced as a pilot project in a select number of committees in 2012 (European Parliament, 2012c), and this was broadened to the entire EP via the Parliament’s Rules of Procedure (Rule 148a) by May 2014 (European Parliament, 2014).

In contrast, plenary amendments are subject to more stringent rules. Plenary amendments may only be introduced in writing, before the deadline set by the Parliament’s President, by the responsible committee, an entire EP Party Group (EPG) or a group of at least 40 MEPs (Rule 156(1) and Rule 156(3)). Oral plenary amendments are only admissible with regards to recommendations within the framework of the common foreign and security policy (Rule 97(3)). Amendments to motions for resolutions require new information or at least 75 signatures (Rule 48(2))

Both committee amendments and plenary amendments can be accompanied by justifications provided by the author(s) of the amendment (Rule 156 (1)). While previously the use of justifications was allowed for all draft amendments, the use of justifications was limited to situations where the amended document is of a legislative nature in 2002 (European Parliament, 2002). As a result, no justifications are admissible under own-initiative procedures (INI/INL)<sup>28</sup>. Instead, as with all reports, EPGs may issue a ‘minority opinion’ in the form of a written declaration (Rule 52(3)). Since the size of a proposed change in terms of edit distance is not directly related to the significance and contentiousness of the change (Kreppel, 2002a: 795), the justification can be an important source of information about the reasons for and intentions of the change.

<sup>27</sup> Since only amendments that have been signed (physically or digitally) are deemed to have been tabled, the EP does not provide researchers access to the AT4AM system or a database version of the amendments.

<sup>28</sup> For an overview of abbreviations of procedures and their meaning see Table 3.2.

Amendments are subject to admissibility restrictions, which differ slightly per legislative procedure (Rules 66, 81, 83, 86, 87, 138, 156, 157, Annex VI Article 4(2)). The general line is that amendments must relate directly to the text at hand (i.e. a germaneness rule<sup>29</sup>), and may only amend one article of the proposal (Rule 157(1)). Despite the formal rule that one amendment suffices for “identical changes to a particular form of words throughout the text” (Rule 157(1c)), MEPs sometimes repeat amendments to make identical changes in different articles. As a result of Rule 157 the number of amendments per dossier is slightly inflated, because MEPs introduce very similar changes to different articles of the same dossier.

The admissibility of amendments is not only slightly different across procedures, also the content of the dossier or the amendment may invoke different rules. Changing the legal basis of a proposal, for example, requires a discussion in the lead committee (Rule 37(5)). In addition, amendments to the draft budget are subject to more stringent rules regarding form, content and reintroduction of amendments in plenary (Rule 75b). In opinion giving committees the admissibility of amendments is even more restricted than in the lead committee: only amendments are allowed to matters within the area of responsibility of the opinion giving committee (Rule 49(2)).

Compromise amendments can only be tabled under very specific circumstances. Firstly, in plenary, by the responsible committee, in 1<sup>st</sup> reading, but only if the European Commission announces that not all EP’s amendments will be adopted (Rule 57(2)). Secondly, in committee, by the rapporteur, during the committee phase of 2<sup>nd</sup> reading (Rule 63(5)). Thirdly, in plenary, by the responsible committee, an EPG, or at least 40 MEPs, in 2<sup>nd</sup> reading with a content that adheres to Rule 66(2), at the EP President’s discretion. Compromise amendments may amend multiple articles or paragraphs simultaneously, while this is not allowed for committee or plenary amendments (Rule 157(1c)). Yet, compromise amendments may not amend parts of the text that were not amended in first instance (Rule 161(4)).

Summarizing, the three different types of amendments are subject to different limitations. Compromise amendments are the most restricted, both in terms of who may table the amendments and when these may be suggested. Plenary amendments are slightly less restricted, but can be the result of different processes. Committee amendments, especially in first reading, are the least restricted kind and precede the complicated process of interinstitutional negotiations. To limit variation on the rules of procedure and to limit the number of venues studied, plenary amendments are not included in the analysis. Since compromise amendments are the result of a different process than regular committee amendments, compromise amendments are also excluded unless stated otherwise.

### **3.3 A brief history of research on amendments in the EP**

The study of amendments in the European Parliament has taken four forms over the years. A first branch of research has used amendments in case studies of one or a limited

<sup>29</sup> Sometimes spelled *germaneness* in the literature (e.g. Tsebelis and Kalandrakis, 1999).

number of legislative dossiers (Benedetto, 2005; Burns and Carter, 2010; Häge and Kaeding, 2007; Hurka, 2013; Jensen and Winzen, 2012; Judge and Earnshaw, 2011; Settembri and Neuhold, 2009; Sigalas, 2012; Tsebelis and Kalandrakis, 1999). These scholars mostly traced the amendments for content and success in the sidelines of case studies into, for example, one particular dossier (e.g. Jensen and Winzen, 2012), a policy field (e.g. Sigalas, 2012), one committee (e.g. Burns and Carter, 2010), or the role of rapporteurs (e.g. Benedetto, 2005: 74).

Second, the relation between MEPs and amendments is used to study various aspects of the functioning of the EP. Connectedness between staff members of MEPs was used to explain co-voting on amendments in the ENVI-committee (Ringe et al., 2013). Ringe et al. found that two ideologically similar MEPs connected informally were more likely to co-vote on amendments than ideologically similar MEPs who were not connected. In their attempt to understand how consensus is formed in committee, Settembri and Neuhold (2009: 143) found that a large number of committee amendments does not make it harder to find consensus. In the plenary, Finke (2014: 5) found that smaller, more ideologically extreme EPGs called for a Roll-Call Vote on their own plenary amendments to signal commitment to their proposal and domestic constituents. And in a slightly different venue, the co-sponsorship of amendments was used to map the positions of members to the European Convention (Proksch, 2012).

Third, a quite recent development in the field is using amending behavior as one of the measures of parliamentary activity of MEPs. Ringe and Wilson (2016) showed that MEPs that amended more reports, were also more likely to be central in the co-voting network of the EP plenary. In the context of a study into moonlighting, Staat and Kuehnhanss (2017) found that ancillary income was not related to amending more often, while they did find a negative effect of outside earnings on the number of reports for which an MEP is appointed rapporteur or shadow rapporteur.<sup>30</sup>

The final strand of research into amendments has focused on success rates of amendments and how this can be used as an indicator of influence of MEPs or the EP as a whole. This line of research started with the seminal large-N study of Tsebelis, Jensen, Kalandrakis, and Kreppel (2001) who traced the fate of 5,000 amendments to compare the power of the EP across legislative procedures. Their dataset was also used to study the regulation of chemicals (Tsebelis and Kalandrakis, 1999), the impact of amendment characteristics on acceptance rates (Kreppel, 1999, 2002a), and the delegation of discretion via amendments (Jensen, 2011). Following their lead, more studies into the EP's influence measured via amendment success were conducted (Häge and Kaeding, 2007; Kardasheva, 2009; Kasack, 2004; Mahr and Ringe, 2016; Shackleton, 2000). Yordanova (2013: 85–112) took

<sup>30</sup> In the article, they claim to have looked at the number of amendments tabled. However, for a short while, VoteWatch mistakenly labelled 'number of reports amended' with 'amendments'. Researchers who used that data therefore are unknowingly misled in the interpretation of their findings (affected studies are for example Brack, 2015; Staat and Kuehnhanss, 2017).

it to a new level by analyzing the power of the EP committee system via acceptance of committee amendments in plenary.

A notable example is the study of Burns et al. (2012), who traced 7,065 amendments in the policy field of environment for a period of 10 years. They looked into the environmental importance of the proposed changes and the degree of success of the amendment. Burns et al. (2012) found that although less ambitious environmental amendments were tabled after the enlargement round of 2004, they were more successful in terms of adoption rates. Another large-n study by Cross and Hermansson (2017) claims to study amendments as well. They used a new algorithm to measure the number and size of changes between the original proposal of the Commission and the final legal text. However, as they do not subdivide the legislative process in its constituent parts, they cannot distinguish between EP committee amendments, plenary amendments, results of trilogue negotiations, and Council amendments. Furthermore, by looking into the difference between the original and the final text they only capture successful changes, while failed attempts are ignored. And finally, one formal amendment changing an article in multiple places, may pop up in their study as multiple 'edits' and thus as multiple 'amendments'. Therefore, they have used the term 'amendment' in a very different way than other scholars in the field.

In summary, these scholars have looked into some of the dynamics and effects of amendments. However, the scholars conducting large-N studies have not paid much attention to what it was they were taking a sample from. And those doing case studies have occasionally be surprised by the number of amendments tabled: "The controversial nature of the draft legislative act was reflected by the fact that 1,600 (!) amendments were made in committee." (Settembri and Neuhold, 2009: 143). Therefore, exploring the use of amendments and looking into which kind of MEPs tables amendments is important to understand which findings are surprising and about whom claims can be made in the subsequent chapters.

### **3.4 Two notes on amendments**

Before turning to the exploration of the use of amendments, two notes about amendments as a data source must be made. First, there is considerable discussion in the literature about whether it is possible to assess the (intended) importance of individual amendments. Tsebelis and Kalandrakis (1999) and Burns et al. (2012) coded the significance and direction of a large number of amendments for proposals within one policy field: environment. Among the case studies, there are some examples where the impact of particular amendments was assessed (e.g. Benedetto, 2005), but these studies leave the impression that in-depth knowledge of the case is necessary to make informed judgements.

However, Kreppel (1999: 526) argued that assessing the size or importance of a proposed change is not feasible once you start looking at multiple policy fields or a larger number of dossiers. Nevertheless, Kasack (2004: 246) and Burns and Carter (2010) still followed the approach of Tsebelis and Kalandrakis (1999), but are open about 'arbitrary aspects' and 'subjective evaluations' in their coding.

Häge and Kaeding (2007) looked for middle ground by keeping the distinction between amendments to recitals and to articles, but discarding all other previously used codes. They argued that “in the absence of a clear definition of what constitutes an important provision and a method to identify these provisions a priori, the second-best solution for the remaining amendments is to treat them all as being of equal importance” (Häge and Kaeding, 2007: 350). Their approach was followed by Mahr and Ringe (2016).

Second, from studies into ‘unelected legislators’ in the EP, there are also some indicators that the drafting work is rarely done by the MEPs themselves (Earnshaw and Judge, 2002; Marshall, 2010; Neunreither, 2002; Schendelen and Scully, 2002). Over the last two decades, the role of the EP’s staff members in the legislative process has been extensively studied (e.g. Dobbels and Neuhold, 2013; Winzen, 2011). However, while most authors suggest that assistants of MEPs may draft amendments and reports, assistants were found to be reluctant to admit that they were involved in this process (Pegan, 2017: 313–314, note 6). In addition, it would be safe to assume that if assistants would (repeatedly) act against the wishes of the MEP, they would be replaced (e.g. Vergauwen, 2013).

More evidence is found for the importance of interest groups in the drafting of amendments. Earnshaw and Judge (2002: 64) argued that committee amendments are for a large degree drafted by interest groups: “Informed estimates put this in the region of 75 to 80 per cent in the most active legislative committees”. Marshall (2010: 561) also argued that it is relatively easy for interest groups to convince an MEP to table one of their amendments, but that an interest group needs to provide high quality amendments to be picked up by influential, well-informed MEPs. Marshall (2010: 570) also found that a majority of the interest groups never asks ‘legislative foes’ to table one of their amendments and that the minority that does approach opposing MEPs only resort to this when they are politically isolated.

The question is whether this poses problems for amendments as a data source? While it is important to keep in mind that MEPs not necessarily drafted their amendments, this does not disqualify amendments as a source of information on the MEP’s legislative activity and behavior for four reasons. First, as Earnshaw and Judge (2002: 65) already noted, MEPs themselves do not see this as a problem and justify their reliance on interest groups with the ideal of responsiveness to societal demands. Second, MEPs have legal liability for their own amending behavior as the ‘cash-for-laws scandal’ and subsequent prison sentence of Ernst Strasser showed (*BBC News*, 2013). Third, their amending behavior is publicly visible, so it is unlikely they will consistently table amendments that they do not agree with.<sup>31</sup> And fourth, from a claims-making perspective (Koopmans and Statham, 1999; Saward, 2006) it does not really matter who the author of the claim was. Regardless of who wrote it, by tabling the amendment and providing the necessary signature, the MEPs establish that they are the

<sup>31</sup> The Panorama-documentary about anti-privacy amendments by Belgian MEP Louis Michel is a clear example of public scrutiny of unexpected amending behavior (Brems, 2013).

'maker' of the claim. Therefore, despite the drawbacks and unknowns surrounding amendments, they can still be used as a source of information.

### 3.5 Data

Committee amendments tabled in the 7<sup>th</sup> legislature of the EP (2009-2014) were derived from both the 'register of documents' and the 'committee archives' on the EP-website.<sup>32</sup> As a result, the dataset only contains dossiers for which committee amendments were tabled. Characteristics of the amendments, like date, procedure, type of amendment, and committee, were derived directly from these documents. As a comparison figures are used from the Committee Statistical Report (DG IPOL - Unit for Legislative Coordination, 2014). Yet, this document is not really clear on whether the start or end of a procedure caused it to be counted in a particular year. Comparison must thus done cautiously.

Rapporteurship data was directly available, but checked against rapporteurship data retrieved from the MEPs personal pages on the EP website. The 'rvest' package in R was used to web-scrape rapporteurship and shadow rapporteurship information. The same package was also used to retrieve activity levels in speeches and debates, parliamentary questions, motions, and written declarations, to which amending activity is compared. Committee membership was hand-coded per half term<sup>33</sup> based on the 'list of members' of September 2009 and the yearly February editions.<sup>34</sup>

External datasets were used to add additional characteristics of MEPs. The age of MEPs, committee leadership (chair or vice-chair), and EP leadership (bureau member or leader of EPG) was derived from Daniel (2015). The 7<sup>th</sup> legislature was in office for 60 months, but not every MEP served the entire term. Logically, as the constitutive meeting of the 8<sup>th</sup> EP was on 1 July 2014, all Croatian MEPs served for 12 months. Number of months spent in the EP for most other MEPs was derived from Sorace (2018) and hand coded from the personal pages on the EP website for 38 MEPs missing in that dataset. Information on ideological position towards European Integration, on the economic left-right scale and the GAL-TAN scale (Green-Alternative-Libertarian vs. Traditional-Authoritarian-Nationalist) of the national level party of an MEP was retrieved from the Chapel Hill expert survey (Bakker, Edwards, et al., 2015; Bakker, Vries, et al., 2015). In general data from the 2014 edition was used. Some national parties did not exist in 2014 anymore. In those cases the 2010 placement was used. If missing in both versions and when the party was the result of a party split, the position of the pre-existing party was used as proxy. For 24 MEPs no position could be retrieved because of parties missing in the data or the MEP being a true 'independent'. They were assigned the mean position of their EPG.

<sup>32</sup> Neither archives was found to be complete.

<sup>33</sup> At half term, January 2012, committee memberships are reshuffled.

<sup>34</sup> The documents were: P7\_LMEP(2009)10-26\_XL; P7\_LMEP(2010)03-15\_XL; P7\_LMEP(2011)03-14\_XL; P7\_LMEP(2012)03-19\_XL; P7\_LMEP(2013)03-20\_XL; P7\_LMEP(2014)03-17\_XL

The first formal session of the 7<sup>th</sup> EP took place in July 2009, while the plenary last convened in April 2014. As the Treaty of Lisbon entered into force on 1 December 2009, transitional measures took effect on 1 December 2011 (European Parliament, 2010a) and Croatia entered the EU in July 2013, some changes took place in terms of procedures and number of MEPs. One of the major changes of the Treaty of Lisbon was the renaming of the co-decision procedure to the ordinary legislative procedure and the extension of this procedure to more policy fields. The dataset contains only ten dossiers in 2009 under the old co-decision procedure, which are related to 667 amendments. The changes to this procedure had no impact on how the procedure was conducted, only on when this procedure would apply. In addition, as this happened very early in the five-year period and affects a very limited number of cases, no distinction is made between amendments before and after the entry into force of the Lisbon Treaty.

The size of the EP was increased from 736 MEPs to 754 MEPs in December 2011 as part of a transitional measure to deal with the effects of the Lisbon Treaty (European Parliament, 2010a). Member States that had the right to extra seats under the Lisbon Treaty were given the opportunity to take up these seats. Simultaneously, three German MEPs were allowed to stay on as the limitations on national delegation size were postponed until the 2014 elections hence raising the size of the EP above the maximum number of 751 MEPs as stipulated in the Lisbon Treaty. When Croatia became a Member State in 2013, another 12 MEPs were added leading to a total of 766 MEPs. Together, the eight Croatian MEPs tabled only 50 amendments related to 20 dossiers. Unless stipulated otherwise, the Croatian MEPs are included in the analysis below. Yet, it must be kept in mind that they are distinctly different from other MEPs that did not serve the full term.

### **3.6 Empirical results**

The exploration of the use of amendments is presented in three parts. First, the dossiers and amendments are put central: How many dossiers were amended? How many amendments were tabled? Under which procedure? Second, the use of amendments is explored from the MEP perspective: In which role did MEPs table amendments? How did MEPs who tabled amendments differ from MEPs who did not table amendments? Finally, the activity of amending is put central: How prevalent were different activities in the 7<sup>th</sup> legislature? How are activity levels associated with each other?

#### *3.6.1 Amendment perspective*

Table 3.1 shows the distribution of dossiers and amendments over the different years of the legislature.<sup>35</sup> The lower number of procedures with amendments and amendments in

<sup>35</sup> This only includes dossiers for which committee amendments were retrieved with complete information on procedure type and procedure identifiers. Table 3.1 does include compromise amendments tabled by the rapporteur.

2009 and 2014 are not surprising. In the first few months of the term, the European Commission was not finalized yet. Knowing that some time may pass between the start of a procedure and the tabling of amendments, the difference between the number of procedures started in a year and the number of procedures with amendments per year shows is also not surprising. The totals show that amendments were retrieved for little over 74% of the procedures that were started.

*Table 3.1 Distribution of reports and amendments over time*

<b>Year</b>	<b>Number of procedures started<sup>36</sup></b>	<b>Number of procedures with amendments</b>	<b>Number of amendments</b>
2009	210	44	2,387
2010	415	276	31,651
2011	520	296	41,752
2012	392	394	69,754
2013	434	393	56,782
2014	80	120	8,963
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,051</b>	<b>1,523</b>	<b>211,289</b>

The European Parliament has different roles depending on the kind of procedure that is followed. The procedures of the EP during the 7<sup>th</sup> legislature in which committee amendments could be tabled can be divided into budget-related procedures, resolutions and initiatives, internal parliament organization procedures, interinstitutional legislative procedures, interinstitutional non-legislative procedures, and quasi-legislative procedures (European Parliament Legislative Observatory (OEIL), n.d.). Within these categories, every different procedure is guided by different rules and procedures. Ordinary legislative procedure and the own-initiative report procedure are used most often. Table 3.2 shows the distribution of dossiers and amendments over procedures. Surprisingly, amendments to dossiers under the ‘Consent procedure’ (APP) were also retrieved, while this is not allowed under the Rules of Procedure (Rule 81(1)). Table 3.2 also shows that the own-initiative report procedure and the ordinary legislative procedure are not only the most-used procedures, but also attract the most amendments on average.

Figure 3.1 shows that the distribution of the number of amendments tabled per report differs per procedure (also statistically significant, Wilcoxon sign-rank test,  $z=-4.26$ ,  $p<.000$ ). Yes, Settembri and Neuhold (2009: 143) were rightly surprised by the 1,600 committee amendments they found for the 2006 Bolkestein Directive. Yet, the left-hand side of Figure 3.1 shows that although 1,600 amendments is an outlying frequency statistically speaking, this is hardly the only case to which many amendments were tabled. Comparison between the

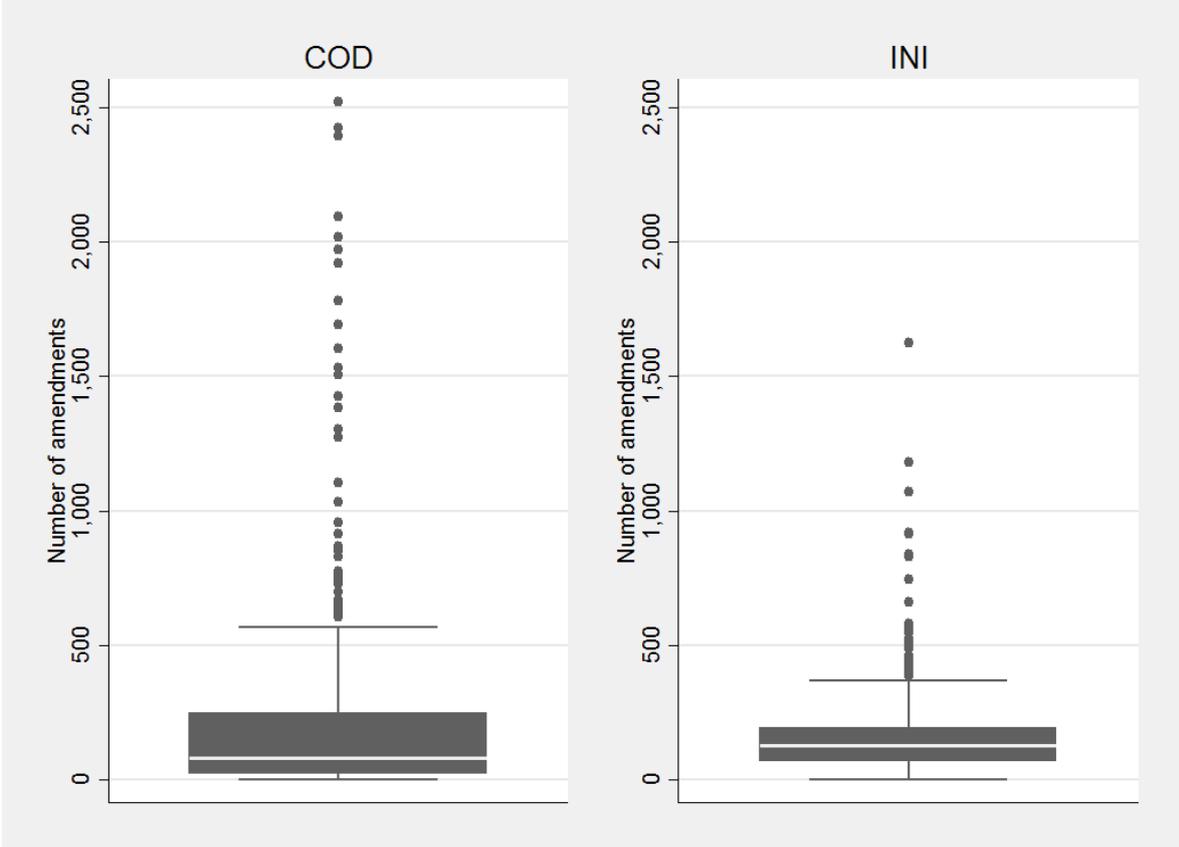
<sup>36</sup> Own calculations based on the Committee Statistical Report (DG IPOL - Unit for Legislative Coordination, 2014) taking only the procedures under which amendments were tabled into account.

two procedures shows that the distribution is more skewed for reports under the ordinary legislative procedure than under the own-initiative procedure: the median is higher for INI-cases, while the maximum is lower.

Table 3.2 Procedures in the European Parliament

Type of procedure	Abbrv.	Procedure	Procedures <sup>12</sup>	Dossiers found	Amendments	Mean number of amendments
Budgetary	BUD	Budgetary	166	112	2,610	23.3
	DEC	Discharge	226	196	5,849	29.8
Resolutions and initiatives	INI	Own-initiative report	576	576	91,868	159.5
	INL	Legislative initiative	22	2	312	156.0
Internal	REG	EP Rules of Procedure	37	21	367	17.5
Legislative	APP	Consent	22	8	636	79.5
	CNS	Consultation	74	50	3,885	77.7
	COD	Ordinary legislative	593	487	102,261	210.0
Non-legislative	NLE	Non-legislative enactments	326	65	3,386	52.1
Quasi-legislative	ACI	Interinstitutional Agreement	9	6	115	19.2
<b>Total</b>				<b>1,523</b>	<b>211,289</b>	<b>138.7</b>

Figure 3.1 Box plots of the number of committee amendments tabled per report (7th legislature)



### 3.6.2 MEP perspective

MEPs can have different formal roles in relation to a dossier. Rapporteurs are responsible for drafting the report to which amendments are tabled in the open amendment phase. Most often reports have one rapporteur, but in rare cases two rapporteurs from different or the same EPG are appointed (see Table 3.3). In addition, EPGs may appoint shadow rapporteurs as designated MEPs to follow up on that dossier, report back to the EPG, and work on finding consensus (Settembri and Neuhold, 2009: 142).<sup>37</sup> For a small number of dossiers, EPGs were even found to appoint shadow rapporteurs when they had received rapporteurship as well or to appoint two shadow rapporteurs. As a result, the maximum number of shadow rapporteurs on a dossier in Table 3.3 is larger than the number of EPGs. Rapporteurs and shadow rapporteurs are always members of the lead committee. In addition to the rapporteur(s) and shadow rapporteurs, other committee members, committee substitutes and remaining MEPs may table amendments as well during first reading. During the 7<sup>th</sup> legislature 98.9% of the committee amendments in the dataset were tabled in first reading.

Table 3.3 shows the distribution of amendments across these roles for regular, single sponsored amendments by MEPs. To ease interpretation of the differences between roles, compromise amendments (1,119 amendments), amendments on behalf of EPGs or a committee (372 amendments), and co-sponsored amendments (51,022 amendments) are not included in this analysis. Probably not surprisingly, over 94% of the amendments are tabled by an MEP that has a formal relationship with the dossier. It makes sense that rapporteurs only play a minor role, as they were already assigned with drafting the initial report. Shadow rapporteurs can be expected to table amendments, as this is their way to publicly influence the dossier in addition to their invisible power as “interlocuteurs of the rapporteur” (Jensen and Winzen, 2012: 121) and in the trilogue-team (Roederer-Rynning and Greenwood, 2017). The shares of amendments tabled by other committee members and substitutes indicates that these actors are actively involved as well.

*Table 3.3 Descriptives for regular, single-sponsored amendments across roles of MEPs*

Role of MEP	MEPs in role			Number of amendments	Share of amendments
	Mean	Min	Max		
Rapporteur	1.00	1	2	10,508	6.62%
Shadow rapporteur	4.40	0	9	42,580	26.82%
Committee member	42.11	17	82	64,113	40.38%
Substitute	42.50	19	74	32,310	20.35%
Other MEPs	708.85	641	754	9,265	5.84%
<b>Total</b>		<b>736</b>	<b>766</b>	<b>158,776</b>	<b>100.00%</b>

<sup>37</sup> The loose group of non-inscrits may formally not assign shadow rapporteurs (Rule 192(3)). However, empirically it was found to occur anyway (for example with Martin Ehrenhauser).

Although Table 3.3 sketches how often amendments are tabled by MEPs in these roles, Table 3.4 gives a better indication of the composition of the group of active MEPs on a dossier. The number of reports fluctuates slightly in this table due to missing data (38 rapporteurs), EPGs not appointing shadow rapporteurs for some dossiers, and the exclusion of joint committees.<sup>38</sup> Table 3.4 shows, as could be expected, that the number of amending MEPs per role is lower than the number of MEPs in that role: not everyone amends. For shadow rapporteurs, Table 3.4 indicates that on average 66.2% of the shadow rapporteurs tables at least one amendment and that there are cases where all shadows rapporteurs amend the dossier. Furthermore, of the other committee members and substitutes 16.9% and 8.3% tables amendments respectively. Yet, on some dossiers a much larger share of the members and substitutes became active. ‘Outsiders’ are much less likely to amend. However, it should be noted that these ‘other MEPs’ may contain the rapporteurs or shadow rapporteurs of opinion giving committees.<sup>39</sup> Table 3.4 also shows that on average 16.33 MEPs table amendments to a dossier. This is in line with previous findings by Marshall (2010: 570) and Jensen and Winzen (2012: 134).

*Table 3.4 Active MEPs per report excluding joint committees*

Role of MEP	Number of reports	Amending MEPs			Share <sup>1</sup>		
		Mean	Min	Max	Mean	Min	Max
Rapporteur	1,474	0.69	0	2	0.685	0	1
Shadow rapporteur	1,225	2.80	0	7	0.662	0	1
Committee member	1,512	7.21	0	47	0.169	0	0.95
Substitute	1,512	3.61	0	35	0.083	0	0.81
Other MEPs	1,512	2.57	0	83	0.004	0	0.12
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,512</b>	<b>16.33</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>160</b>	<b>0.022</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0.21</b>

<sup>1</sup> The share-column shows descriptive statistics of the share of MEPs in the role (see Table 3.3) that amended.

Up until now, who amends was central. However, to understand the scope conditions it is relevant to zoom in on those MEPs that did not amend: are they different? Of the originally elected 736 MEPs, 657 MEPs or 89.3% served the entire 5 years.<sup>40</sup> In total 857 different MEPs served during the 7<sup>th</sup> legislature. 59 MEPs of these did not amend in committee phase, out of which 22 served the full term. Four explanations for this can be identified in previous studies. First of all, as amendments are often quite technical (Tsebelis et al., 2001: 583) and hence drafting amendments requires a certain amount of knowledge, one would not expect MEPs that served for a very short time to table amendments. Second, research on Eurosceptic MEPs

<sup>38</sup> Joint committees are meetings of two or three committees combined. As this affects the potential size of ‘committee members’ and ‘substitutes’, these 9 dossiers were excluded dropping the number of dossiers from 1,521 to 1,512 and excluding 398 amendments.

<sup>39</sup> Based on anecdotal evidence, like amendment 78 to 2013/0307(COD), as rapporteurship and shadow rapporteurship for opinion is not included in the dataset.

<sup>40</sup> MEPs that served 59 out of the 60 months are also considered to have served the full term.

showed that a considerable share of the Eurosceptics can be expected to ‘exit’ by not participating or ‘voice’ their discontent by using publicly visible activities, but not table amendments (Brack, 2012: 165). Third, Sorace (2018: 302) would argue that leaders of the EP, leaders of the EPGs and committee chairs are ‘show horses’ who prioritize activities that have a high visibility and thus electoral impact. Therefore these types of MEPs could be expected to table no committee amendments. Finally, scholars like Daniel (2015) would argue that some MEPs use the EP as a step towards national politics or a step towards retirement. For those younger MEPs with ambitions towards national politics, the ‘show horse’ argument may apply, while those that are retiring might slow down in activity levels all together.

Table 3.5 presents logistic regression analyses and shows how differences in months spent in the EP, position towards European Integration, leadership positions, and age at the end of term affect the likelihood of an MEP to table at least one committee amendment. As controls, extreme position on the economic left-right scale and the GAL-TAN scale were also included, but not found to have significant effects. In Model 2 squared age is added to disentangle the effects of young MEPs with national-level ambitions and the EP as retirement home. As could be expected, spending more months in the EP and being more pro-European Integration increases the likelihood of tabling a committee amendment. Neither leadership of the EP or EPGs or committee leadership was found to have an effect, which is not in line with the ‘show horse’ expectation of Sorace (2018). Looking into the data, of the leaders only EP chair Martin Schulz did not table any amendment. Of the regular MEPs, Janusz Lewandowski jumps out, but his lack of amendments can be explained by his nomination as European Commissioner early in the term.

*Table 3.5 Logistic regression of tabling at least one amendment or not*

	<b>Model 1</b>		<b>Model 2</b>	
	<b>Tabling at least one amendment</b>		<b>Tabling at least one amendment</b>	
Total months spent in EP7 (1-60)	0.077***	(0.01)	0.079***	(0.01)
Anti-Pro European integration (1-7)	0.430***	(0.09)	0.415***	(0.09)
EP Leader vs. not	-0.284	(0.55)	-0.378	(0.55)
Committee Leader vs. not	1.237	(0.78)	1.242	(0.78)
MEP Age (end of term) (26-86)	-0.049**	(0.02)	0.193*	(0.10)
Squared MEP Age (end of term)			-0.002*	(0.00)
Folded left-right scale (0-5.5)	0.090	(0.13)	0.062	(0.13)
Folded GAL-TAN scale (0-5.5)	-0.205	(0.14)	-0.207	(0.14)
Constant	0.122	(1.07)	-6.186*	(2.73)
Observations	857		857	
Pseudo $R^2$	0.323		0.336	
chi2	138.615		144.362	
p	0.000		0.000	
ll	-145.492		-142.618	

Standard errors in parentheses; \*  $p < 0.05$ , \*\*  $p < 0.01$ , \*\*\*  $p < 0.001$

For the age of MEPs, both models show interesting differences. In Model 1 a negative effect is found, while the sign changes when squared age is added in Model 2, which in itself has a negative effect. This indicates evidence for both expectations surrounding age and the use of committee amendments. Further research could dive deeper into these relations. Nevertheless, for the next chapters this analysis does indicate which kind of MEPs are underrepresented in the data.

*3.6.3 Amending activity compared*

Finally, the question remains how tabling amendments is related to other measures of legislative activity. Staat and Kuehnhanss (2017: 375) classified amending as the same type of activity as issuing motions for resolutions, written declarations and parliamentary questions. However, they also admit (Staat and Kuehnhanss, 2017: 375, note 18) that this classification is debatable. Compared to other parliamentary activities of MEPs on which the EP provides figures, Ringe and Wilson (2016: 766, note 19) claim that amendments fall in the same category as rapporteurships. They argue that while amendments affect the content of legislation, other activities, like speeches, issuing questions, motions, and written declarations, are largely symbolic. This is partly in line with previous studies, which found that speeches were a communication tool to fellow MEPs and a boost-your-profile tool towards the national party to ensure a chance for re-election (Slapin and Proksch, 2010). Staat and Kuehnhanss (2017: 375) argued that the same applies to written declarations, which can be seen as the written form of a speech. Corbett et al. (2011: 62, 341) classified motions for resolutions as both an agenda setting tool and a way to symbolically address constituent concerns. In contrast with Ringe and Wilson, others argued that parliamentary questions are not just symbolic, but are the main tool for parliamentary oversight (Corbett et al., 2011: 315–316), and are mostly used by MEPs from national level opposition parties (Proksch and Slapin, 2011).

*Table 3.6 Descriptive information for different parliamentary activities*

	<b>Observations</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Std. deviation</b>	<b>Min</b>	<b>Max</b>
Reports amended	857	29.4	25.1	0	166
Amendments tabled	857	367.2	361.9	0	3104
Speeches in plenary	857	178.3	289.8	0	2190
Motions	857	32.2	64.7	0	471
Written declarations	857	1.4	2.0	0	16
Written questions	857	75.9	161.8	0	1480
Oral questions	857	8.1	11.8	0	89

The descriptive information for the different activities is provided in Table 3.6. As the means, standard deviations and maximum values show, the distributions of most activities are skewed. Furthermore, some activities are more prevalent than others: amendments,

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speeches and written questions are used most often, while especially written declarations seem to be rare. Table 3.7 shows the correlations between amending behavior and other activities.<sup>41</sup> As could be expected, the number of reports amended and the number of amendments tabled is significantly and strongly related to each other ( $\rho=0.85, p<.000$ ). The correlation of amendments with other activities is not significant (with speeches), low (with motions) and weak with the other activities. Comparing the other activities to each other provides some larger correlations (speeches and written questions; motions and oral questions; written declarations and oral questions). Summarizing, for amending behavior these correlations mean that investing in amendments does seem to be a different kind of behavior than the other activities.

*Table 3.7 Spearman’s rho of parliamentary activities (count) for 657 MEPs that served the full term*

	Reports amended in committee	Amendments in committee	Speeches in plenary	Motions	Written declarations	Written questions
Amendments tabled	0.85 ***	-				
Speeches in plenary	0.16 ***	0.05	-			
Motions	0.11 **	0.12 **	0.23 ***	-		
Written declarations	0.22 ***	0.19 ***	0.23 ***	0.25 ***	-	
Written questions	0.27 ***	0.22 ***	0.40 ***	0.11 **	0.30 ***	-
Oral questions	0.27 ***	0.28 ***	0.19 ***	0.52 ***	0.37 ***	0.23 * **

\*  $p < 0.05$ , \*\*  $p < 0.01$ , \*\*\*  $p < 0.001$

### 3.7 Conclusion

In this chapter, the use of committee amendments was explored. The inspection of the Rules of Procedures indicated that the different kinds of amendments are subject to different rules. It must be noted that these rules applied for (most of) the 7<sup>th</sup> legislature, while Brack and Costa (2018) demonstrated that the Rules of Procedure are in constant flux. The survey of the body of literature on (committee) amendments showed that for the European context more is known about the fate of amendments in specific dossiers and how interinstitutional power can be assessed via amendment adoption rates than is known about the prevalence of amendments, the dynamics of amendments and where amendments come from. Recently the attention for the activity levels of MEPs has spurred new lines of research into how differences in activity levels can be explained (e.g. Sorace, 2018; Staat and Kuehnhanss, 2017). Nevertheless, amendments may also be used to study cooperation in the EP on a larger scale than the case study by Jensen and Winzen (2012) (Chapters 4 and 5). In addition, while Burns et al. (2012) coded the environmental impact of amendments, more can be learned from the content of amendments and their justifications (Chapters 6 and 7).

<sup>41</sup> With count data, a non-parametric correlation coefficient like spearman’s rho is preferred.

The empirical exploration of committee amendments sketched a picture of the population samples are taken from. Dossiers under the own-initiative report procedure are most likely to be amended, while outlying dossiers that receive a lot of amendments are found under the ordinary legislative procedure. The findings regarding the role of MEPs and committee amendments highlight that besides the rapporteur, the shadow rapporteurs and fellow committee members are actively involved as well. Yet, the size of the active group of MEPs per dossier is rather limited, indicating a clear division of tasks. The number of reports amended and amendments tabled per MEP were compared to other parliamentary activities. The results show that activity levels are weakly related at best and thus that committee amendments are different from plenary activities.

Comparing MEPs that amended to those that did not table any committee amendment indicates that the likelihood of tabling at least one committee amendments is lower for MEPs that did not serve the full term, the Eurosceptics, the younger and the extremely old MEPs. This indicates that not amending may be due to a learning curve and being in the EP long enough to build up expertise. Furthermore, these results lend support to explanations available in the literature: the exit and voice behavior of Eurosceptics (Brack, 2012), and the EP as a 'retirement home' and springboard towards a national political career (Daniel, 2015). Simultaneously, it challenges the idea of an EP of show horses and work horses (Sorace, 2018). Further research could explore these effects more thoroughly.

## Chapter 4

### **Specialists, party members, and national representatives**

#### *Patterns in co-sponsorship of amendments in the European Parliament*

*Published as:* Baller I (2017) Specialists, party members, or national representatives: Patterns in co-sponsorship of amendments in the European Parliament. *European Union Politics* 18(3): 469–490.

#### **Abstract**

Tabling committee amendments is an important way for MEPs to influence legislation, build coalitions and give signals to constituents. This paper questions to what extent these coalitions follow party lines, national lines or the logic of informational specialization. Expectations are linked to the theories of legislative organization and tested using Exponential Random Graph Models (ERGM) of the co-sponsorship patterns during the 7th legislature of the EP. The results indicate that representing the same member state, sharing committee membership, and being affiliated to the same EP Party Group all contribute to the formation of recurring co-sponsorship ties. Furthermore, this study indicates that especially the GUE/NGL has strong within-party co-sponsorship bonds and that ALDE adopts a pivotal link between left and right in cross-party co-sponsorship.

## 4.1 Introduction

During the 7th legislature of the European Parliament (EP), a total of 857 different citizens served as a Member of the European Parliament (MEP). Although – theoretically – they may act on a completely individual basis, ever since the first meeting of the European Assembly MEPs have established cooperative networks in the form of Party Groups, which are organized along ideological lines instead of national lines (Hix and Høyland, 2013). The increase of powers of the EP has strengthened the role of these Party Groups over time (Kreppel, 2002b: 7–8), resulting in, for example, party discipline in roll-call votes (RCVs) (e.g. Attina, 1990; Hix et al., 2007) and a strong influence in committee assignments (e.g. Bowler and Farrell, 1995). But do the Party Groups play a similar pivotal role in the legislative behavior of MEPs inside the EP's parliamentary committees? Or are there other rationales for cooperation amongst representatives? For instance, could shared national interests be the rationale for European Conservatives and Reformists (ECR) Member Vlasák to co-sponsor an amendment with Progressive Alliance of Socialists and Democrats (S&D) Members Sehnalová and Rouček?

The literature provides multiple explanations for legislators cooperating. Firstly, Finke (2012) argues that to influence the outcome of the policy process, pre-voting 'legislative coalitions' are necessary to shape the alternatives that are put to the vote. He also argues that despite the lack of a formal governing coalition in the EP, legislative coalitions are built during the proposal stage. Secondly, Koger (2003: 241) argues that co-sponsorship in the US Congress serves as a signaling tool both towards the chamber by providing a signal about diversity and size of support for the bill or amendment, and towards donors, constituents, and interest groups about expressed policy positions.

Similarly, MEPs are expected to co-sponsor amendments because they consider that a broadly supported amendment has a higher chance to be adopted. MEPs may also undertake this form of formal cooperation to send signals to the plenary, EP Party Groups, constituents, and other relevant stakeholders. In this article, I aim to shed light on with whom MEPs decide to co-sponsor amendments in order to explain varying patterns of co-sponsorship in the EP committees. Empirically, I look at the co-sponsored committee amendments related to 1.536 legislative dossiers addressed during the 7<sup>th</sup> legislature. For the analysis, these amendments are linked to some key characteristics of the co-sponsoring MEPs, such as their nationality or party affiliation.

Since the EP-plenary typically relies on committee reports (e.g. Farrell and Héritier, 2004: 1196), tabling committee amendments is an important way for MEPs to influence legislation (Hurka, 2013: 274; Whitaker, 2011: 8). Nevertheless, these amendments have until recently received limited scholarly attention. Scholars have focused more on the content, the success rates, and the effect of – predominantly plenary – amendments than on what the characteristics of these amendments can tell us about how the EP functions and how MEPs carry out their legislative task (e.g. Burns et al., 2012; Finke, 2012; Hurka, 2013; Kreppel, 1999, 2002a; Tsebelis and Kalandrakis, 1999; Yordanova, 2013).

During the plenary phase, amendments can only be submitted by the responsible committee, a Party Group, or at least 40 MEPs. In contrast, ‘committee amendments’ can be submitted by individual MEPs, small (or larger) groups of MEPs, Party Groups, or on behalf of the committee. Since the digitalized process of submitting committee amendments made *ex ante* control by the Party Group difficult and the two largest Party Groups explicitly abolished restrictions on individual activities of their MEPs during the 1980s (Kreppel, 2002b: 194–197), explanations for co-sponsorship other than shared Party Group membership might play a role as well. For instance, not only party affiliation, but also national affiliation, shared committee membership, and ideological proximity may affect the decision of MEPs to jointly submit amendments.

Based on empirical observations, Neuhold and Settembri (2007: 165) argue that, aside from differing opinions of parties, conflict in committees is often due to differing national interests. This ties in with the observation that MEPs have remained nationally based representatives (Scully, 2005: 18). To provide a more theoretical rationale for the empirically focused debate on national or transnational MEPs, I approach the research question with the theories of legislative organization. Although these theories were originally developed to explain committee formation in Congress, the mechanisms are not necessarily limited to that context (e.g. Fujimura, 2012; Jensen and Winzen, 2012; Raymond and Holt, 2014; Strøm, 1997). Previously, scholars applied the theories to analyze other aspects of the EP than committee formation, including rapporteurship allocation (Kaeding, 2004), rapporteur influence over the plenary (Costello and Thomson, 2010), amendment success (Hurka, 2013), and informal cooperation between MEPs (Jensen and Winzen, 2012).

First, I test the hypotheses using Exponential Random Graph Modelling (ERGM); a method to statistically assess the probability that two actors in a network have a recurring co-sponsor relationship (‘form a tie’), given the characteristics of those actors and the ties they have with the other actors in the network. The second part of the article contains an in-depth discussion of the methodology and a presentation of the analyzed data. The empirical section consists of two components. The first portion addresses the findings on within-party co-sponsorship, co-sponsorship along national lines, and committee membership. The second portion focuses on differences between Party Groups and the findings regarding cross-party co-sponsorship. Combined, the results indicate that the national lines are more important in structuring the patterns of co-sponsorship than within-party cooperation. Yet, cross-party co-sponsorship is not consistently structured by ideological proximity. Nevertheless, looking beyond national or party lines by including measures of shared committee membership and looking at cross-party co-sponsorships sheds more light on the behavior of MEPs.

#### **4.2 Expectations on amendment co-sponsorship in the European Parliament**

One of the debates in the literature focuses on the degree of cohesion of the Party Groups. Early studies based on RCVs found that EP party cohesion is exceptionally high (e.g. Hix et al., 2007; Whitaker, 2001). Some scholars argue that party cohesion has since increased (e.g.

Yordanova and Mühlböck, 2015), while others point out that in 'early agreements' this only applies to the large Party Groups (Bressanelli et al., 2016). The focus on party loyalty as a tool of parties and Members of Parliament (MPs) to organize a parliament is central in the partisan theory of legislative organization (Cox and McCubbins, 2007: 153–210). Cox and McCubbins argue that parties deliberately use loyal legislators to make sure that the outcome in committee phase is in line with what the party wants.

Legislators are expected to cooperate within the party to show loyalty and to please the party leadership. This allows them to gain positions they value and to increase the chances of re-selection. The party cohesion argument holds beyond the plenary: Whitaker (2001) found that Party Groups, via group coordinators in the committees, are able to control committees as well. Therefore, based on the partisan theory one will expect MEPs to express their loyalty by co-sponsoring with MEPs from the same EP Party Group.

*H1a: MEPs are more likely to co-sponsor with MEPs from their own Party Group than with MEPs from other Party Groups.*

However, Louwse and Otjes (2015: 480) argued that in situations of party discipline, single sponsored amendments would be enough to convey the party line; within-party co-sponsorship would be a waste of resources. Therefore, one expects less within-party co-sponsorship. This should be especially the case in the EP, where Party Groups have the habit of appointing 'shadow rapporteurs' to monitor the behavior of the rapporteur. This means that Party Groups try to determine who of their members should pay attention, be informed, and submit amendments. The same expectation is put forward by Krehbiel in the 'heterogeneity principle' of the informational theory. Krehbiel (1992: 85) argues that informed legislators from opposite sides of the spectrum can 'come to agreement on a single policy that makes both of them better off'. This leads to a rival hypothesis (*H1b*) on co-sponsorship within EP Party Groups:

*H1b: MEPs are less likely to co-sponsor with MEPs from their own EP Party Group than with MEPs from other Party Groups.*

Next to Party Group as the main binding factor fostering a co-sponsorship relation, the literature puts forward three alternative explanations. First, Neuhold and Settembri (2007: 165–167) identified as many conflicts along party lines as along national lines. The importance of national interests was also indicated by Scully (2005), who argued that socialization of MEPs is limited and that MEPs keep a national orientation over time. These observations can be linked to the distributive theory, which states that re-election is the main goal of legislators (Weingast and Marshall, 1988). Since MEPs are elected at the national level, acting as national representatives and letting their electoral constituency benefit from their legislative work helps them strive for re-election. As a result, legislators are expected to put their home constituency (or Member State, in the case of the EU) first and cooperate with other legislators with whom they share this goal 'regardless of their partisan and general ideological background' (Hurka, 2013: 277). This leads to the expectation that MEPs will work together following national lines.

*H2: MEPs are more likely to co-sponsor with MEPs from their own Member State than with MEPs from other Member States.*

However, Yordanova (2009: 262) points out that Weingast and Marshall's interpretation requires a strong electoral connection, while this connection is rather weak in the European context. Since national parties nominate legislators for re-election, the constituency is less important for MEPs than for Congressmen and the MEP's performance on the European level might be less noticeable for voters. Combined with the second-order election status of European elections, which entails that the voters do not care about the MEPs that much (Reif and Schmitt, 1980; Yordanova, 2009: 262), what an MEP can bring home in 'pork' is not likely to heavily affect re-election chances. As a result, the incentives for co-sponsoring along national lines might not be that strong.

The second alternative expectation, like *H1b* on co-sponsorship across the EP Party Groups, can be derived from the informational theory. This rationale posits that representatives act as 'agents of production' in committees by striving to prepare informed policies to be sent to the plenary (Shepsle and Weingast, 1987). The logic behind this is that good policies require the processing of a lot of information about the likely effect of a policy measure. This processing can be done more efficiently in a setting where information on the topic is already accumulated, like in committee setting (Krehbiel, 1992: 84–85). To fulfil this 'informed production role' and to reach policy goals in that kind of setting, representatives will specialize in the policy field of their assigned committee. As 'informed agents of production', the incentives are low for committee members to cooperate with non-committee members, who are less informed. This leads to the expectation that MEPs would rather co-sponsor amendments with fellow committee members.

The same expectation was set forth by Jensen and Winzen (2012: 124–125), who argue that on the one hand committee members could have expertise to offer to non-members, but that, alternatively, the committee members could be less open to promote less informed policy positions of non-specialized legislators. While during the plenary, support from non-committee members is needed to table an amendment, this is not the case for committee amendments. As a result, the expectation is that experts will co-sponsor with fellow committee members. However, Jensen and Winzen (2012: 143) did not find support for this effect in their analysis in the EP's Environment, Public Health and Food Safety Committee (ENVI). Nevertheless, since their study focused on one specific committee, we can still expect an effect of committee membership when all other committees are included. Moreover, Louwse and Otjes (2015) did find this effect of a shared policy field of specialization as a catalyst for co-sponsorship of amendments and bills in the Dutch parliament. Therefore, shared accumulation of information about and interest in a topic, visible as shared committee membership, might be the 'glue' in a co-sponsorship coalition in the EP as well. This relationship is expected to be stronger for fellow committee members than for substitutes.

*H3: The higher the degree of shared committee membership, the more likely MEPs are to co-sponsor.*

The final alternative expectation is that MEPs will be more inclined to co-sponsor with MEPs that are ideologically close. This expectation runs against the ‘heterogeneity principle’ from the informational theory, which states that cross-party co-sponsorship between two opposite sides of the spectrum gives the most informed opinion. Despite the informational advantages of dissimilar co-sponsorship, MEPs are expected to avoid co-sponsorship with MEPs that are ideologically highly dissimilar – for instance a radical leftists MEP with a right wing MEP – as this sends a confusing signal to the electoral constituencies (Louwerse and Otjes, 2015: 480–481). In addition, it would be easier to develop such amendments and the amendment might be more acceptable for the party leadership. An analysis of Dutch MPs by Louwerse and Otjes (2015) indeed supported that ideological proximity increased the chances of co-sponsorship.

*H4: If MEPs co-sponsor across EP Party Group lines they will be more likely to do so with ideologically adjacent EP Party Groups than with ideologically more distant Party Groups.*

### **4.3 Data & Methods**

The data analyzed in this article was obtained from the documents with proposed amendments tabled in committee phase during the 7th legislative term of the EP, which are available on the website of the EP.<sup>42</sup> The process of tabling amendments in committee takes place after the responsible rapporteur has presented a draft report. During first reading every MEP, regardless of whether the MEP is a member, substitute or non-member of the committee, can propose changes to the draft report. This is either done alone or in cooperation with other MEPs. The document with all the proposed amendments is subsequently discussed in a committee meeting and the amendments are voted upon (European Parliament, 2009b; Hix and Høyland, 2011: 56–59). The EP documents or rules do not spell out whether the order in which the authoring MEPs appear has any meaning, therefore the term co-sponsor is used regardless of whether the MEP's name came second or first.

This article focuses on co-sponsored amendments in standing committees, which narrowed the cases of interest down to the subset of 51.043 co-sponsored amendments (24% of the total amount of amendments). In total, this resulted in 11.910 unique dyads of two co-sponsoring MEPs. The MEPs belonging to the non-inscrits were excluded from the analyses, since the expectations on within-group cooperation and cross-party co-sponsorship would be

<sup>42</sup> Documents were found via both the 'register of documents' of the EP and via the 'archives' of the committees on the EP-website, since neither archive was complete. In total, 50 amendments were excluded due to missing information in the original documents. These documents were scraped and transformed into a dataset using a MATLAB script. Due to limitations in the script, detecting more than 12 co-sponsors was problematic, while Hurka (2013) has demonstrated that the number of co-sponsors can at least be as high as 37. Nevertheless, this is not expected to impact the outcome of the analysis largely, because only 0.1% of the amendments had 12 (or more) co-sponsors. Compromise and consolidated amendments were excluded from the analysis, because their sponsor does not reflect everyone who supports the amendment at the moment of tabling.

different for this loose group that does not function as a Party Group. Furthermore, the Europe of Freedom and Democracy (EFD) group was excluded from the analysis due to their low level of co-sponsoring, which influenced the results in Model IV disproportionately. For instance, EFD-MEPs co-sponsored very few amendments with the European United Left–Nordic Green Left (GUE/NGL) (one tie) and the Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe (ALDE) (six ties), while the data contains 23 ALDE-GUE/NGL ties.<sup>43</sup>

Furthermore, a pair of MEPs co-sponsoring together once does not indicate a lasting co-sponsor relationship. By looking at recurring co-sponsorship, I limit the analysis to more durable relationships and simultaneously transcend the specific circumstances of one legislative dossier. A recurring pattern of co-sponsorship is defined as two MEPs co-sponsoring an amendment regarding at least two different legislative dossiers.<sup>44</sup> These co-sponsorship patterns are the focus of the analyses, regardless of the committee in which they are formed. As a result, 7.959 out of the 11.910 dyads did not have recurring co-sponsorship relations. This left a network with 652 MEPs, 3.951 dyads or edges, and a density of 0.019.<sup>45</sup>

EP Party Groups can be placed on a scale that covers the ideological spectrum from left to right (e.g. Hix and Høyland, 2013; McElroy and Benoit, 2012). McElroy and Benoit (2012: 156) placed the EP Party Groups on a general ideological left-right scale in the following order: GUE/NGL, The Greens–European Free Alliance (Greens/EFA), S&D, ALDE, European People's Party (EPP), and the ECR. Hix and Høyland (2013) showed that the ideological distance between the EP Party Groups varies across ideological dimensions, but that their overall ranking is very similar. Therefore, I used this order to interpret the results of the analysis of cross-party co-sponsorships. The differences in ideological positions of the national parties are included in the model to control for the impact of ideological distance and within EP Party Group variation. Ideological positions on European integration, the economic left-right scale, and the GAL-TAN dimension (Green-Alternative-Libertarian vs. Traditional-Authoritarian-Nationalist) were derived from the 2010 and 2014 Chapel Hill expert survey (Bakker, Edwards, et al., 2015; Bakker, Vries, et al., 2015). For national parties missing in the 2014 edition, the 2010 estimates were used. For national parties, not present in either version, that were established as a split from a pre-existing party present in the data, I used the position of the

<sup>43</sup> ERGM is sensitive to combinations of parties that do not or only once occur in the dataset, which would lead to large coefficients with large SE in Model IV. Including the EFD in Model III yields substantially identical results as Model III as it was presented here.

<sup>44</sup> Analyzing amendments at the dossier level has the added advantage that there is no distinction between amendments tabled in lead committees and amendments in opinion-giving committees.

<sup>45</sup> All types of legislative procedures are included in the analyses. Focusing only on co-decision/ordinary legislative procedure dossiers or own initiative dossiers yielded fairly similar results, except for the disappearing effects of educational level for COD/OLP and 'leaving the EP' for INI-reports. However, for these subsets of dossiers cross-party co-sponsorships could not be assessed: the limited number of empirical dyads of some party group combinations had the result that not all coefficients could be estimated.

pre-existing party. For the remaining 24 MEPs the mean position of the EP Party Group was assigned.

Information on the member state affiliation, leaving the EP before the end of term, entering the EP later than the start of the term, national party affiliation, and European Party Group affiliation at the end of the 7th legislature is based on the list of MEPs on the website of the EP (European Parliament, n.d.). I include additional controls for the educational level of the MEPs, gender, and seniority measured as 'EP terms served', which were derived from Daniel (2015). The educational level was corrected upwards for 64 MEPs and missing data was added based on the CVs and personal pages on the EP website.<sup>46</sup>

The composition of the standing parliamentary committees is established at the beginning and re-established halfway through the term. If two MEPs shared one or more committee memberships in half of the term, they are coded as having shared committee membership. This shared committee membership served as the reference category to which a member-substitute relationship, a substitute-substitute relationship, and no shared membership were compared. I coded committee membership and substitute status using the September 2009 edition and the February-editions of the monthly published list of members. Descriptive information for all explanatory variables is presented in Appendix 4A.

To statistically assess the impact of the characteristics of MEPs on the occurrence of co-sponsorship relations, I rely on undirected Exponential Random Graph Modelling (ERGM) using the Statnet package in R (Handcock et al., 2008, 2016). ERGM can be used to analyze whether characteristics (so-called nodal and dyadic attributes) of two MEPs in a pair (i.e. nodes in a dyad) are associated with the presence of a relation between the two actors (a tie or edge), while simultaneously estimating whether certain small endogenous network patterns occur more often within the bigger network than expected by chance (Robins et al., 2012: 386–387; Wang et al., 2013: 213). These endogenous network patterns are the main asset of ERGMs compared to more traditional forms of regression: the complex interdependence of the dyads is considered when estimating the coefficients. These smaller network patterns could account, for example, for the fact that a relationship between actor A and actor B combined with a relationship between A and C increases the chance of a relation between B and C occurring. In ERGMs, the dependent variables are binary values indicating whether a tie was present or not for each cell in the adjacency matrix, i.e. an  $n \times n$  table indicating the presence or absence of a tie for each possible pair of MEPs.

The control variables 'leaving the EP', 'entering the EP later than 07/2009', 'educational level', and 'EP seniority' of the MEPs are added as main effects: does having these characteristics increase/decrease the baseline probability of an actor to form ties to other actors? 'Representing the same Member State', 'having the same gender', and 'being affiliated

<sup>46</sup> Including additional controls for the background of MEPs like previously held profession and field of study was considered. However, the diversity in background (see Braendle, 2015) provided computational problems.

with the same EP Party Group' are interaction terms, since characteristics of both actors are combined in one term (see Lusher et al., 2012: 95–96). These are added using a dummy indicating whether the two MEPs share the same value for the characteristic or not (i.e. as homophily effects).<sup>47</sup> Alternatively, in Model IV in Table 4.1 the Party Group affiliation is added including a model term for every possible combination of party affiliation (i.e. as nodal mixing pattern). The measures for Committee Membership, differences in position on European integration, on the economic left-right scale and on the GAL-TAN dimension are included as characteristic of the joint relationship between two MEPs (i.e. as edge-covariates). Because of limited computational power, insignificant model terms in Model III were not included in Model IV.

For the estimation of the coefficients, a large number of simulations were conducted using Markov Chain Monte Carlo (MCMC) parameter estimation. In this estimation procedure, in every simulation one or more randomly selected cells are switched from 0 to 1 (or the other way around) to assess the impact of that change on the overall network (Harris, 2014). In all models presented, endogenous network statistics are included. By correcting for general structural tendencies in empirical networks, these terms increase the robustness of inferences about the exogenous characteristics of the MEPs and dyads (Harris, 2014: 16–19; Lusher et al., 2012: 58–76). The included terms are 'edges' (comparable to an intercept in regular statistical models), 'GWDegree' (geometrically weighted degree, which dampens the effect of the highly connected MEPs and thus captures the popularity effect), 'GWESP' (geometrically weighted edge-wise shared partners, which controls for triadic closure and thus captures the effect of the ties between A-B and B-C on the probability of a tie between A-C), and 'GWDSPP' (geometrically weighted dyad-wise shared partners, which controls for alternating two-paths which captures via how many two-step routes – with another actor in between – A is connected to B). For GWDegree  $\alpha$  was fixed at 0.5, while for increased model fit  $\alpha$  was fixed at 0.85 for GWDSPP and at 0.3 for GWESP (Goodreau, 2007: 237). This difference in alphas has the effect that additional edge-wise shared partners weigh slightly heavier than additional dyad-wise shared partners and extra ties.

Comparing the size of effects across models should be done cautiously, since the coefficient indicates the increase/decrease caused by that variable conditional upon the values of the other variables (Harris, 2014). Nevertheless, this problem does not apply for within model comparisons of effect sizes, which I conduct with the Wald test, using this formula<sup>48</sup>:

<sup>47</sup> While in other kinds of regression it is necessary to include both the main effects and interaction terms in the model, this is not the case for ERGMs due to the limited degrees of freedom (Harris, 2014: 55).

<sup>48</sup> The full matrix of Wald statistics for within- and cross-party co-sponsorship is available in Appendix 4B.

$$W = \frac{(\beta_1 - \beta_2)}{\sqrt{\text{Var}(\beta_1) + \text{Var}(\beta_2) - 2 * \text{Cov}(\beta_1, \beta_2)}} \sim N(0,1)$$

#### 4.4 Results of the ERGM analysis

The results of the ERGM analyses are presented in Table 4.1. Model I is the null model (a so-called Bernoulli-model). In this model, the negative coefficient for edges (-3.965;  $p < 0.001$ ) shows that the density of the network is lower than 50%, which is normal for most observed networks (Harris, 2014: 46). Model II confirms that including endogenous terms increases the model fit. The negative effect for GWDegree, which captures the popularity effect, signifies that MEPs with many co-sponsor relations are more likely than chance to form a new co-sponsor bond. The small, negative effect of GWDSP indicates that two MEPs without a co-sponsor relation also tend to have no two-path between them, meaning that they are less likely than chance to be connected via a common third MEP. The large, positive effect of GWESP, which mirrors GWDSP, highlights that two MEPs with a co-sponsor relation are more likely than chance to have shared common third MEPs.

##### 4.4.1 Party line, national line, or committee members?

Model III assesses how being affiliated with the same EP Party Group (*H1*), representing the same Member State (*H2*), and sharing Committee Membership (*H3*) affects the chances of co-sponsorship. In Model III, Table 4.1, the dyadic covariates for Member State, being affiliated with the same EP Party Group, shared Committee Membership and additional controls are added. The goodness-of-fit graphs (Figure 4.1) suggest that although none of the models provides a perfect fit, Model III has a better fit for edge-wise shared partners and minimum geodesic distance than Model II. The goodness-of-fit graphs for Model IV are similar to Model III.

Surprisingly, in Model III, the effect of GWDegree changed direction. The positive coefficient indicates that when controlling for the node and dyad characteristics, highly connected MEPs are less likely than chance to form additional co-sponsorship relations. This reveals that the tie formation of well-connected MEPs is quite well captured by the introduced attributes. GWDegree ceases to be significant once all Party Group combinations are included in Model IV.

Table 4.1 Explaining recurring co-sponsorship ties among MEPs *a*

	Model I: Bernoulli			Model II: Reduced homogeneous realization- dependent model <sup>b</sup>			Model III: dyadic covariate effects			Model IV: cross-party co- sponsorship		
	$\theta$	(se)	P value	$\theta$	(se)	P value	$\theta$	(se)	P value	$\theta$	(se)	P value
<i>ENDOGENEOUS STRUCTURES</i>												
Edge	-3.965	(.016)	<.001	- 8.034	(.123)	<.001	-5.777	(.148)	<.001	-5.038	(.144)	<.001
GWDegree( $\alpha=0.5$ )				-0.578	(.196)	.003	0.493	(.190)	.010	0.245	(.195)	.209
GWDS( $\alpha=0.85$ )				- 0.048	(.003)	<.001	-0.044	(.003)	<.001	-0.036	(.003)	<.001
GWESP( $\alpha=0.3$ )				4.236	(.082)	<.001	2.797	(.068)	<.001	2.723	(.069)	<.001
<i>NODAL COVARIATES</i>												
Leaving EP before 07/2014							-0.218	(.039)	<.001	-0.238	(.039)	<.001
Entering EP later than 07/2009							-0.223	(.045)	<.001	-0.214	(.038)	<.001
Level of education							0.064	(.013)	<.001	0.056	(.012)	<.001
Seniority in EP							-0.046	(.010)	<.001	-0.030	(.009)	<.001
<i>DYADIC COVARIATES</i>												
Same Gender <sup>c</sup>							-0.037	(.035)	.281	--	--	--
EU position <sup>c</sup>							0.011	(.014)	.442	--	--	--
Economical position							-0.067	(.011)	<.001	-0.061	(.014)	<.001
GAL-TAN position							-0.050	(.011)	<.001	-0.040	(.012)	<.001
Same Member State							1.459	(.030)	<.001	1.510	(.034)	<.001
Committee membership							--	--	--	--	--	--
<i>Ref: Member - Member</i>												
Member - Substitute							-0.567	(.034)	<.001	-0.617	(.037)	<.001
Substitute - Substitute							-1.090	(.067)	<.001	-1.118	(.065)	<.001
No shared membership							-2.179	(.039)	<.001	-2.284	(.042)	<.001
EP-party group							0.953	(.032)	<.001	--	--	--
<i>Ref: S&amp;D - S&amp;D</i>												

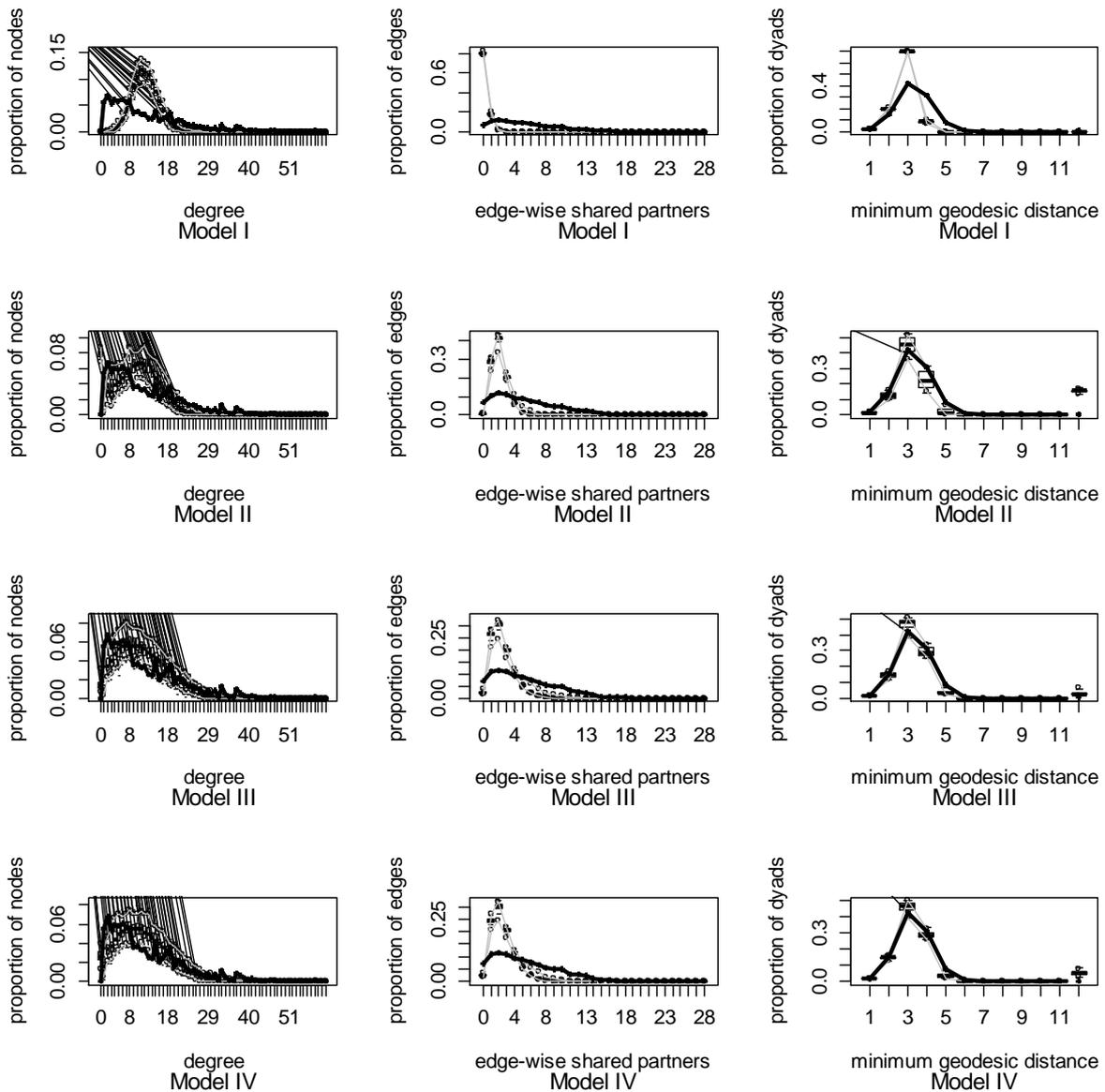
GUE/NGL - GUE/NGL				1.298 (.093)	<.001
Greens - Greens				0.504 (.076)	<.001
ALDE - ALDE				0.866 (.056)	<.001
EPP - EPP				0.098 (.040)	.014
ECR - ECR				0.105 (.095)	.268
S&D - GUE/NGL				-0.960 (.134)	<.001
S&D - Greens				-0.924 (.085)	<.001
S&D - ALDE				-0.690 (.075)	<.001
S&D - EPP				-1.005 (.069)	<.001
S&D - ECR				-1.147 (.160)	<.001
GUE/NGL - Greens				-0.540 (.126)	<.001
GUE/NGL - ALDE				-0.528 (.167)	.002
GUE/NGL - EPP				-1.038 (.170)	<.001
GUE/NGL - ECR				-0.811 (.333)	.015
Greens - ALDE				-0.426 (.099)	<.001
Greens - EPP				-1.103 (.117)	<.001
Greens - ECR				-0.971 (.277)	<.001
ALDE - EPP				-0.608 (.061)	<.001
ALDE - ECR				-0.758 (.126)	<.001
EPP - ECR				-0.671 (.073)	<.001
Goodness of fit	LL = -19653.52, df=1 AIC= 39309, BIC= 39319	LL = -15205.04, df=4 AIC= 30418, BIC= 30459	LL = -11502.96, df=17 AIC= 23040, BIC= 23214	LL = -11239.09, df=34 AIC= 22546, BIC= 22895	

<sup>a</sup> ERG-models; co-sponsored amendments for more than one draft report = tie. MCMC sample size is 10.000 with a burn-in of 100.000. These numbers are doubled for Model IV.

<sup>b</sup> The nodal and dyadic controls are not included in this model, since their limited effect size led to a non-converging model.

<sup>c</sup> Due to limitations in computational power not all covariates could be included in Model IV simultaneously. Tests with alternative model specifications showed that EU position and gender were not significant, therefore these were not included in the final Model IV.

Figure 4.1 Goodness-of-fit diagnostic plots<sup>d</sup>



<sup>d</sup> The black line represents the observed network statistics, while the box-plots show the distribution across 10.000 simulated networks.

Substantially, Model III shows that for recurring co-sponsor relationships (co-sponsoring an amendment for at least two different dossiers), being affiliated with the same EP Party Group (*H1a*) increases the chances of tie formation between two MEPs. The consistent, significant, negative coefficients for the different cross-party combinations in Model IV again demonstrate that within-party ties (*H1a*) are more likely to occur than cross-party ties (*H1b*). Nevertheless, Model IV highlights differences in the strength of within-party effects across the Party Groups. Compared to a dyad consisting of two S&D MEPs, the chances of forming a tie are equal for ECR-ECR dyads (non-significant effect), while the chances of forming a tie are

higher for the other Party Groups (significant positive effects).<sup>49</sup> The coefficients are particularly large for the GUE/NGL indicating that MEPs of this smaller and perhaps ideologically less diverse Party Group are particularly likely to form a within-party co-sponsorship bond (*H1a*). One could argue that this is due to shared ideological preferences, but the relationship holds even when measures for ideological distance are included in the model. While this contrasts with the findings of Louwse and Otjes (2015) in the Dutch context, the positive coefficient for within-party co-sponsorship does fit with the picture of powerful Party Groups seeking to control the pre-plenary phase (e.g. Whitaker, 2001).<sup>50</sup>

Nevertheless, the size of the effect of Party Group homophily in Model III (0.953;  $p < 0.001$ ) is smaller than the effect of representing the same Member State (*H2*) (1.459;  $p < 0.001$ ;  $W = 16.68$  with a critical value of 1.96). This difference in effect size lends more support to Hypothesis 2, which stated that because of the prominence of a national conflict line and because the electoral constituency is situated at the (sub-)national level, MEPs are expected to work across partisan and along national lines to serve their voters and ensure their re-election. Even when including all possible combinations of Party Groups (Model IV), this effect of representing the same Member State remains present.

Hypothesis 3 posited that committee members are more likely to use their informational advantage to cooperate with fellow committee members than to form a co-sponsorship connection with substitutes or non-members. The negative results for the different levels of shared committee membership highlight that those MEPs with shared involvement on the level of member-substitute are less likely to form a recurring co-sponsorship tie, compared with MEPs who share membership of at least one committee during one half of the term. MEPs who share substitute status are even less likely to form a tie and MEPs without shared committee membership are – as expected – the least likely to form a strong co-sponsorship relation. The effect size of having no shared committee involvement is also larger than the effect of representing the same Member State and the same Party Group. This corresponds with the results of Louwse and Otjes (2015) obtained for the Netherlands, who assert that shared expertise is almost a prerequisite for co-sponsorship between MPs.

The control variables that were included in Model III indicate that – as could be expected – not serving the entire term of the 7th legislature slightly decreases the baseline chance of an MEP to establish a co-sponsor tie and that higher educated MEPs are more likely to form recurring co-sponsorship relations. More EP seniority appears to slightly decrease the chance an MEP will co-sponsor amendments. This corroborates findings by Van Geffen (2016), who established that senior MEPs tend to amend fewer reports than junior MEPs. One explanation for this phenomenon could be that senior MEPs amend and co-sponsor less due to being

<sup>49</sup> While the coefficient of EPP-EPP is significantly larger than the reference category of S&D-S&D, the effect is not significantly different from the ECR-ECR combination (Wald statistic is 0.07 with a critical value of 1.96). All other within-party effects are significantly different from each other.

<sup>50</sup> One could argue that national party affiliation should be included in the analysis and that the rationale of Louwse and Otjes (2015) would especially apply to that party bond. Including this term in the model had no statistically significant effect. This supports their findings, but this could also be due to the small size of the national party delegations.

assigned other, time-consuming tasks like being rapporteur (e.g. Hurka et al., 2015; van Geffen, 2016: 1027). Having the same gender and the difference in position on European integration between MEPs proved not to have a significant impact. While, as could be expected, the larger the difference between two MEPs on the economic left-right scale or the GAL-TAN scale, the lower the probability of tie formation. These effects are of limited size and thus do not have a large impact on the probability of the formation of a recurring co-sponsorship relation.

#### 4.4.2 Ideological proximity or extreme compromises?

Both the informational theory and the empirical observations of Louwse and Otjes (2015) predicted that cross-party co-sponsorship would occur. While Table 4.1 points out that within-party co-sponsorship is more likely than cross-party co-sponsorship, Model IV indicates that some cross-party combinations are more likely to form co-sponsorship relations than others. Wald statistics showing whether the coefficients are significantly different from each other are available in Appendix 4B.

Hypothesis 4 posited that dyads with ideologically adjacent parties have a higher chance of forming a tie than dyads with ideologically more distant parties. For S&D, this leads to the expectation that their MEPs are most likely to co-sponsor with Greens/EFA or ALDE MEPs, since they are placed near each other on the left-right scale (Hix and Høyland, 2013: 180). However, Model IV demonstrates that the most likely cross-party co-sponsorship for S&D MEPs is with ALDE or GUE/NGL MEPs.<sup>51</sup> Compared with S&D-ALDE, the other Party Groups, except GUE/NGL, are significantly less likely to form a co-sponsorship relation with an S&D MEP. This manifests that for S&D, ideological proximity does not have a consistent effect (*H4*). The results show that the EPP is just as likely to co-sponsor with ALDE or the ECR. Less likely co-sponsorship parties are S&D, Greens/EFA, and GUE/NGL. This is in line with the expectations based on ideological adjacency and supports Hypothesis 4.

The smaller likelihood of co-sponsorship between S&D-EPP indicates that the 'Grand Coalition' seems not prominently present in the co-sponsorship of amendments, though this party combination was often a winning coalition in RCVs (Hix and Høyland, 2013). However, this does corroborate previous findings indicating that the ideologically clashing 'Grand Coalition' was mostly formed when an oversized majority was necessary or when a united front towards other EU institutions was advantageous (Hix and Høyland, 2013; Kreppel and Hix, 2003). Since neither of these prerequisites is present in the setting of committee amendments, this lack of a 'grand' S&D-EPP coalition is not that surprising.

For GUE/NGL, I expected that co-sponsorship is most likely to occur with Greens/EFA. Model IV points out that a tie with Greens/EFA is indeed likely, but not more likely than a tie with ALDE or ECR MEPs. Yet, co-sponsorship between GUE/NGL and S&D or EPP is less likely to occur. Focusing on the ECR shows that – as expected – an ECR-ALDE tie or an ECR-EPP tie is more likely than ECR-S&D tie. However, a GUE/NGL or Greens/EFA tie with the ECR is just as

<sup>51</sup> The coefficients of S&D-ALDE and S&D-GUE/NGL are not significantly different from each other:  $W=1.91$  with a critical value of 1.96.

likely to occur as an ECR-EPP tie ( $W=0.41$  and  $W=1.07$ ), which I did not expect based on *H4*. An alternative explanation could be that cross-party co-sponsorship between the smaller Party Groups, despite their ideological distance, is also more likely to occur to send a strong signal to the 'Grand Coalition'.

ALDE seems to hold an essential middle position, with non-significant differences between the coefficients for co-sponsorship with GUE/NGL, Greens/EFA, S&D, and the EPP. Only tie formation with the ECR is less likely (compared with Greens/EFA,  $W=2.21$ ). The link of ALDE with the EPP and S&D could have been expected because of the pivotal role of ALDE in the 'Super Grand Coalition' and the 'right coalition' with EPP and ECR (Hix and Høyland, 2013), but the connection to the Greens/EFA is somewhat more surprising. A possible explanation for the ALDE-Greens/EFA relation could be the multidimensional nature of 'conflicts' in the EP (e.g. Hix and Høyland, 2013; Otjes and van der Veer, 2016). On some dimensions, like the civil-liberties dimension, these two EP Party Groups have been placed fairly closely together (Hix and Høyland, 2013: 180). Overall, Model IV does not provide consistent support for Hypothesis 4 on ideologically proximate cross-party co-sponsorship, which indicates that other explanations for co-sponsorship, like national affiliation, shared committee membership, and forming a united front towards the 'Grand Coalition' have more explanatory value.

#### **4.5 Discussion and conclusion**

In this article, I argued that analyzing co-sponsoring behavior amongst MEPs in committee phase sheds more light on pre-vote coalition formation in the EP and that connecting empirically established knowledge on the EP to more general theories of legislative organization can provide a more theoretically grounded account of MEP behavior. This research supports the statement that tabling committee amendments is perceived as an important tool by MEPs (Hurka, 2013: 274; Whitaker, 2011: 8): during the five years of the 7th legislature over 50,000 co-sponsored committee amendments were tabled alongside the over 150,000 single sponsored amendments. This large number of co-sponsored amendments also demonstrates that – regardless of whether the MEPs wanted to give a signal to the plenary, the party group, or constituents – pre-voting coalitions were formed, supporting earlier findings by Finke (2012).

When looking at the establishment of a recurring co-sponsorship tie (a threshold of tabling co-sponsored amendments related to at least two different legislative dossiers), I found that the effect of representing the same Member State is larger than the effect of being affiliated to the same EP Party Group. This confirms previous observations regarding the importance of the national dimension (e.g. Kreppel, 2002b: 217; Neuhold and Settembri, 2007: 165; Scully, 2005) and fits with the distributive theory of legislative organization, which assumes legislators to be constituency focused. Nevertheless, within-party co-sponsorship is more common than cross-party co-sponsorship, confirming the role of Party Groups as put forward by the partisan theory. However, patterns of party cohesion are less strong in the setting of EP committee amendments than in voting in the plenary. This indicates that studying other

legislative activities of MEPs could help shed more light on the dynamics and use of strategies in the EP.

The effect of having shared expertise by serving on the same EP committee as a member or substitute turned out to be stronger than the national and party affiliations, while this is not always taken into account when explaining MEPs' attitudes or behavior (e.g. Scully et al., 2012). This result on the importance of shared committee membership is in line with the study of Louwerse and Otjes (2015) and the expectations derived from the informational theory of legislative organization (Krehbiel, 1992).

Furthermore, the analysis did not provide consistent support for the expectation that cross-party co-sponsorship is more likely to take place with ideologically adjacent parties. For ALDE and the EPP, ideological adjacency had a positive effect on the likelihood of cross-party co-sponsorship, but results were mixed for the other party groups. The first explanation for the unexpected results for dyads with the smaller EP Party Groups is that the size of the Party Groups may play a role as well, with the smaller, ideologically more extreme groups working together to form a front towards the 'Super Grand Coalition'. A second explanation for these less-straightforward results is the complex multi-dimensionality of conflicts in the EP, which means that an ideological ally on one dimension might not be the likely co-sponsorship partner in a differently structured conflict. Nevertheless, the results highlight that the important, central role of ALDE in voting coalitions in the 7th legislature of the EP (Hix and Høyland, 2013), was also found in pre-voting coalitions (Finke, 2012).

One explanation for the result that all three theories of legislative organization contribute to quite some extent in explaining the shape of recurring patterns of co-sponsorship could be found in the level of aggregation used in this study. I analyzed all co-sponsored committee amendments simultaneously, regardless of the specific EP committee in which they were tabled. However, Hix and Høyland (2013: 179) argued that there is growing evidence that the coalitions in the EP are not universal across policy fields. This could mean that underneath the results presented in this article, there might be other forces at work. Future research may focus on the possibility that the informational and partisan theories of legislative organization will have more explanatory power in some policy fields, while the distributive theory of legislative organization might explain more in other policy fields.

Another reason for the relevance of all three theories of legislative organization could be the challenge of translating the theories of legislative organization from the US Congress context to the context of the EP. Firstly, one could question whether the incentives for legislative organization can be transformed into incentives for tabling amendments in cooperation with other parliamentarians. Secondly, the European context differs from the US context in terms of committee power, strength of the electoral connection, re-selection incentives, and party discipline (Raymond and Holt, 2014). Nevertheless, while being aware of these differences, distilling the useful elements from these established theoretical models might still help to continue to move beyond the uniqueness of the EU.

Finally, this study could not take all possible explanations into account. It focused on formal relations between MEPs, like formal affiliation with the same Party Group and

committee. However, it has previously been argued and shown that weak ties or informal relationships between MEPs formed in Intergroups play a role in the EP as well (Ringe et al., 2013). Furthermore, Marshall (2010) highlighted that interest groups are influential in committee phase. Shared links with interest groups could serve as an even more informal network than Intergroups. Future research could expand in this direction.

## *Chapter 5*

### **Different EP committees, different logics for co-sponsorship?**

*Chapter based on paper currently under review*

#### **Abstract**

Co-sponsorship of amendments is an important tool of Members of European Parliament to influence legislation, send signals to constituents and build coalitions. This paper draws upon Congressional theories of legislative organization to derive rationales shaping co-sponsorship coalitions in the European setting: do coalitions rather follow national lines, party lines, informational specialization or government-opposition dynamics? Furthermore, a cross-committee analysis is performed to assess to what extent these explanations vary depending on the characteristics of the committees. Co-sponsorship patterns related to 1536 dossiers from the 7<sup>th</sup> legislature of the EP are analyzed in a two-step model using Exponential Random Graph Models (ERGM) and Generalized Linear Modelling (GLM). The results show that the rationales for co-sponsorship of amendments have different levels of explanatory power across committees. However, the variation cannot be explained by the kind of externalities produced by the committee or the relative power of the committee.

## 5.1 Introduction

Co-sponsoring committee amendments is a popular activity among Members of European Parliament (MEPs) with over 50.000 co-sponsored amendments in the 7<sup>th</sup> legislature. Tabling amendments in the committee phase of the European Parliament (EP) is an important tool of MEPs, since a committee report usually informs the substantive position of the plenary on the dossier (Farrell and Héritier, 2004: 1196). The literature suggests that legislators form co-sponsorship coalitions to increase the chances of success of the amendment or provide a signal to other actors, like the plenary, the European parliamentary group (EPG), and constituents (e.g. Finke, 2012; Jensen and Winzen, 2012; Koger, 2003: 241; Micozzi, 2014: 1190). However, less is known about with whom legislators are more likely to cooperate and to what degree this varies across policy fields.

The EP is commonly characterized as a parliament with high party unity in roll-call votes (e.g. Hix and Noury, 2009; Yordanova and Mühlböck, 2015), and with a *de facto* government-opposition dynamic consisting of the (Super) Grand Coalition versus the smaller EPGs (Hix and Høyland, 2013). However, the high degree of party cohesion contradicts with the relatively lower degree of party discipline in the EP (Kreppel, 2002b: 10). As a result, we may see cohesive EPGs in the plenary, but can expect other coalitions of MEPs in committee phase. Moreover, a recent study by Roger et al. (2017: 17) into the Two-Pack legislation has indicated that Grand Coalition EPGs initially stressed their differences in the committee phase before compromising into the Grand Coalition. Therefore, studying the coalitions MEPs form in pre-plenary stage and analyzing how the different committee contexts come into play can help shed more light on how the EP functions.

Simultaneously, this research aims to move beyond the uniqueness of the EP. First, this is done by tapping into the theories of legislative organization that were developed in the context of the US Congress. Second, I draw upon the strategic motivations of electoral representatives that Strøm (1990, 1997, 2012) identified. Therefore, in this paper vote-seeking, office-seeking, and policy-seeking motivations of legislators are connected to theories of legislative organization. Legislators who prioritize vote-seeking are expected to focus on the same constituents, which will be linked to the distributive theory. The partisan theory is connected to office-seeking legislators, who want to show party loyalty in order to achieve their goal. Furthermore, policy-seeking legislators are expected to use their shared accumulated expertise, which will be associated with the informational theory of legislative organization.

Studying the Environment, Public Health and Food Safety committee (ENVI), Jensen and Winzen (2012) indeed found that party affiliation and expertise matter in the formation of co-sponsorships. However, while Louwerse and Otjes (2015) found that in the Dutch parliament shared specialization increases the chances of co-sponsorship, Jensen and Winzen (2012) observed a negative effect in the ENVI-committee. These inconsistent findings might be due to differences between the cases they studied. In addition, Hix and Høyland (2013: 179) report a growing support for the fact that coalitions in the EP differ across policy fields. Therefore, a

cross-committee analysis can help to shed more light on how policy fields differ and to what extent explanations of co-sponsorship are equivalent across EP committees.

Although all standing committees of the EP are set up in the same way, there are noteworthy differences in the content and the importance of the proposals that they address. In some literature, EP committees have been classified based on the kind of externalities they produce (Cox and McCubbins, 2007: 179–186; Whitaker, 2005): uniform (benefitting all electoral constituencies evenly), targeted (affecting specific electoral constituencies or homogeneous organized interests) or having mixed externalities. These externalities may create incentives to behave more or less like vote-seeking and office-seeking legislators. However, EP committees have also been classified according to the amount of power they hold based on the number of co-decision reports and the formal jurisdiction of the committee (Frech, 2016; van Geffen, 2016; Yordanova, 2013: 38–39). Power can create incentives for outsiders with less accumulated knowledge to join in and may affect the degree to which the (Super) Grand Coalition will surface. This leads to the research question: do explanations for co-sponsorship of committee amendments differ across parliamentary committees depending on the kind of externalities produced and the relative power of that committee?

To answer this question, I analyze co-sponsored committee amendments submitted in relation to 1536 dossiers in one of 19 standing committees<sup>52</sup> during the 7<sup>th</sup> legislature. In the empirical analysis a two-step approach is employed. First, Exponential Random Graph Models (ERGM) are used to statistically assess the impact of the characteristics of MEPs on the establishment of co-sponsorship between two MEPs. In the second step, I analyze the estimated probabilities from the ERGM using a generalized linear model (GLM) to assess to what extent committee level characteristics can account for the variance across committees. The results indicate that the expected complementary character of rationales for co-sponsorship holds despite variation in setting, albeit that there is considerable variation between committees in the balance between the different explanations for co-sponsorship. However, the differences seem to be more intricate than just being related to the relative power of the committee or the kind of externalities produced by the committee.

The paper proceeds as follows: in the first half of the theoretical section four complementary rationales for co-sponsorship are introduced. The second half of the theoretical section outlines how the characteristics of the committees are expected to influence the relative explanatory power of the rationales for co-sponsorship. After an elaboration of the data and methods, the results of both steps of the analysis are presented. In the final section, the implications of the findings regarding motivations of legislators, the classifications of EP committees and the (Super) Grand Coalition in committee phase are explicated.

<sup>52</sup> The Petitions committee was excluded due to a low number of co-sponsoring MEPs (20). This can be explained by the jurisdiction of the committee: dealing with citizen's petitions, citizen hearings and relations with the European Ombudsman.

## 5.2 General explanations for co-sponsorship of amendments

Establishing coalitions and cooperation between legislators in a parliament are common processes that enable decision making and division of labor (Finke, 2012: 489). One form of coalition formation in the European Parliament are the voting coalitions (e.g. Hix and Noury, 2009; Høyland, 2010). However, voting is only the final stage of coalition building within the EP (Finke, 2012: 488). Indeed, before a report reaches the plenary it is determined to which committee(s) a dossier is sent, which MEPs serve in which committee(s), who the responsible rapporteur will be and which committee amendments will be accepted. In this way, pre-vote coalitions shape the proposal that is voted upon in the plenary (Finke, 2012). A direct way in which MEPs can influence the proposal is therefore via committee amendments, which they not only submit alone, but also via co-sponsorship.

Two approaches can be used when studying co-sponsorship networks. First, the literature on coalition formation points out three motivations for cooperation: vote-seeking, office-seeking, and policy-seeking (e.g. Finke, 2012; Strøm, 1990). Policy-seeking parties aim at a majority for their preferred policy (or a policy that is close to that), while office-seeking parties join a coalition to gain powerful positions. Although vote-seeking is less easy to connect to coalescing (Strøm, 1990), one can expect that serving the constituency will be rewarded by voters and therefore joining a coalition based on shared constituency interests can be regarded as vote-seeking. The most studied forms of coalition formation are the governing coalitions in parliamentary systems and legislative coalitions in presidential systems (Finke, 2012: 489). Nevertheless, Finke (2012) showed that these theories can also be applied to the proposal-stage coalitions that are formed in the EP. Using the theories of legislative organization that were developed in the setting of the US Congress, the motivations of political parties for joining a coalition are translated to the level of the individual legislators co-sponsoring amendments.

Second, three theories of legislative organization<sup>53</sup> (the distributive theory, the informational theory and the partisan theory) have been developed to explain the formation of parliamentary committees in the US Congress (Cox and McCubbins, 2007 [1993]; Krehbiel, 1992; Shepsle and Weingast, 1987). Over time, their applicability has been expanded to the composition, function and functioning of committees and to other parliaments than the US Congress (e.g. Fujimura, 2012; Raymond and Holt, 2014; Yordanova, 2013). However, letting the Congressional theories travel to other settings is the subject of an ongoing debate

<sup>53</sup> A fourth theory – the bicameral-rivalry theory – has surfaced over the last two decades (Groseclose and King, 2001; Martin, 2014). This theory looks at the role of committees in the process of two chambers competing over influence on the final policy. The bicameral-rivalry posits that committee members are driven by power and money (Groseclose and King, 2001) and will act whenever they can receive more payments from lobbyists or power compared to the other chamber (Martin, 2014: 359–360). Based on this theory we can expect MEPs to amend if lobby activity is high on a dossier. Additionally, if are likely to join the trilogue-team – the informal negotiations of the responsible EP committee with the Council and the European Commission – where they have the power to bargain, they will be more likely to join the debate and amend. This theory thus tells us more about if they will co-sponsor than about with whom they will do that, therefore it is not taken into account.

(Fernandes, 2016; Martin, 2014; Raymond and Holt, 2017). Nevertheless, both Martin (2014), and Hix and Høyland (2014) indicate that of all non-US parliaments, the EP provides the best opportunity to apply the theories of legislative organization because of the similarities between US Congress and the EP. I thus assume that I can draw upon these theories to study the parliamentary committees of the EP.

The three theories of legislative organization all assume that legislators act rationally within the given institutional structures, but the theories differ in the motivations that they put central (Yordanova, 2009: 261–262). To be clear, all three theories address vote-seeking, office-seeking, and policy-seeking motivations, but one is put more central than the others. In addition, I put forward that legislators, whenever possible, prefer to combine these motivations. As a result, the first four hypotheses outlined below are complementary rather than competing. Yet, their explanatory power is expected to vary depending on the committee context (hypotheses 5-8).

Vote seeking motivations for cooperation can be linked to the distributive theory of legislative organization which argues that legislators will try their best to let their home constituency benefit from their actions (Hurka, 2013; Weingast and Marshall, 1988: 145). As a result they will pursue 'particularistic policies' and will attempt to become a member of the committee their voters care most about (Kaeding, 2004: 357; Yordanova, 2009: 262). Since MEPs can only receive votes from electoral constituencies in their Member State, vote-seeking MEPs are expected to work together with MEPs representing voters from the same Member State. Furthermore, if the Member State would be central in their reasoning, they share this goal 'regardless of their partisan and general ideological background' (Hurka, 2013: 277). Therefore the first hypothesis is:

*H1: Representing voters from the same Member State will increase the probability of co-sponsorship.*

However, this expectation requires a strong electoral connection, which is questionable in the case of the EP (Yordanova, 2009). European elections are notoriously regarded second-order national elections (Reif and Schmitt, 1980; Yordanova, 2009: 262), which makes voters less likely to pay attention to the behavior of MEPs. Therefore, the incentives to portray vote seeking behavior in the formation of co-sponsorships might not be that strongly present.

The lower importance of the national dimension is also highlighted in studies of roll-call votes in the EP plenary (Hix and Noury, 2009). What these studies do show, however, is that voting cohesion is exceptionally high in the EP. In other words, MEPs tend to vote loyal to their European parliamentary group (EPG). In addition, the EPGs play an important role in report allocation (Hausemer, 2006), and can guide committees via group coordinators (Whitaker, 2011). This ties in nicely with office-seeking motivations for co-sponsorship, which can be derived from the partisan theory of legislative organization. Cox and McCubbins (2007: 153–210) posit that legislators use party loyalty as a way to get appointed to important committees and be awarded important tasks within committees. Parties use loyal legislators to shape the outcomes of the committee phase. Anticipating this party behavior, the office-seeking committee members are expected to be loyal to the party line. Establishing the party line and

showing loyalty to the party can be done by establishing co-sponsorships within the parliamentary group. This leads to the second hypothesis:

*H2: Being affiliated to the same EP Parliamentary Group will increase the probability of co-sponsorship.*

In addition, in most parliaments a government-opposition dynamic is present. As a result government-legislators must not only show loyalty to their party, but also to their coalition partners (Louwerse and Otjes, 2015: 481). On the other hand, opposition legislators are not constrained by the line of the governing coalition and have more freedom in the choice of co-sponsorship partners. At the same time, the opposition might be more inclined to co-sponsor with each other in order to shape the agenda while not formally in a leadership position (Koger, 2003). While this formal government-opposition dynamic is absent in the European Parliament, a *de facto* coalition has emerged in the form of the 'Grand Coalition' between the EPP (European People's Party) and S&D (Progressive Alliance of Socialists and Democrats) (Hix and Høyland, 2013). This coalition is sometimes even increased in size to the 'Super Grand Coalition' with ALDE (Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe). Therefore, the opposition-government dynamics could be structuring co-sponsorship in the EP as well. However, since the ideological distance between the EPGs of the 'opposition' is rather large, the 'government' dynamics are expected to be stronger than the 'opposition' dynamics.

*H3: The probability of co-sponsorship will be higher for a pair of MEPs belonging to the Super Grand Coalition than for a pair of MEPs that both do not belong to the Super Grand Coalition, but this probability will be the lowest for a pair of one MEP belonging to the Super Grand Coalition and one MEP that does not belong to the Super Grand Coalition.*

Policy-seeking motivations for co-sponsorship can be linked to the informational theory of legislative organization (Kaeding, 2004: 356–358; Krehbiel, 1992) which argues that legislators will act as 'agents of production' in a committee by striving for qualitatively good policy (Shepsle and Weingast, 1987). Compared to the plenary setting, more information on the effects and details of a policy measure can be accumulated and processed in the committee setting. The specialization of legislators in a committee serves as a reinforcing mechanism that will make these specialized legislators more likely to end up on the same committee again. Previous research on committee assignment in the EP and the division of power within EP committees showed support for this effect (Bowler and Farrell, 1995; Whitaker, 2001: 81).

If information and specialization play such an important role in the functioning of parliamentary committees, then there is an incentive for legislators to work together with other highly informed legislators. Louwerse and Otjes (2015) found exactly this effect in the Dutch parliament: they observed that shared specialization works as a catalyst for cooperation and is almost a *conditio sine qua non* for co-sponsorship. Furthermore, shared involvement in an EP committee also creates a small environment in which a group of MEPs regularly meets. This creates opportunities to establish cooperation and provides them with regular clues of

the substantial position of their fellow MEPs. Therefore, shared committee membership as a proxy for having established informal contacts might explain co-sponsorship.

Furthermore, tabling committee amendments is not restricted to committee members: substitutes and non-members may also table amendments in committee phase (European Parliament, 2009b). In addition, some policy dossiers are related to the jurisdiction of multiple committees. Therefore, MEPs who share membership of one committee, can be motivated to table an amendment in another committee. It is expected that the higher the degree of shared involvement in committees, the more accumulated relevant expertise the MEPs have and the denser the shared environment is. A previous case study of the ENVI-committee (Jensen and Winzen, 2012: 144) already showed that this effect might be present, since they observed that specialization - measured via committee membership - increases activity in the negotiations, and that committee members are not that attractive as co-sponsorship partners for non-members, since they are less likely to promote the policy positions of less specialized actors. Therefore the fourth hypothesis is:

*H4: A higher degree of shared involvement in a committee will increase the probability of co-sponsorship.*

### **5.3 Different committees, different expectations**

Since coalitions are expected to differ across policy fields (Hix and Høyland, 2013), it is possible that the effects of representing the same Member State, EP Parliamentary Group affiliation, government-opposition dynamics, and involvement in committees vary across EP committees. The literature suggests multiple ways in which parliamentary committees differ, such as in power, in jurisdiction, and in size. Yordanova (2013: 38–39) proposes a categorization of EP committees using two dimensions: type of policy output and power.

On the first dimension Yordanova distinguishes 'information-driven committees with regulatory output', 'interest-driven committees with distributive output' and a rest category of 'mixed committees'. The information-driven committees produce policies that have broader implications than a specific constituency, while the output of interest-driven committees affects 'specific constituencies or organized homogeneous interests outside the EP' (Yordanova, 2013: 38). This dimension is presented as an adapted version of the classification of committees based on the type of externalities they produce (Whitaker (2005) based on Cox and McCubbins (2007 [1993])) and Lowi (1964). According to Whitaker some committees produce targeted externalities (i.e. 'policies that affect only certain groups of voters' (Whitaker, 2005: 8)) like the cohesion policy in the Committee on Regional Development (REGI). While others produce uniform externalities (i.e. policies affecting all voters) - like the European Citizens' Initiative in the Committee on Constitutional Affairs (AFCO). These definitions of categories are so akin, that one can conclude that, both classifications aim to capture the same distinction between committees: the type of externalities produced. The classification of committees can be seen in Table 5.2.

In committees with uniform externalities, where output affects all voters in the same way, parties will be concerned with presenting a united front to uphold the 'collective reputation

with the electorate' (Cox and McCubbins, 2007: 178). Therefore it is expected that being affiliated to the same EPG increases the likelihood of cooperation more in committees with uniform externalities. Yet, parties are expected to be less concerned with presenting a united front in targeting committees (Cox and McCubbins, 2007: 178). The policies developed in these targeting committees are likely to affect one part of the geographical constituencies in the EU more than others. While this is a more limited interpretation of 'targeted externalities' than Yordanova used, it is more in line with Lowi (1964: 690–692).<sup>54</sup> Therefore these committees can be expected to reflect the national dimension more than other committees. This leads to the fifth and sixth hypothesis:

*H5: The effect of representing the same Member State on the probability of co-sponsorship will be stronger for committees with targeted externalities compared to committees with uniform externalities.*

*H6: The effect of being affiliated to the same EP Parliamentary Group on the probability of co-sponsorship will be stronger in committees with uniform externalities compared to committees with targeted externalities.*

The second dimension Yordanova distinguished is based on the differences in power between committees. Previously, the committee transfers of MEPs served as a proxy for legislative power (McElroy, 2001: 12). This is based on well-established practice in the context of the U.S. Congress (e.g. Groseclose and Stewart, 1998; Munger, 1988). However, as McElroy already points out, the large role of the Conference of Presidents in EP committee assignments and the constant expansion of powers of the EP hinder the use of transfer measures as a proxy for power in the context of the EP.

More recently, a power measure based on the amount of co-decision reports and influence over the EU budget was used to classify EP committees (Frech, 2016; van Geffen, 2016; Yordanova, 2009: 256). The assumption behind this classification is that MEPs have indicated that they want to serve on committees with legislative and budgetary impact (Yordanova, 2013: 39). Additionally, more budgetary impact can be made in committees involved in the financial management of the EU than in committees that advise on softer issues (Yordanova, 2013: 38). Therefore committees with more co-decision activity and budgetary responsibilities are regarded to be more powerful.

While the type of externalities produced is not expected to affect the government-opposition dynamics, the relative power of committees is expected to play a role. The 'Super Grand Coalition' dynamics have been shown to be particularly present when the EP needed an oversized majority to form a united front towards other EU institutions (e.g. Hix and Høyland, 2013). In dossiers that have a larger legislative impact - which are dealt with in the more powerful committees – this process of forming a united front is expected to be more present than in less powerful committees. This leads to the expectation:

<sup>54</sup> Lowi (1964: 690–692) posited that distributive policies benefit or disadvantage not all affected by a policy in a similar way, which means that the effect of the policy would be different for parts within a group with organized homogeneous interests.

*H7: The effect of both belonging to the Super Grand Coalition and both not belonging to the Super Grand Coalition on the probability of co-sponsorship will be stronger for powerful committees compared to less powerful committees.*

Furthermore, MEPs might pay more attention to a piece of legislation that is tabled in a powerful committee. One can expect that powerful committees might attract more attention from non-committee members than relatively weak committees. These outsiders may do this to internally advance to committees that deal with more dossiers under the Ordinary Legislative Procedure (Daniel, 2015: 97) or have more budgetary impact. In order to make credible proposals, they may want to co-sponsor with more specialized committee members. Therefore the effect of specialization on co-sponsorship (H4) might be weaker in those powerful committees. This leads to the hypothesis:

*H8: The effect of a higher degree of shared involvement in a committee on the probability of co-sponsorship will be weaker for powerful committees compared to less powerful committees.*

#### **5.4 Data**

These hypotheses are tested using data extracted from the online documents with committee amendments tabled during the 7<sup>th</sup> legislature of the EP.<sup>55</sup> Since this research focuses on explaining why two MEPs establish cooperative ties through cosponsoring amendments, single-sponsored amendments are excluded from the analysis. With a sample limited to co-sponsored amendments in standing committees, a subset of 51.043 amendments has been taken into account (24 per cent of the total amount of amendments). The smallest EP Parliamentary Groups (EFD and GUE/NGL), the non-inscrits, and MEPs that never (co-)sponsored have been excluded from the analysis. Since Exponential Random Graph Models (ERGMs) are sensitive to low cell counts and MEPs from EFD and GUE/NGL co-sponsored to a very limited extent, these small EP Parliamentary Groups dominated the analysis disproportionately, and led to distorted research outcomes with respect to the larger Parliamentary Groups. Therefore, these EPGs are excluded. Additionally, the non-inscrits do not function as an EPG and therefore the expectations on within group cooperation would not apply.

Information on EPG affiliation and Member State were extracted from the list of MEPs on the EP website (European Parliament, n.d.). Committee membership and substitute positions are established at the start and halfway the term of the legislature. However, MEPs entering the EP as replacement of leaving MEPs are assigned to committees at other moments.

<sup>55</sup> Both the 'Register of Documents' and the 'Archives' of the committees have been used. Missing information led to the exclusion of 50 amendments. Due to limitations in the MATLAB script maximum 12 co-sponsors could be detected, while Hurka (2013) showed that co-sponsoring coalitions can be larger. However, this affected only 0.1 per cent of the amendments.

Therefore the September 2009 edition and the February editions of the monthly published list of EP members were used.<sup>56</sup>

Based on the three statuses an MEP can have in a committee five degrees of shared involvement are distinguished: both being involved in the committee in which the amendment is tabled ('specific committee'); sharing membership of another committee; serving as substitute and member of another committee; both serving as substitutes of another committee and having no shared involvement in any committee. Sharing membership of another committee was used as the reference category. Since there are 20 standing committees, each set of two MEPs has 20 committees in which a co-sponsorship tie can be established.<sup>57</sup> To capture this in one variable the 'highest' level of shared involvement within the dyad was used. This means that if MEP X and Y are both a member of committee A, but X is a member in committee B, while Y is not involved at all, they will be coded as having a member-member relation.<sup>58</sup>

Since not all MEPs served the entire legislature, which reduces the probability for establishing co-sponsorship, controls for leaving the EP before the end of term and entering the EP later than July 2009 were included (derived from European Parliament, n.d.). As higher educated and more senior MEPs may have a broader expertise and may thus be more attractive as a co-sponsorship partner, controls for the educational level of MEPs<sup>59</sup> and seniority in the EP were derived from Daniel (2015). Gender, derived from the same dataset, is also included as a control as female legislators have been found to work together more frequently than their male colleagues (Lausberg, 2016). To account for ideological diversity within EPGs, the 2014 Chapel Hill expert survey provided controls for policy position of the national party on European integration, the GAL-TAN dimension (Green-Alternative-Libertarian vs. Traditional-Authoritarian-Nationalist) and the economic left-right scale (Bakker, Edwards, et al., 2015; Bakker, Vries, et al., 2015).<sup>60</sup> Summary statistics regarding these variables can be found in Table 5.1.

<sup>56</sup> The documents are: P7\_LMEP(2009)10-26\_XL; P7\_LMEP(2010)03-15\_XL; P7\_LMEP(2011)03-14\_XL; P7\_LMEP(2012)03-19\_XL; P7\_LMEP(2013)03-20\_XL; P7\_LMEP(2014)03-17\_XL.

<sup>57</sup> Even though PETI is excluded from the analysis; membership of PETI is included when determining the level of shared membership.

<sup>58</sup> The sixth level of two MEPs who are both not involved in any committee was empirically absent in this study.

<sup>59</sup> The educational level of 64 MEPs was corrected upwards based on their CVs and personal pages on the EP website.

<sup>60</sup> In cases of missing data in the 2014 version, the 2010 version of the survey was used. For national parties missing in both datasets the position of the pre-existing 'mother'-party was used. For the 24 MEPs for which this was impossible the mean value of their EPG was taken as an estimation of their position.

Table 5.1 Summary statistics of co-sponsoring dyads across committees

	Level	Overall percentage	Lowest percentage in a committee	Highest percentage in a committee	
Same Member State	Dyadic	27%	15%	57%	
Same EP Parliamentary Group	Dyadic	65%	31%	72%	
Grand coalition					
Ref: yes – yes	Dyadic	80%	58%	89%	
Yes – no	Dyadic	15%	8%	35%	
No – no	Dyadic	5%	1%	12%	
Committee membership:					
Member-Member	Dyadic	34%	15%	48%	
Member-Substitute	Dyadic	32%	17%	40%	
Substitute-Substitute	Dyadic	7%	5%	12%	
No shared membership	Dyadic	28%	10%	63%	
Specific committee	Dyadic	56%	14%	83%	
Same Gender	Dyadic	53%	49%	60%	
Leaving EP before 07/2014	Nodal	7%	4%	13%	
Entering EP later than 07/2009	Nodal	8%	3%	13%	
		<b>Overall mean</b>	<b>Lowest mean in a committee</b>	<b>Highest mean in a committee</b>	<b>Range</b>
Difference in EU-position (1-7)	Dyadic	0.79	0.58	1.09	0 – 5.67
Difference in economic position (0-10)	Dyadic	1.58	1.31	2.26	0 – 8.37
Difference in GAL-TAN position (0-10)	Dyadic	1.41	1.14	2.18	0 – 9.17
Level of education	Nodal	3.34	3.17	3.55	0 - 4
Seniority	Nodal	1.69	1.30	1.93	1 - 7

### 5.5 Two-step analysis of co-sponsorship

In order to take both the complex dependencies in the networks of the committees and cross-committee differences into account a two-step approach is used (e.g. Lewis and Linzer, 2005; Snijders, 2016: 32). First, the impact of (shared) characteristics of MEPs on the occurrence of co-sponsorships is assessed per committee using Exponential Random Graph Modelling (ERGM). In order to assess the impact of committee characteristics on co-sponsoring, the resulting coefficients are used to estimate predicted probabilities of co-sponsoring per pair of MEPs per committee. In the second step, these predicted probabilities were analyzed using generalized linear modelling (GLM) with a logit link and clustered standard errors at the committee level.

One could argue that it would be better to combine the two steps in one model. However, ERGM for multiplex networks - which would make it possible to analyze the 19 committees simultaneously – have not yet been developed and more traditional multilevel modelling techniques are not equipped to take the endogenous network structures into account. The literature on Estimated Dependent Variable models (EDV) (see Achen, 2005) argues that subsequent analyses with correction in the second step for heteroscedasticity from the first step can serve as the solution for this problem. This correction can be done using clustered standard errors (Lewis and Linzer, 2005).

The ERGM was conducted in R using the Statnet package (Handcock et al., 2008, 2016). This kind of models statistically assess whether and to what extent characteristics of actors (so-called nodal attributes) are associated with the presence of a 'tie' between the two actors (in this case: having co-sponsored an amendment). Simultaneously, this technique takes the existence of endogenous network patterns into account, like the fact that a relation between actor A and B, combined with a relation between A and C increases the chance of finding a relation between B and C (Robins et al., 2012: 386–387).

Representing the same Member State, affiliation to the same EPG, and having the same gender are added in the models as so-called 'homophily' effects, meaning that the two MEPs have the same value on the variable or not. Belonging to the Super Grand Coalition is included as a mixing pattern: all possible combinations are included with 'both belonging to the Super Grand Coalition' as reference category. Leaving the EP, entering the EP late, the level of education, and seniority in the EP are included to control to what extent those characteristics increase or decrease the baseline chance of an individual MEP to co-sponsor (i.e. as nodal covariates). The measures for the level of shared committee membership and difference in policy position are included as so-called 'edge covariates', because the value on this variable captures a characteristic of the joint relation between two MEPs. The same model is presented for all committees to facilitate comparison.

The estimation of the coefficients is conducted via a large number of simulations using Markov chain Monte Carlo (MCMC) parameter estimation.<sup>61</sup> All models contain the endogenous network statistics 'edges' (similar to an intercept) and 'GWDegree' (geometrically weighted degree, dampening the effect of the few most connected MEPs). In all models  $\alpha$  was fixed at 0.5 (Goodreau, 2007: 237). Lusher et al. (2012: 58–76) argued to include more endogenous statistics, but models in which GWESP or GWDSP were added failed to converge.

The predicted probabilities used in the second step of the analysis are calculated using this formula (see Harris (2014: 54–60)):

$$P(Y_{ij} = 1 | n \text{ actors}, Y_{ij}^c) = \text{logistic} \left( \frac{\theta \text{edges} + \theta_1 \delta_1 + \dots + \theta_k \delta_k + \theta \text{GWDegree} * ((1 - e^{-\alpha})^i + (1 - e^{-\alpha})^j)}{(1 - e^{-\alpha})^i + (1 - e^{-\alpha})^j} \right) \quad (1)$$

In this formula  $\theta$  refers to the coefficient and  $\delta$  to the change statistic (equivalent to the unit increase) for that particular variable. The nodal covariates and mixing pattern are included for both MEPs. The  $i$  indicates the 'degree' of MEP X in the dyad (i.e. to how many other MEPs MEP X is connected in the network), while  $j$  denotes this degree for MEP Y. Concise versions of the results of the ERGM analyses are presented in Table 5.2. To increase readability, non-significant effects and the control variables are not shown here, yet the full table is available in Appendix 5A.

<sup>61</sup> MCMC sample size is 10.000 with a burn-in of 100.000.

Table 5.2 Explaining co-sponsorship among MEPs per committee<sup>a</sup>

Power	Uniform									Mixed						Targeted			
	BUDG high	IMCO high	JURI high	TRAN high	AFCO low	CONT low	AFET low	DEVE low	INTA low	ENVI high	ECON high	ITRE high	CULT high	LIBE high	FEMM low	EMPL high	REGI low	AGRI low	PECH low
Edges	-1.99	-3.94	-3.00	-4.65	-4.58	-1.80	-3.24	-4.87	-	-3.04	-4.32	-4.05	-6.15	-2.54	-1.96	-2.86	-3.72	-4.23	-1.56
GWDegree ( $\alpha=0.5$ )	-1.89	-1.36	-	-1.63	-1.18	-0.95	-3.00	-	-	-1.35	-1.57	-1.28	-1.06	-2.87	-0.89	-1.87	-2.03	-1.28	-2.64
Same MS	1.38	2.19	1.33	3.24	2.79	1.32	1.30	1.65	1.58	2.20	2.19	1.69	2.00	1.08	1.63	2.15	2.79	2.61	0.89
Same EPG	1.14	1.78	1.58	1.43	1.43	1.79	1.40	1.99	1.93	1.01	1.51	1.44	2.21	1.73	2.73	1.97	1.22	1.83	0.69
Super Grand Coalition <i>Ref: yes-yes</i>																			
Yes- no	0.84	-	-	-0.36	-	0.83	0.22	-	0.82	-0.45	-	-	-	0.88	2.00	1.06	-0.44	-0.55	0.90
No - no	0.63	-	-	0.81	0.71	2.85	0.62	2.82	-0.45	-0.61	-	-	-	1.48	0.87	1.44	2.08	-	1.56
Committee membership <i>Ref: Members</i>																			
Mem-sub	-0.84	-0.43	-1.22	-0.63	-0.76	-0.57	-0.48	-	-0.82	-0.73	-0.50	-0.84	-	-0.40	-	-0.70	-	-0.74	-0.90
Sub-sub	-1.61	-0.76	-1.18	-0.97	-0.93	-0.94	-0.98	-0.83	-1.09	-1.40	-0.55	-1.59	-1.22	-0.65	-0.88	-1.08	-0.76	-1.18	-1.35
No shared	-1.79	-0.97	-1.56	-0.59	-0.77	-1.33	-0.66	-	-1.48	-1.28	-0.56	-1.30	-0.82	-0.86	-1.01	-1.30	-	-0.74	-1.47
Specific Committee	0.52	1.96	1.07	1.99	0.75	-	0.95	1.03	1.67	2.09	1.56	1.96	1.20	0.91	-	0.72	1.35	2.45	0.87
Controls																			
MEPs	144	158	69	183	144	67	234	59	69	227	151	182	94	170	69	146	140	192	66
Edge-count	531	805	138	889	509	156	1285	169	261	1709	781	1208	268	952	164	577	593	1281	357
Density	0.05	0.07	0.06	0.05	0.05	0.07	0.05	0.10	0.11	0.07	0.07	0.07	0.06	0.07	0.07	0.06	0.06	0.07	0.17

<sup>a</sup> only statistically significant effects are presented. The control variables and non-significant effects are included in Appendix 5A.

## 5.6 Results of the two-step analysis

The main findings of the analysis presented in Table 5.2 are that the different rationales for co-sponsorship have explanatory power for most committees, indicating that they are complementary rather than competing. Secondly, the results indicate that their relative explanatory power differs across committees and that the direction of the effect of Super Grand Coalition is not consistent across committees. Before discussing these results in more detail, another interesting finding is that the maximum number of MEPs (234 for the AFET-committee) that co-sponsored within one committee is much lower than the total amount of MEPs in the EP. This means that most MEPs only cooperate in a few policy fields and that some EP committees have a very low amount of MEPs forming co-sponsorships.

The quite consistent negative coefficient for edges shows that the baseline chance of co-sponsorship between two MEPs is lower than 50 per cent, which is normal for empirical networks (Harris, 2014: 46). Table 5.2 also includes a row containing the AIC-values (Akaike Information Criterion) of both the presented model and the null model (a Bernoulli-model with only 'edges' as predictor). While the difference between these two values gives an indication for the increased model fit, these should be interpreted cautiously because the assumption on the independence of observations is not met (Harris, 2014: 61–63).

GWDegree is significant for all committees except the Legal Affairs (JURI), Development (DEVE), and International Trade (INTA) committees. This means that no correction for highly-connected MEPs was necessary in these committees. The effect of representing the same Member State (H1) and being affiliated to the same EP Parliamentary Group (H2) is significant and positive in all models. This indicates that the two explanations derived from the partisan and distributive theories of legislative organization are indeed complementary to each other. Nevertheless, for quite some committees the coefficient of Member State is significantly larger than the effect of being affiliated to the same EPG, while this is the other way around for the Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs (LIBE) and Women's Rights and Gender Equality committees (FEMM). This shows that although the effects are positive across the line, there are differences between committees. To what extent these differences are related to the type of externalities produced by the committee or the relative power of the committee is assessed in the second step below.

Hypothesis 3 posited that MEPs would be more likely to co-sponsor within their respective 'coalition' as a mimic of government-opposition dynamics. Here, significant, negative coefficients were expected for cross-coalition co-sponsorship (Super Grand Coalition: yes-no in Table 5.2). This turned out to only be the case for four out of 19 committees. Nevertheless, for a small majority of the committees a positive effect of both not being affiliated to the 'Super Grand Coalition' was found. This indicates that despite the relative absence of 'government-dynamics', an opposition dynamic is found in a part of the committees. In five high power committees no effect was found, indicating that in co-sponsorship of amendments in Internal Market and Consumer Protection (IMCO), Legal Affairs (JURI), Economic and Monetary Affairs (ECON), Industry, Research and Energy (ITRE), and Culture and Education

(CULT) no clear 'Super Grand Coalition' dynamics could be identified. All together, these results do not show clear support for Hypothesis 3.

The results for the level of shared involvement in committees (H4) are somewhat more straightforward. Compared to both being a member of at least one committee (which serves as the reference category) the expected negative effect is found for not sharing any involvement for most committees except for the Development (DEVE) and Regional Development committees (REGI). In both cases it could well be that only a very limited amount of non-members is present in the network, reducing the likelihood of finding a significant effect.

With regards to shared involvement in the specific committee compared to not both being involved in that committee, again the significance of the effect is not consistent across committees. No effect was found for the Budgetary Control (CONT) and Women's Rights and Gender Equality committees (FEMM). The significant effects in the other committees are consistently positive, which indicates that shared involvement of that specific committee increases the chances of tie formation, which supports Hypothesis 4. Overall, for most committees Member State, EPG, and committee involvement combined do seem to capture tie formation quite well. These results show that the expectations based on the theories of legislative organization turn out to be complementary. While this is in line with the argument made above, this contradicts with previous studies of the EU (Kaeding, 2004; Yordanova, 2009).

To test the expectations on differences between committees (H5-8) the predicted probabilities derived from the ERGM were analyzed using a GLM (Table 5.3). Model 1 only includes control variables: the same predictors that were entered in the ERGMs. In Model 2 the effects for committee characteristics (power and type of externalities) are included. None of these effects is significant, which shows that regardless of the type of externalities produced, MEPs are equiprobable to co-sponsor amendments. Furthermore, the absence of a main effect of the level of power of a committee means that dyads in powerful committees do not have a baseline higher chance of forming ties.

Model 3 shows that none of the cross-level interaction effects are significant.<sup>62</sup> To illustrate this, Figure 5.1 shows predicted probability plots for all interaction effects. In all four graphs the lines do not diverge significantly from each other. This indicates that the effect of representing the same Member State (H5) or being affiliated to the same EPG (H6) does not differ systematically depending on the kind of externalities the committee produces. This also indicates that effect of the 'government-opposition' dynamics (H7) and degree of shared involvement in a committee (H8) does not depend on the degree of power of the EP committee. This last result is in line with observations of Jensen and Winzen (2012), who found that in the 'powerful' ENVI-committee, members were not frequently co-sponsoring with non-members.

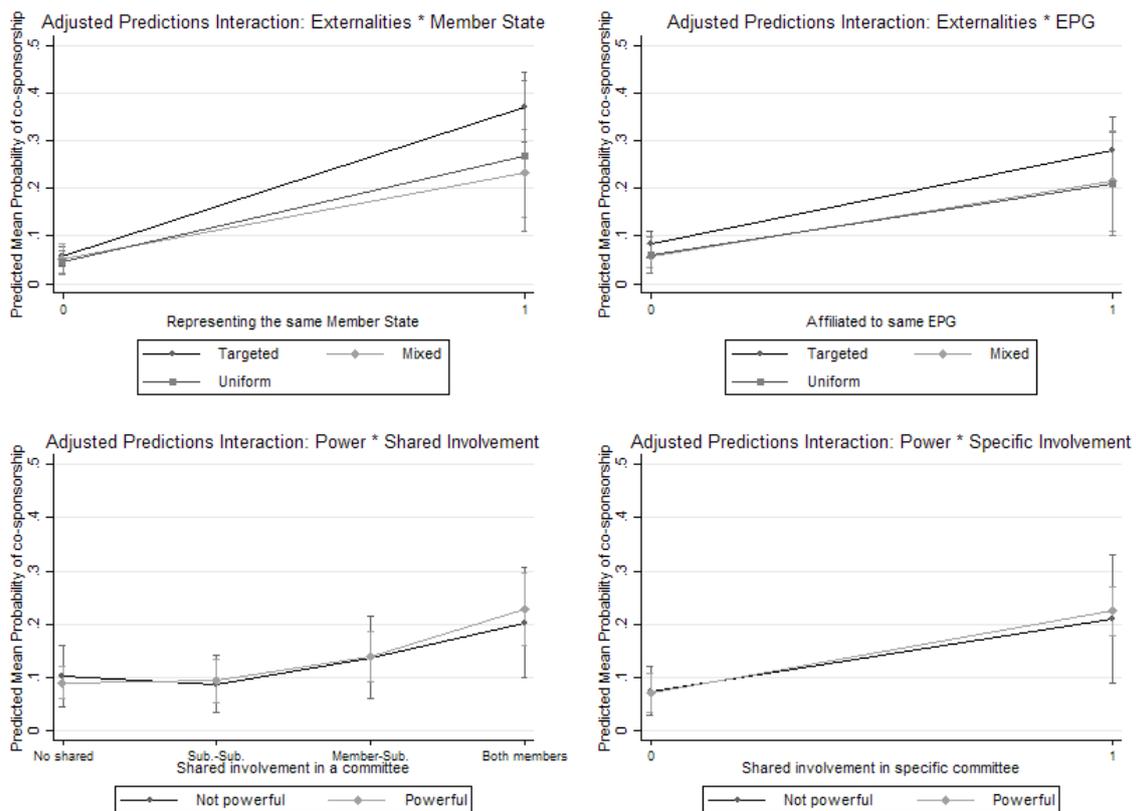
<sup>62</sup> To increase clarity, only the model with all interaction effects is presented here. When the interactions were introduced one by one, the effects were not statistically significant either.

Table 5.3 Binomial logistic regression (GLM) on the predicted probability of tie formation at dyad level<sup>b</sup>

	Model 1			Model 2			Model 3		
	Δ Log Odds	Robust se		Δ Log Odds	Robust se		Δ Log Odds	Robust se	
<b>Dyad level characteristics</b>									
Same Member State	1.973	(0.17)	*	1.979	(0.18)	*	2.066	(0.32)	*
Same EPG	1.446	(0.10)	*	1.452	(0.10)	*	1.415	(0.12)	*
Grand coalition									
<i>Ref: yes-yes</i>									
Yes- no	0.510	(0.19)	*	0.516	(0.19)	*	0.510	(0.20)	*
No - no	0.206	(0.16)		0.212	(0.15)		0.216	(0.15)	
Committee membership ( <i>Member-Member=ref</i> )									
Member-Sub.	-0.548	(0.06)	*	-0.552	(0.05)	*	-0.475	(0.09)	*
Sub.-Sub.	-1.013	(0.10)	*	-1.019	(0.09)	*	-0.976	(0.08)	*
No shared	-0.978	(0.12)	*	-0.979	(0.12)	*	-0.803	(0.17)	*
Specific committee	1.274	(0.19)	*	1.284	(0.18)	*	1.208	(0.32)	*
Degree – MEP 1	0.010	(0.00)	*	0.009	(0.00)	*	0.009	(0.00)	*
Degree – MEP 2	0.009	(0.00)	*	0.009	(0.00)	*	0.008	(0.00)	*
Same gender	-0.011	(0.02)		-0.009	(0.01)		-0.004	(0.02)	
Leaving early - MEP 1	-0.256	(0.10)	*	-0.236	(0.09)	*	-0.234	(0.09)	*
Leaving early - MEP 2	-0.242	(0.09)	*	-0.220	(0.09)	*	-0.217	(0.09)	*
Arriving late - MEP 1	-0.218	(0.08)	*	-0.228	(0.08)	*	-0.235	(0.08)	*
Arriving late - MEP 2	-0.224	(0.08)	*	-0.236	(0.08)	*	-0.240	(0.08)	*
Educational level - MEP 1	0.057	(0.03)	*	0.065	(0.02)	*	0.064	(0.02)	*
Educational level - MEP 2	0.063	(0.02)	*	0.070	(0.02)	*	0.069	(0.02)	*
Seniority - MEP 1	-0.056	(0.02)	*	-0.050	(0.02)	*	-0.048	(0.02)	*
Seniority - MEP 2	-0.058	(0.02)	*	-0.051	(0.02)	*	-0.049	(0.02)	*
Distance EU position	0.023	(0.03)		0.020	(0.03)		0.019	(0.03)	
Distance Economical	-0.101	(0.03)	*	-0.100	(0.03)	*	-0.099	(0.03)	*
Distance GAL-TAN	-0.113	(0.02)	*	-0.113	(0.02)	*	-0.113	(0.02)	*
Type of externalities ( <i>Uniform = ref</i> )									
Mixed				0.124	(0.22)		0.138	(0.26)	
Targeted				0.318	(0.32)		0.230	(0.36)	
Powerful committee				0.012	(0.33)		0.085	(0.43)	
Mixed*EPG							0.220	(0.36)	
Targeted*EPG							0.056	(0.19)	
Mixed*Member State							-0.366	(0.36)	
Targeted*Member State							0.081	(0.15)	
Powerful*Specific com.							0.130	(0.37)	
Powerful*Member-Sub.							-0.129	(0.11)	
Powerful*Sub.-Sub.							-0.076	(0.16)	
Powerful*No shared							-0.289	(0.24)	
Constant	-3.525	(0.27)	*	-3.716	(0.38)	*	-3.745	(0.41)	*
Deviance	5644			5507			5332		
AIC	56914			56777			56603		
N(dyads)	200,848			200,848			200,848		

<sup>b</sup> with clustered standard errors for committee setting (19 clusters). EPG = EP Party Group.

Figure 5.1 Predicted probabilities of co-sponsoring



## 5.7 Discussion & conclusion

Starting from the idea that different settings would offer different incentives for cooperation between two MEPs when tabling amendments and from the observation by Hix and Høyland (2013: 179) that coalitions differ across policy fields, this paper compared co-sponsorship patterns in the EP standing committees. Expectations on the effect of shared characteristics of two MEPs were derived using the goals of legislators (vote seeking, office seeking, and policy seeking) in connection with the theories of legislative organization developed for the US Congress. The results indicate that the expected effects on the probability of two MEPs co-sponsoring an amendment of being electorally linked to the same Member State, being affiliated to the same EP Parliamentary Group, and having shared involvement in the EP committees are present. Furthermore, the consistency of the direction of the effects across EP committees shows that effects are quite robust even when only a subset of amendments is analyzed.

These results show that the expectations based on the three theories of legislative organization turn out to be complementary in the case of co-sponsored committee amendments in the EP. This means that all three theories contribute to explaining co-sponsorship, while this was not expected based on previous studies in the context of the EU (e.g. Kaeding, 2004; Yordanova, 2009). Two explanations for this finding can be offered: firstly, the theories were developed to explain committee formation and not necessarily the legislative behavior of the MEPs within and across the committees. Yet, by distilling the

incentives for behavior embedded in theories of legislative organization, we can apply theories developed in other settings than the EU to explain behavior of elected representatives and thus move beyond the uniqueness of the European Union. By retesting theories aware of the particularities of a parliament, we can move towards more generalizable theories. And secondly, legislators are not single-minded (Strøm, 1997: 171–172), especially not in the context of the EP. MEPs face many insecurities in pursuing their goals: they are up for re-election in 'second-order elections', the policy outcomes are subject to inter-institutional bargaining without a formal governing coalition, and they are elected on national party lists, while they pursue office via EPGs. As a result, pursuing votes, policy and office for MEPs may not be a question of 'either-or', but rather a balancing act of pursuing multiple of these goals simultaneously in the hope to achieve anything at all.

The analysis of differences in effect size of Member State, EPG and committee involvement using the classification of EP committees displayed no significant effects. This indicates that this pre-existing classification of the EP committees (e.g. Whitaker, 2005; Yordanova, 2009) does not help to shed more light on why there are differences between committees with regards to with whom MEPs form co-sponsorship ties. One possible explanation for not finding the expected effects could be misclassification of the committees. For example: during the 7<sup>th</sup> legislature an important dossier in the Transport and Tourism committee (TRAN) was the development of the 'trans-European transport network'. This specific dossier touched upon important national and local interests as MEPs attempted to add local ports and roads to the 'transport network'. Therefore, the TRAN committee might have been producing more targeted externalities in this time frame, compared to previous legislatures.

This would not only mean that the TRAN committee was placed in the wrong category, but also that classification of EP committees based on their formal jurisdiction and budgetary output might not be the appropriate way to capture the kind of externalities produced. This coincides by a comment made by McElroy (2006: 27) that is hard to make the distinction between committees producing uniform or targeted externalities. This leads to the suggestion that measuring the type of externalities produced at the dossier level might provide better explanations for differences in rationales for co-sponsorship across policy fields.

The classification of committees using the power measure was applied to capture the importance of a committee. It was expected that the coalition dynamics would be stronger in more powerful committees and that more powerful committees would draw in more non-experts. However, the amount of co-decision reports and influence over the EU budget in the post-Lisbon EP might not capture the importance of a dossier to the EPGs and MEPs to a sufficient extent. Alternatively, other measures of salience – like level of contestation over a dossier - might have more explanatory value. Furthermore, it might be more appropriate to assess this at the dossier level, since variation in salience across dossiers within one committee might be large.

In addition, the analysis presented here revealed interesting patterns with regards to government-opposition dynamics. Despite the lack of a formal governing coalition in the EP,

a *de facto* coalition has emerged over the years consisting of the EPP and S&D, sometimes enlarged to the 'Super Grand Coalition' with ALDE. While in other parliaments a 'government-opposition' dynamic explicitly can be expected (Koger, 2003; Louwse and Otjes, 2015), this expectation is less straightforward in the EP. Despite the coalition patterns observed in the plenary, there were no 'Super Grand Coalition'-effects in half of the powerful committees, while in almost all other powerful committees MEPs from non-coalition EPGs were more likely to co-sponsor with each other. However, for the Environment, Public Health and Food Safety committee (ENVI) these effects run the other way around. Differences in the degree of 'government-opposition' patterns were thus found. Yet, the aggregated analysis showed that these differences could not be consistently explained by the degree of power of the committee or the type of externalities produced. This leads to the conclusion that no systematic government-opposition dynamics could be found in committee setting.

These results corroborate the findings by Roger et al. (2017), who showed that in the first part of the committee phase the EPP and S&D polarized, before forming the backbone of a 'grander coalition' towards the final vote. The implications of this finding are, firstly, that by looking at RCVs in the plenary the cohesion of the (Super) Grand Coalition may be overestimated. By the time MEPs get to the voting stage, most battles have been fought and the vote mostly reflects the final compromise. Secondly the patterns of co-sponsorship found at committee level are good news for the representative character of the EP: during the committee stage MEPs form coalitions based on EPG, Member State and informational advantage to produce 'better' legislation and represent the voters' interests.



## *Chapter 6*

### **The distribution of foci of representation among MEPs**

*Looking beyond dichotomies*

*Chapter based on paper currently under review*

#### **Abstract**

The multi-level nature of the European Union and the second-order character of European Parliament (EP) elections provide Members of European Parliament (MEPs) with complex incentives for representative behavior. This paper tries to understand the representative character of the EP better, by connecting research on the EP with the literature on representation. Combining the old concept of ‘focus of representation’ with findings on role switching, this study introduces the notion of a distribution of foci. The distribution of foci captures how representatives combine a broad range of foci. Legislative amendments of 200 MEPs from the 7<sup>th</sup> legislature are used to show that mapping the distribution of foci encompasses the empirical reality better than a classification of MEPs based on their dominant focus. Additionally, the results show that MEPs consistently put administrative and idealistic foci more central than geographical foci, which sheds new light on representative behavior in the European Parliament.

## 6.1 Introduction

Who or what is represented by Members of the European Parliament (MEPs) and the representative character of the European polity as a whole is a continuous source of contention among academics (e.g. Follesdal and Hix, 2006; Majone, 1998; Moravcsik, 2002), journalists and even politicians themselves (Brems, 2013). MEPs operate in a multi-level political context, where (second-order) elections, highly technical legislative proposals, lobby groups, and an ever changing institutional setting shape opportunities and norms regarding representation.

On top of that, surveys of MEPs showed that they consider it more important to represent their Member State than to represent 'all people in Europe' (Farrell et al., 2006, own calculations based on 2013). In contrast, article 10 of the Treaty on European Union (European Union, 2010) states that Member States are represented by the European Council and the Council of the EU, while the EP represents the citizens of the Union. Therefore, there is a tension between who or what the Treaty on European Union states an MEP should represent and what MEPs think they should represent.

Previous studies have focused on exactly this tension and posed the question whether MEPs have remained national representatives, or have become Europeans in attitudes and party affiliation (e.g. Mühlböck, 2012; Scully et al., 2012). However, studying the focus of representation using behavioral data instead of perceptual data may provide a novel view on the state of representation in the EP. MEPs can be expected to be more sophisticated in their representative behavior than a simple national versus European dichotomy. Hence, the main research question is: Who or what do MEPs represent in their legislative behavior?

Of course, we already know some key aspects of how representation works in the European Parliament (EP), more in particular on rapporteurship allocation mechanisms (Kaeding, 2005; Mamadouh and Raunio, 2003; Yordanova, 2013), the influence of different procedures on the power of the EP (e.g. Tsebelis et al., 2001), and to what extent committee composition reflects the composition of the plenary (Whitaker, 2011; Yordanova, 2013). Nonetheless, very little research has been conducted on individual-level legislative behavior, like tabling amendments by MEPs. This is remarkable as the legislative powers of the EP have grown considerably over the past two decades. Combining research into legislative behavior in the EP and the study of representation can generate valuable insights for both fields of study.

Beyond the narrow scope of the EP, political scientists have developed three distinct streams of research dealing with legislators and their representative tasks (Katz, 1997): (1) research on how representatives take up their role (e.g. Blomgren and Rozenberg, 2012; Fenno, 1978; Searing, 1994; Wahlke et al., 1962); (2) research on the descriptive (under)representation of societal segments (e.g. Mansbridge, 1999; Ruedin, 2012); and (3) research on how well behavior and attitudes of representatives correspond with the preferences of their constituency (i.e. issue congruence) (Arnold and Sapir, 2013; Schmitt and Thomassen, 2000).

However, these streams of research cannot be seen completely independent from each other. The 'focus of representation', one of the two central concepts in the study of representational roles, is implicitly also very important in both other literatures. The focus of representation, as defined by Wahlke et al. (1962), refers to which interests are represented. This focus is not limited to geographical units (i.e. the constituency), but can also be a party, a pressure group or an 'administrative organization'. The study of the descriptive representation of societal segments is closely linked to the focus of representation, because these societal segments (like women or ethnic minorities) can be considered a focus of representation. Furthermore, in the study of issue congruence inherent assumptions are made about what the focus of representation is (often assumed to be either the geographical constituency or the party base) in order to compare behavior of representatives with the wishes of the represented (e.g. Walczak and Van der Brug, 2013).

Previous research into the focus of representation does not cover the full complexity of possibilities. Studies on representative roles taught us that one legislator does not necessarily adopt just one role orientation, but can hold varying views on what being a representative entails. Moreover, the foci of representation are not mutually exclusive (Wahlke et al., 1962: 270). This implies that one legislator can combine multiple foci by representing, for instance, both the party and a specific societal segment. This idea that multiple foci can occur simultaneously was echoed, and slightly adapted by Andeweg (1997) and Costa and Kerrouche (2009). They argued that the focus of representation might differ for one representative across time or policy issues, coined 'role switching' by Andeweg (1997: 121). Remarkably, scholars have rarely taken this into account in their analysis, while their measurement of foci would allow this (see for example: Brack et al., 2012; Damgaard, 1997; De Winter, 1997; Hagger and Wing, 1979). As a result, the common practice is to characterize representatives using just one focus per representative. Hence, the intricacy of 'switching' deserves more fine-grained attention in order to move beyond such crude dichotomies.

The first part of the paper elaborates more on the 'focus of representation' and its place in the literature on representative roles. Besides that, this section outlines how the combination of 'focus of representation' and the idea of 'role switching' leads to a new concept: the 'distribution of foci of representation'. Data on the focus of representation in legislative amendments of 200 MEPs is subsequently used to (1) describe the 'distribution of foci', (2) demonstrate the relevance of the concept, and (3) substantially answer the question who or what MEPs represent in their legislative behavior. The data shows that the 'distribution of foci' captures the empirical reality better than a classification of MEPs based on the dominant focus. Furthermore, the results indicate that most MEPs have two or three relevant foci and most often have a distribution skewed towards an idealist focus and a focus on administrative interests and norms.

## **6.2 Focus of representation**

The tradition of researching representatives using the concept of 'focus of representation' starts with what Blomgren and Rozenberg (2012) have coined 'the

functionalist tradition'. Wahlke, Eulau, Buchanan and Ferguson (1962: 269) - drawing on Edmund Burke - argued that one can make a distinction between the *focus* and the *style* of a representative when studying the representational role. They also stressed that this distinction should analytically be maintained. In addition, they deliberately kept the representational role separate from the purposive role. The representational role refers to the relationship between the representative and the represented, while the purposive role refers to the attitude, norms, and behaviors of the representative towards office (Wahlke et al., 1962: 245–247).

Within the representational role, the focus of representation refers to which interests are represented. Wahlke et al. did not limit this focus to geographical units, but explicitly added a party, a pressure group and an administrative organization to the possible foci. Style on the other hand refers to the way in which a representative represents these interests: as a free agent “following his own convictions” (a trustee), as a delegate, bound by instructions, or as a ‘politico’, who tries to balance the trustee and the delegate orientation by switching between them or by trying to reconcile them.

In the seventies the ‘interactionist approach’, most notably used by Fenno (1978), became more prominent. Fenno (1978) used ethnographic methods in order to understand what being a representative means and how the relationship between congressmen and the constituency grows via interaction (Searing, 1994: 8). With that, he restricted the focus of representation to the geographical focus. After limited attention for representational roles in the 1980s, Searing (1994) inspired a revival among political scientists. Searing (1994) made the distinction between position roles (the function of the representative in the institutional structure) and preference roles (allowing representatives to use their own perception to shape the role interpretation). One of the categories of preference roles is the ‘constituency member’, for whom the focus on their geographical constituency determines the role. This shows that Searing has eliminated the clear distinction between focus and representational role that Wahlke et al. (1962) sketched. With that he did not solve the conceptual confusion he observed (Searing, 1994: 6–9), but rather contributed to it.

Following Searing’s example, common practice is to draw up a typology of roles for every parliament, including for the European Parliament (Navarro, 2012). In constructing the typologies, scholars no longer disentangle the focus of representation, the representative style, and the purposive role. This leads to conceptual confusion and hinders comparative research. Furthermore, some interpret ‘roles’ as how a representative understands the norms he/she should adhere to (e.g. Bale and Taggart, 2006; Farrell et al., 2006; Scully et al., 2012; Searing, 1994). In role theory, perception and behavior are intentionally put together in the definition of roles (Biddle, 1986: 69–70). The problem of separating the two and still calling it a study of roles, was already identified in an overview of general role theory in the 1980s (Biddle, 1986), but apparently remains hard to solve.

Nevertheless, for analytical clarity, I agree with Strøm (1997) and Jenny and Müller (2012) to separate the two. I argue that a representative can have a particular *conception* of what the focus of his or her representation is or should be, and that the *actual* focus of

representation – which might differ from the intended focus - is at the same time observable in the representative behavior. The conception of what the focus should be is not irrelevant, as it could be one of the possible factors that can explain the behavioral focus. This implies that I do not study representational roles, but just one constituent element of this role: the behavioral focus.

In addition, the most recent definition of the representational role, provided by Blomgren and Rozenberg, ends with the semi-sentence: “MPs’ own conception of their job overall, and their vision of their voters in particular” (Blomgren and Rozenberg, 2012: 9). What can the ‘vision of their voters’ other be than the representative’s vision of the interests they should represent? Except, voters are only one of the possible foci Wahlke et al. (1962) put forward. One possible focus has thus fifty years later become part of the definition of ‘representational roles’, while other foci than the electoral constituency get limited attention.

### **6.3 From focus of representation to a distribution of foci**

In their seminal work on the legislative system, Wahlke et al. (1962: 270–271) approached the ‘focus of representation’ more broadly and nuanced than later studies using this concept. The ‘focus’ has become almost synonymous with ‘geographical focus’ (constituency vs. nationwide) in the role literature (e.g. Russo<sup>63</sup>, 2011) or ‘party voters’ in the congruence literature (e.g. Walgrave and Lefevere, 2013). However, Wahlke et al. (1962: 270) argued that “foci of representation may be other than geographical interests [...]. The modern representative faces similar choices [...] vis-à-vis other clienteles, notably political parties, pressure groups, and administrative agencies.” Even though quite some studies have taken up a broader conception similar to that of Wahlke et al. (Andeweg, 1997; Davidson, 1969: 124–125; De Winter, 1997; Hagger and Wing, 1979; Kim, 1973; Thomassen and Andeweg, 2004; Wessels, 1999), the focus of representation is still often equated with the geographical level of representation and at most political parties (e.g. Blomgren and Rozenberg, 2012: 223; Brack et al., 2012; Brouard et al., 2013; Chiru and Enyedi, 2015; Converse and Pierce, 1986).

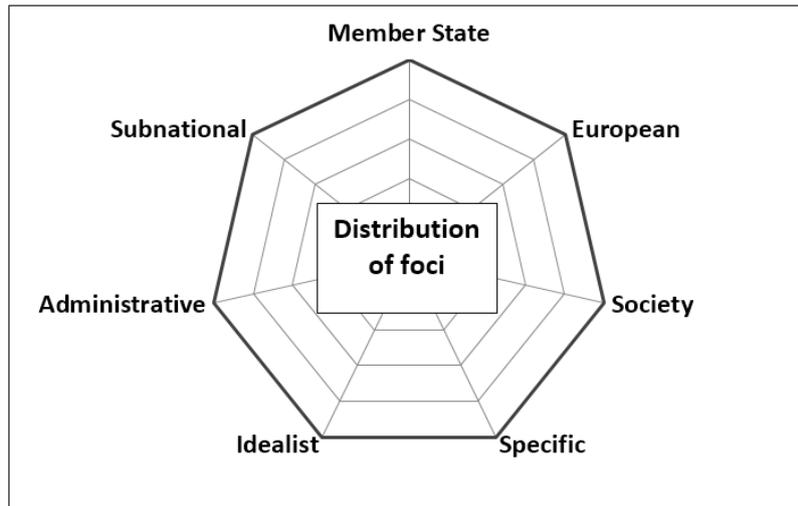
Wahlke et al. (1962: 270–271) also recognized that “different foci of representation [...] may occur simultaneously”. They identified two options for the combination of foci or role-orientations: when interests coincide (1962: 207–271)<sup>64</sup> or depending on the context (1962: 385). The importance of context was also noted by Miller and Stokes (1963: 56), who observed that the style of representation differed between the policy domains of civil rights and social welfare. These observations were echoed by Hagger and Wing (1979: 167), who noticed that the ‘role structure’ of an individual can change over time, Andeweg (1997), who coined this ‘role switching’, and Costa and Kerrouche (2009: 232–233), who observed French

<sup>63</sup> Russo (2011: 290) and Sozzi (2016a: 199–200) even misrepresent Wahlke et al., by stating that “According to the literature on representative roles (Wahlke et al. 1962), parliamentarians can have a local or a nationwide focus of representation.”

<sup>64</sup> This co-occurrence of interests may be non-coincidental: “[...] a pressure group may have such a pervasive influence [...] that, again, the interests of district and pressure group become [identical]” (Wahlke et al., 1962: 270–271)

MPs changing role and struggling with the local and national dimensions of their dual mandate. These insights show us that we should expect a legislature filled with ‘multifocal’ MEPs, i.e. MEPs that combine multiple foci. And that we should expect these foci to shift in dominance depending on the context, like timing in the electoral cycle, formal responsibilities, or issues at stake.

Figure 6.1 Basic radar chart of the distribution of foci



In order to incorporate this multifarious nature into the theoretical framework, the notion of a ‘distribution of foci of representation’ is introduced here. This concept is based on the idea that we can look at the foci of representation as a set from which in every instance of representation a legislator draws one or more foci that are at that moment, under those conditions, for him/her the most appropriate foci. Looking at the aggregate of a series of instances of representation of one legislator would not necessarily result into one focus, but rather a distribution of foci.<sup>65</sup> This distribution of foci is expected to vary across legislators, but also for each legislator between activities and venues (e.g. voting in plenary, amending in various committees, sending out newsletters, and tabling amendments) and between issues at stake. Schematically, this can best be captured in a radar chart, like in Figure 6.1. For example: a legislator might predominantly have a local territorial focus, to a lesser extent an idealist focus, and hardly focus on the European interests; while another legislator might have an outspoken geographical focus on the Member State when economic issues are discussed, and a focus on the global common good when environmental issues are at stake. This would

<sup>65</sup> Hagger and Wing (1979: 192) argue that Wahlke et al. saw components of roles as dimensions instead of as dichotomous or ‘trichotomous’ variables. I do not follow Hagger and Wing’s (1979: 167) practice of separately analysing unidimensional continua, nor do I follow Katz’s (1997) approach of constructing dimensions with opposing ideal points (like CONFED and AGENT), or Wessels’ (1999) strategy of deciding which foci have possible trade-offs between them to capture the focus of representation. Instead, I look at the relative predominance of all foci for each MEP without limiting the possible combinations.

mean that the radar chart for the first legislator will differ substantially from the radar chart of the second legislator.

In conclusion, retracing the development of the literature on representational roles identifies three areas where progress can be made. Firstly, we should analyze the focus of representation, the style of representation, and the purposive role separately. Secondly, we can and should analytically separate attitude towards 'focus' from focus in behavior. Thirdly, we should interpret the 'focus of representation' broader by taking more foci into account and by paying more attention to the findings on 'simultaneous foci' and 'role switching'. Therefore, I propose to move from studying the 'focus of representation' towards studying the 'distribution of foci'. This is especially relevant in the context of representation in the EU, since the supranational level adds extra foci into the mix.

#### **6.4 Measuring the distribution of foci**

In order to capture the distribution of foci in legislative behavior, I concentrate on amendments made in committee phase in the European Parliament (EP). Committee amendments have the potential to be influential as the EP plenary relies heavily on the detailed changes to legislative proposals that come out of the committee phase (Farrell and Héritier, 2004: 1196). In addition, amendments are the main device through which individual MEPs can influence policy outcomes (Tsebelis and Kalandrakis, 1999: 137; Whitaker, 2011: 8). Surprisingly, very few researchers have looked at amending behavior, while this is one of the key activities of MEPs (Hurka, 2013: 274; Whitaker, 2011: 8). Most of the studies on amendments are focused on the extent to which representatives, via amendments, are able to shape legislative outcomes, i.e. on the acceptance rates of different kinds of amendments under several kinds of circumstances (Kasack, 2004; Kreppel, 1999; Russell and Sciara, 2008; Tsebelis et al., 2001; Tsebelis and Kalandrakis, 1999; Yordanova, 2013).

However, amendments can also be used to study the distribution of foci, because every amendment is one instance of representative behavior by one or more identifiable MEPs. This approach has great promise as there are many amendments tabled per legislative period (213,236 amendments in the 7<sup>th</sup> legislature, of which 102,841 on co-decision proposals). Furthermore, 32% of the co-decision amendments are accompanied by extensive justifications explaining the reason for introducing the amendment (see Example 6.1). Furthermore, all MEPs are eligible to make amendments to all legislative proposals in first reading (even when they are not a member of the responsible committee). As a result, studying amendments may give an insight in the representative behavior of all MEPs in a quite unrestrained setting.

The foci of representation referred to in amendments and their accompanying justifications were coded for a total of 3,591 amendments related to 200 different MEPs. These amendments were sampled using a multi-stage sampling procedure consisting of (1) selection of amendments on procedure type (Ordinary Legislative Procedure, OLP/COD), first

reading, not introduced by the rapporteur alone<sup>66</sup>, not introduced on behalf of a EP Party Group or Committee, and accompanied by a justification; (2) random sampling of 200 MEPs from the MEPs that tabled at least 10 amendments that fulfil the criteria of 'step 1', (3) random sampling of a maximum of 20 amendments per MEP. Since not every MEP in the sample has an equal number of amendments that have been coded, and since multiple foci may occur simultaneously, the score for each focus was determined by taking the relative prevalence of that focus for that MEP compared to the total number of references identified for that MEP.<sup>67</sup>

Following Wahlke et al. (1962: 270) the focus of representation is understood broader than the geographical focus of representation. Therefore, besides the subnational, Member State and European geographical level, four extra foci were included. First, the societal focus, which captures references to (groups of) citizens or society in general (without specifying the geographical level of that society).<sup>68</sup> This focus is added, since it captures a focus on the broader public like the 'other-regarding justifications' in the work of Naurin (2007: 52–53). Second, the specific interests focus, which refers to organized interests and groups with specific socio-economic interests (like farmers) (De Winter, 1997: 134).

The third and fourth additional foci are the idealist focus and administrative focus. Pitkin (1967: 156) perceived ideals as a form of interests that are broader than concrete stakes. She introduced the distinction between attached and unattached interests to capture this, arguing that interests can be 'of someone' in its attached form, or can occur in an unattached form. Interests in the unattached form are not directly linked to a group of people that are the ones to be consulted to see whether their wishes fit with the interests defended (like world peace, justice or consistency) (Pitkin, 1967: 158). These unattached interests can also be labelled norms or ideals. The idealist focus thus captures the 'unattached' references to political ideals.

Previous studies have included a party focus instead of an idealist focus in their analysis (e.g. Brack et al., 2012; Converse and Pierce, 1986). However, the exact interpretation of this focus varies across studies. For example, the party focus is interpreted as 'the interests of their party' by Brack et al. (2012: 393), while Kim (1973: 402) defined this focus as "the view of parties". References to interests of parties in amendments are scarce and due to the heterogeneity of the parliamentary groups in the EP, the ideology of these parties is hard to pin down. In addition, the sheer number of national parties in the EP makes it impossible to include the view of the national party of the MEP in the analysis. Therefore, the references to

<sup>66</sup> As these can be compromise amendments.

<sup>67</sup> Initially, not all foci reached acceptable intercoder reliability levels (percent agreement >.80). Iteratively, the codebook was refined and codes were reassessed.

<sup>68</sup> Focussing on a specific societal segment is also included in this category, because it has been central in the study of underrepresentation (e.g. Mansbridge, 1999; Ruedin, 2012). However, due to a limited number of references to a specific segment, this could not be included in the analysis as a separate focus.

ideals are interpreted broader than references to ideals of the own party, and these references are labelled 'idealist' instead of 'party'.

The administrative focus is extended beyond direct interests of administrative agencies in a similar way. Wahlke et al. (1962: 12) write about "executive or administrative officers and agents" that "legislators will, in some sense, be alert to their possible views and wishes". One of their wishes can rationally be 'technically perfect laws', which is the focus of the 'ritualist', who is not so much interested in the "policy content of a bill, but with its technical perfection" (Wahlke et al., 1962: 251). Therefore, besides the references to the administration<sup>69</sup>, references to technical norms<sup>70</sup> are also considered an administrative focus.

Out of all the foci, the administrative focus might be the most controversial to include. Following De Winter (1997), one might argue that technical perfection of legislation is another function of legislators besides representation. Yet, the administrative focus is representational in three ways. First, because it includes the representation of interests of administrative agencies, who are tasked with the implementation of the legislation (Wahlke et al., 1962: 12). Second, because using technical norms to justify amendments represents the technocrats who want expertise to prevail over attached interests to achieve the best policy outcomes (Shapiro, 2005: 343).<sup>71</sup> Finally, because it is a way to represent the interests of the EU polity by contributing to the output legitimacy of the system (Lindgren and Persson, 2010). Nevertheless, as a robustness check the analyses have been replicated without the administrative and idealist foci.

*Example 6.1 Amendment to 2011/0401(COD) (European Parliament, 2012b)*

**Amendment 711**

**Cristina Gutiérrez-Cortines, Pilar del Castillo Vera, Maria Da Graça Carvalho, Alejo Vidal-Quadras**

**Proposal for a regulation**

**Article 22 – paragraph 2 a (new)**

*Text proposed by the Commission*

*Amendment*

**In order to simplify the access to information and to develop an instrument with all the information demanded by the research community and, having regard the need for a transparency, Cordis, as a digital instrument shall be revised and reformed in a more clear and flexible way. The New Cordis shall be finalized before June 2013.**

Or. en

*Justification*

*At the current time CORDIS is one of the most complex and difficult programs to deal with. If we want to make an easier access of society, researchers and companies to information, it is needed to review the program and to extend the information and make an easier access to all the proposals and grants.*

<sup>69</sup> EU agencies, but also other EU institutions and international institutions.

<sup>70</sup> For example: consistency, legality, clarity, efficiency, proportionality, subsidiarity, or feasibility.

<sup>71</sup> Traditionally, technocracy is pitted against democracy (Shapiro, 2005), but paradoxically democratically elected legislators may represent the ideas and interests of technocrats.

Example 6.1 shows one of the coded amendments that was submitted in relation to proposal for a regulation regarding the Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme. In this case, the amendment itself references the ideal of transparency and the demand of the ‘research community’. The justification clarifies that this research community consists of ‘society, researchers and companies’, which is coded as ‘societal interests’ and ‘specific interests’.

Not every MEP refers to all foci. Therefore, I used the formula for the effective number of parties in a party system to find the number of relevant foci per MEP. Since the 1970s the family of formulas for the effective number of parties has been used as a measure of fractionalization of party systems and to identify the number of relevant parties (Laakso and Taagepera, 1979; Taagepera, 1999). Following the same logic, the distribution of foci can be used to calculate the effective number of foci per MEP, i.e. replacing parties with foci and party systems with MEPs. Golosov (2010) showed that a revised version of the famous formula of Laakso and Taagepera (1979) captures a small effective number of parties better. The results below will show that a small number of MEPs is expected to have only one focus. Therefore, the effective number of foci ( $N_f$ ) is calculated using the Golosov-formula (Golosov, 2010: 188):

$$N_f = \sum_1^x \frac{1}{1 + \left(\frac{s_1^2}{s_i}\right) - s_i}$$

where  $x$  is the total number of components taken into account (i.e. seven foci in this case),  $s_1$  is the share of the largest component of the MEP’s distribution of foci and  $s_i$  denotes the share of the  $i$ th component. For example, Georgios Koumoutsakos who, sorted from largest to smallest share, referred more to the idealist (.37), administrative (.3), and Societal (.15) foci, but less to the Subnational (.07), specific (.07), European (.04), and Member State (.00) foci, has an effective number of foci of 3.35:

$$N_f = \frac{1}{1 + \left(\frac{.37^2}{.37}\right) - .37} + \frac{1}{1 + \left(\frac{.37^2}{.3}\right) - .3} + \dots + \frac{1}{1 + \left(\frac{.37^2}{.04}\right) - .01} = 3.35$$

## 6.5 Results

The results of the content coding of amendments on the foci of representation are shown in figures 6.2 and 6.3. I first discuss some revealing descriptive statistics. Figure 6.2 shows clearly that the idealist and administrative focus are more prevalent than the other foci of representation (Wilcoxon signed rank-test,  $z=11.85$ ,  $p=.00$ ).<sup>72</sup> However, neither of the two dominates, as a Wilcoxon signed rank-test shows them to be not significantly different from each other ( $z=1.68$ ,  $p=.09$ ). This means that MEPs tend to rather represent unattached interests than attached interests when amending and justifying their amendments to legislative proposals. This observation goes against results of surveys among MEPs (Farrell et

<sup>72</sup> Wilcoxon signed-rank test assumes that the difference between the compared scores is ordinal. This is not necessarily the case. To check for robustness of this test, a Wilcoxon sign test was also performed, which leads to the same conclusions for all signed-rank tests.

al., 2006). Apparently, at least in this setting, MEPs do not act completely in accordance with their expressed preference.

Besides the clear importance of the administrative and idealist focus, these box plots indicate that there might be an ordering of the remaining five foci. The geographical foci of representation (on the left) are notably less common than the other foci. Especially the share of the focus on the European geographical level is surprisingly small. This finding is at odds with the observed justifications in EP debates. Lord and Tamvaki (2013: 44–45) found that 50% of the justifications in the 6<sup>th</sup> legislature’s plenary debates referred to a European common good, while 14.6% of the references focused on the national good, and 16.2% on the global common good. This indicates that the likelihood of making geographical references by MEPs could be quite dependent on the type of activity, setting or time frame.

Figure 6.3 shows the plotted distributions of foci for all 200 MEPs (in grey). The black line denotes the average distribution of foci. The distances from the center to the line for the different foci provide a similar picture as the boxplots in Figure 6.2. However, the grey lines indicate that there is quite some variation among the MEPs regarding which foci have their priority. The chart also contains some grey lines that have a clear ‘peak’ towards one of the foci (like the spikes pointing at a societal, administrative, and idealist focus). This could indicate that the distribution of foci is not necessary to capture the foci of representation of the MEPs: some MEPs clearly have one dominant focus, while others seem to divide their attention over different foci. The question is: do we really need a more nuanced approach? Or does the majority of MEPs have one dominant focus? And if the distribution of foci does capture reality better, can we observe types of distributions?

Figure 6.2 Boxplots of relative number of references

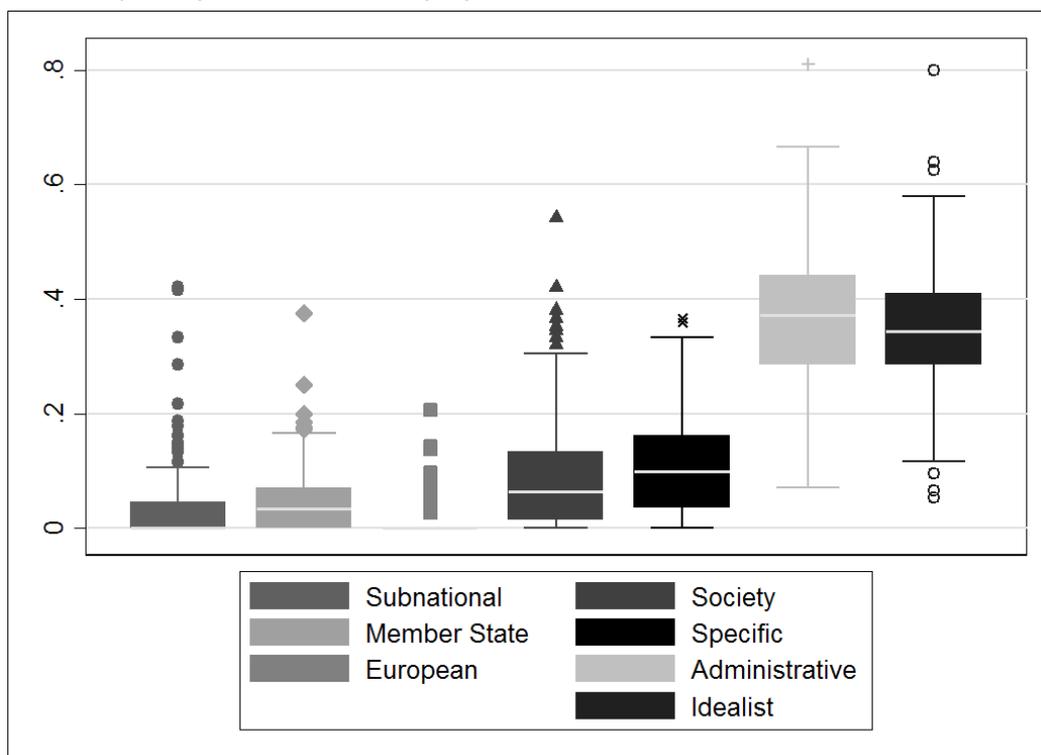
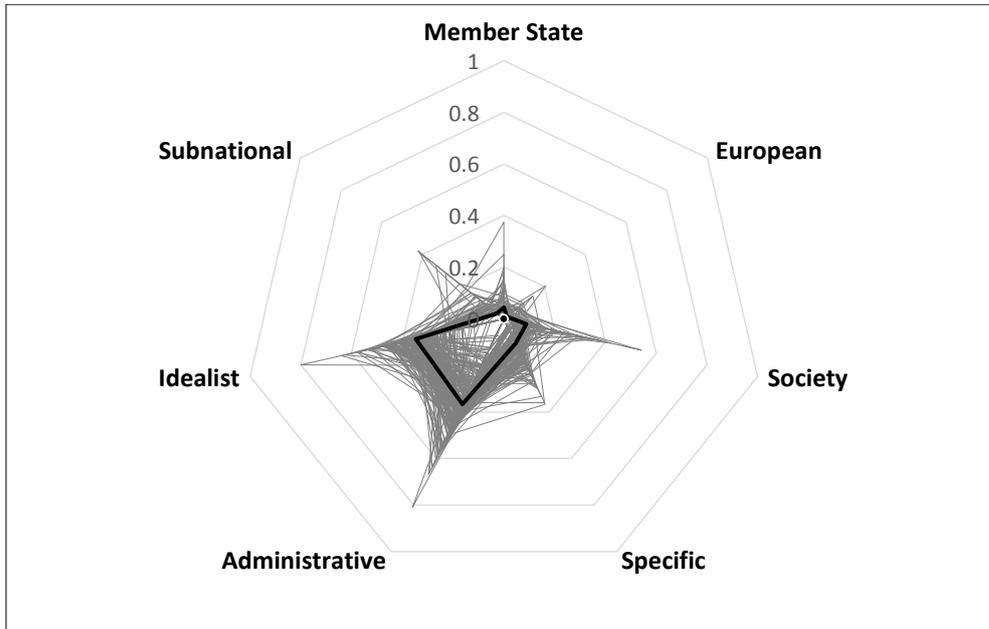


Figure 6.3 Radar chart of the empirical distribution of foci



To answer these questions, I sorted the relative scores for the foci of representation from large to small within each MEP. Hence, variables were created indicating the size of the 1<sup>st</sup> focus (i.e. the most dominant focus), the 2<sup>nd</sup> focus, the 3<sup>rd</sup> focus etc. Figure 6.4 shows the box plots of these rank-ordered foci. The box plots seem to indicate that most MEPs have one focus that they refer to more often than the other foci.

Figure 6.4 Boxplots of rank-ordered foci

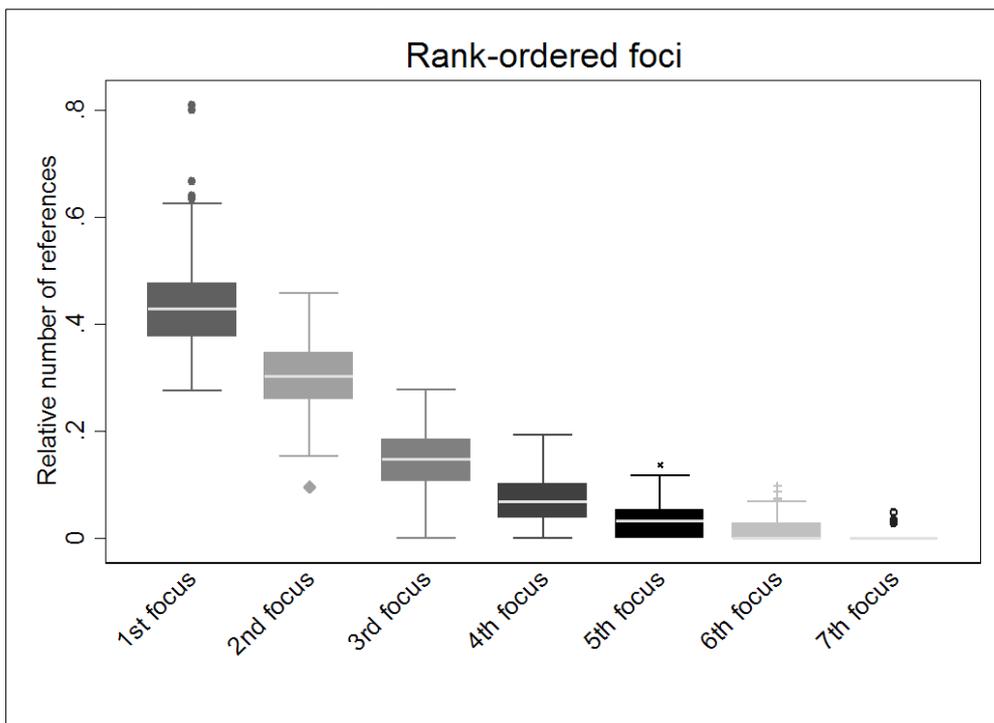
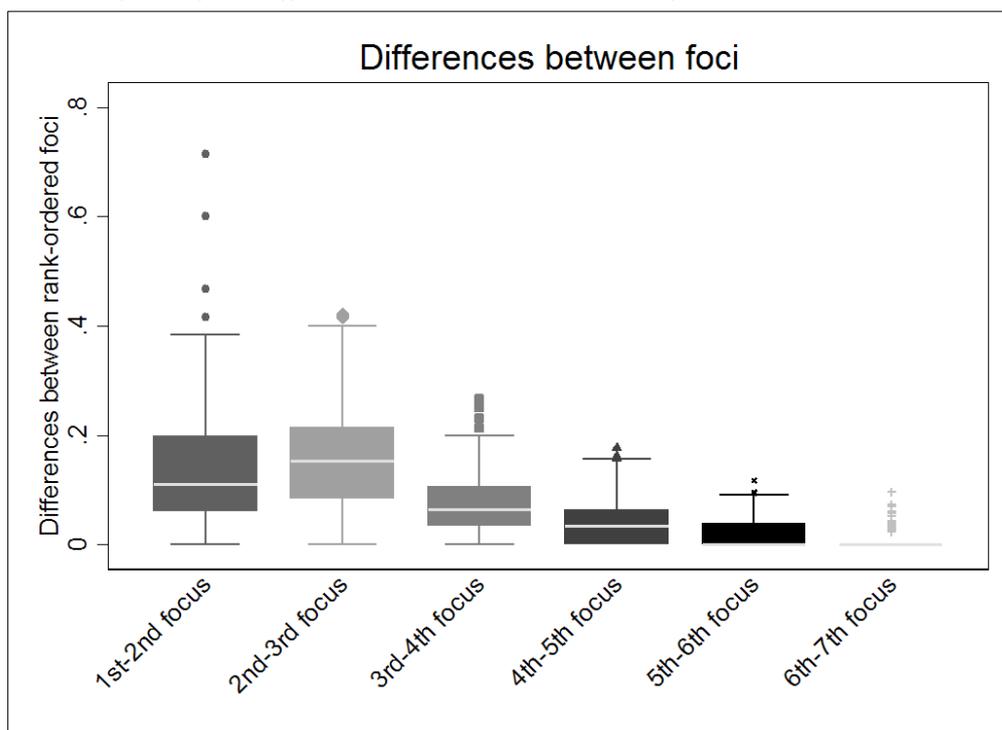


Figure 6.5 Boxplots of the differences between rank-ordered foci



The sizes of the differences between subsequent rank-ordered foci are presented in Figure 6.5. On the left, one can see that there are a number of outliers whose 1<sup>st</sup> focus is considerably larger than their 2<sup>nd</sup> focus. However, most striking is the observation that the median difference between the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> focus is larger than the median difference between the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> focus. A Wilcoxon signed-rank test indicated that the difference between the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> focus is indeed statistically significantly larger than the difference between the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> focus ( $z=-2.312$ ,  $p=0.02$ ).<sup>73</sup> This means that in general, the distribution of foci is better described as a bimodal distribution than a distribution with a clear peak. This fits nicely with the average distribution of foci in Figure 6.3 and indicates that statistically, the concept of a ‘distribution of foci’ captures reality better than defining MEPs by their ‘focus of representation’.

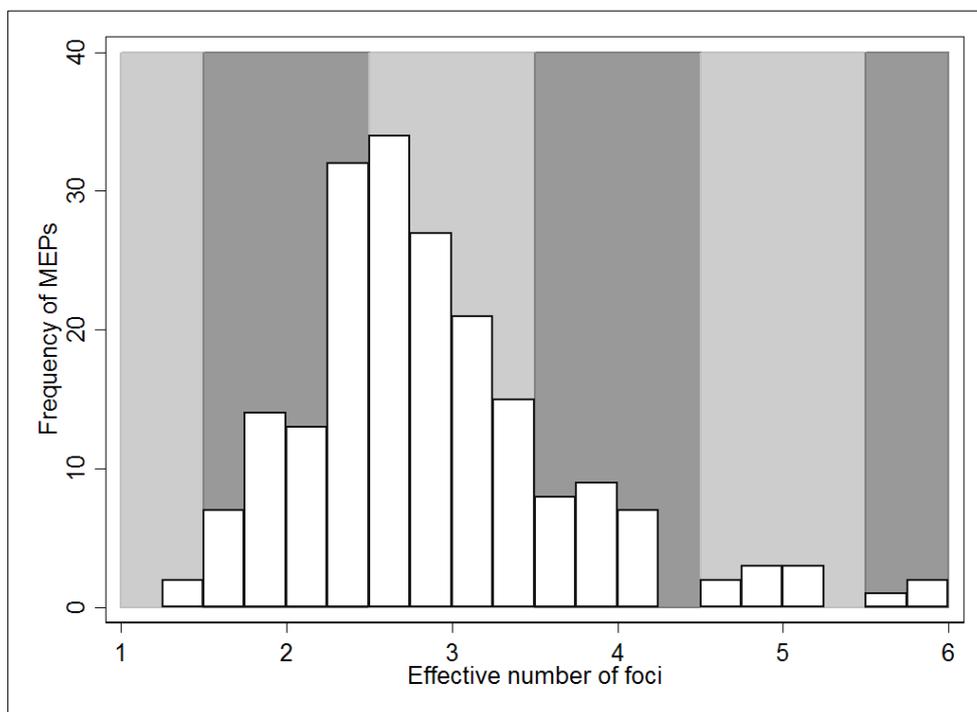
To find out whether there are types of distributions, we need to identify how many of the foci are relevant for each MEP and which may be ignored as ‘noise’. Although an MEP may score above zero on all seven foci, this does not mean that this MEP can be characterized as having seven foci. The number of relevant foci per MEP is calculated using the Golosov-formula to determine the effective number of parties in a party system. The resulting distribution of MEPs over the effective number of foci is shown in Figure 6.6, with the white bars showing the frequency and the grey bins indicating the resulting categories.

<sup>73</sup> A Wilcoxon signed-rank test was used, because the boxplot for the 1<sup>st</sup> focus in Figure 6.4 indicated that the distribution is skewed. Nevertheless, a one-sided t-test leads to the same conclusion,  $t=-1.97$ ,  $p=0.025$ .

Substantially, Figure 6.6 shows that indeed a very small number of two MEPs have one major focus and that only three MEPs have six different foci. This implies that none of the MEPs take all foci of representation equally into account. The middle section of Figure 6.6 shows that most MEPs effectively have three foci (97 MEPs), while 66 MEPs have a distribution skewed towards two relevant foci. Smaller groups of 24 and 8 MEPs respectively effectively have four or five foci.

As a robustness check, the analysis was replicated with only the attached interests, i.e. excluding the administrative and idealist foci (see Appendix 6A). With only five foci, the mean effective number of foci was 2.1, with 35% of the MEPs with only one focus, 33% with two foci, and 32% with three or more effective foci. This indicates that the conclusion that representation can better be described with a distribution of foci holds, even with a more restricted conception of the possible foci of representation.

Figure 6.6 Histogram of the effective number of foci



Now that is established that there are types of MEPs in terms of the effective number of foci, we can look into which combinations of foci occur more often than others. Empirically, 31 different combinations are present (see complete overview in Appendix 6B). Table 6.1 shows the five most common combinations of foci. Together, these five types cover 75% of the MEPs. The column with the relevant frequency shows that 28% of the MEPs has as two relevant foci: the administrative and idealist foci. This mirrors the average distribution of Figure 6.3. However, 23% of the MEPs has three foci, by combining the administrative and idealist focus with a specific interests focus. Two other larger groups of MEPs combine the administrative and idealist foci with a societal focus (15%), or a geographical focus on the Member State (5%). A fifth group has a more fractionalized distribution with four foci and

combines the administrative and idealist focus with a societal and specific interests focus (5%).

*Table 6.1 Overview of empirically frequently present configurations of relevant foci*

Cluster	N	N <sub>f</sub>	Subnat.	Member State	European	Societal	Specific	Administr.	Idealist	Relative frequency
3	56	2						x	x	0.28
6	46	3					x	x	x	0.23
9	29	3				x		x	x	0.15
11	10	4				x	x	x	x	0.05
15	9	3		x				x	x	0.05
Total	200		22	24	8	59	85	189	192	
Share of MEPs			11%	12%	4%	30%	43%	95%	96%	100%

In total, 90.5% of the 200 MEPs had both the administrative and the idealist focus within their effective number of foci. This indicates that in their amending behavior MEPs are not that pre-occupied with the representation of attached interests of outside actors, but rather focus on ideals, administrative norms and interests of the institutions. Less prevalent, but still important are the societal and specific focus. This indicates that when defending interests, MEPs make more claims in name of a group or society in general than in name of the geographical constituency where this group is located. In total, 23% of the MEPs had at least one of the geographical foci within their effective number of foci.

That MEPs do not only focus on attached interests was also observed by Lord and Tamvaki (2013: 44) in their study of EP plenary debates. However, they found that during plenary debates in the 6<sup>th</sup> legislature MEPs tended to refer to interests 2.5 times more often than to values. The difference in balance between attached and unattached interests between the two studies might be explained by the different activity (spoken vs. written), different time frame (2004-2009 vs. 2009-2014) or different venue (EP plenary vs. EP committees).

## 6.6 Conclusion

In this paper, it has been argued that in order to gain more insights into how representation works in the EU polity, we could draw more on insights from the literature on representation. At the same time, the literature on representational roles could benefit from disentangling the representational role into its constituent parts. This allows for analytical clarity and creates the opportunity to move beyond dichotomies and typologies towards a more nuanced picture of how MEPs combine different foci of representation. This is especially interesting for the EU, because of the tension between possible foci that is inherently present in a multi-level political system of which the elections are commonly identified as second-order elections (e.g. Reif et al., 1997). As a result of combining research into representation with studying the EP, the conclusion is twofold.

First, based on the literature on the focus of representation and more specifically on the works of Wahlke et al. (1962), Miller and Stokes (1963), Hagger and Wing (1979), Andeweg

(1997), and Costa and Kerrouche (2009), I show that multiple foci can be present at the same time and that MEPs may 'switch' depending on the circumstances. Therefore, if one would assume that every representative can be characterized as having one focus of representation, one would ignore the complexity of being a representative. This complexity is incorporated in the idea of a 'distribution of foci of representation': the constellation that results out of the combination of foci of representation a representative employs in his/her legislative behavior. The empirical analysis of MEPs shows that there is considerable variation between MEPs in their distribution of foci. On top of that, the data shows that almost all MEPs do not have just one dominant focus, but rather combine multiple foci of representation. This indicates that the distribution of foci indeed helps to understand representation in the EU better than previous interpretations of the focus of representation.

In addition, the low share of geographical references compared to the other foci suggests that limiting research on representation to geographical foci (like Martin, 2011b; Russo, 2011; Sozzi, 2016a) can give a biased picture of the focus of representation of European legislators. Therefore, the results indicate that solely studying constituency focus, or narrowly defining the focus of representation as the geographical focus of representation may lead scholars to overlook substantial parts of who or what legislators represent. This signals that taking the full range of possible foci into account is pivotal in understanding better to whom MEPs might be responsive, with whom we may expect issue congruence, and who or what MEPs represent.

In future research, this approach can be applied to other institutional settings or other forms of representational behavior. Within the EP, comparing the distribution of foci in amendments with distributions of foci in the more publicly visible parliamentary questions could generate new insights in how MEPs deal with the constraints and opportunities produced by the venue and the freedom of choosing the issue that is addressed. Furthermore, the distribution of foci could be used at national and regional levels as well, although alternative foci may be observed and expectations would be slightly different. For example, the EP only has limited competencies in some policy fields, like social policy. Different competencies of parliaments may create other incentives for representational behavior. In addition, as Andeweg (1997) and Van Vonno (2012) showed, opposition and coalition dynamics affect role switching. This dynamic is absent in the EP, but may affect the distributions of foci in other parliaments.

Second, the analysis shows that MEPs' distributions of foci are more skewed towards the administrative and idealist focus than towards other foci. This was not expected based on earlier studies on the preferences of MEPs (e.g. Farrell et al., 2006) and observations in plenary debates (Lord and Tamvaki, 2013). These inconsistencies suggest that further research is warranted into the connection between attitudes towards representation and representative behavior and into how the distribution of foci differs between activities and settings. Furthermore, the importance of the administrative focus signifies that MEPs are apparently also attempting to contribute to the output legitimacy of the EU by working towards effective, consistent, good quality legislation (Lindgren and Persson, 2010).

What this all means for the quality of representation in the EP is ambiguous, as it depends on the definition of what representation should be. The low importance of the geographical foci and the secondary role of the societal and specific foci indicate that in their amending behavior MEPs do not represent interests of their constituents that much. This would be a problem, if the normative stance would be that MEPs should be accountable delegates (Piattoni, 2013). However, with their predominant focus on administrative interests and norms, and ideals, they seem to work more towards a desired future than towards defending current interests. So, if you define a good representative as a gyroscope who aims for the common European good (Rehfeld, 2009), then these distributions of foci are rather a sign of good representation.



## Chapter 7

### **Pursuing who you are or responding to where you are?**

*Explaining distributions of foci among MEPs*

*Co-authored with Peter Bursens, paper currently under review*

#### **Abstract**

Describing and explaining who or what MEPs aim to represent has been subject to research since before the first direct elections to the EP. Yet, the literature is inconclusive over why MEPs differ in their focus of representation. We argue that this is due to overlooked findings on legislators switching role depending on policy domain (Miller and Stokes, 1963) and formal position (Andeweg, 1997). Legislative amendments of 200 MEPs from the 7<sup>th</sup> legislature are used to show that who or what is represented is related to characteristics of the activity. Specifically we found that non-committee members put Societal interests more upfront than formally involved MEPs and that co-sponsorship is positively related to representing the European citizen. Furthermore, the likelihood of representing the Subnational and Idealist foci is higher in committees with targeted externalities, while the likelihood of a Societal and Administrative focus is higher in committees with uniform externalities.

## 7.1 Introduction

The representative character of the European Parliament (EP) is often disputed (e.g. Piattoni, 2013: 240). In addition, the elections to the EP are still mostly second-order elections (Hix and Marsh, 2011), despite the increase in powers of the EP, the introduction of the *Spitzenkandidaten*, and more attention for European issues among voters due to the economic crisis (Hobolt and De Vries, 2016). Nevertheless, Members of European Parliament (MEPs) do think of themselves as representatives (e.g. Scully and Farrell, 2003). Who or what MEPs aim to represent and how we can explain that, has been subject to research since before the direct elections to the EP in 1979. Yet, there is still not much agreement over why MEPs differ in how they take up their representative task.

Taking cue from the psychological literature on socialization and inspired by the idea that the role of legislators is mainly shaped by experiences, early studies generally focused on individual characteristics to explain variation between legislators (e.g. Bell and Price, 1975). In this interactionist approach, experiences in the constituency are expected to shape representation (e.g. Fenno, 1977; Jewell, 1983). In the context of the EU this has been supplemented with attitudes towards European integration and experiences shaped by Member States (e.g. Hagger and Wing, 1979; Navarro, 2012). With the turn to neo-institutionalism, the experiences shaped by Member States have been reinterpreted as how electoral institutions shape strategic, goal seeking behavior of representatives (Strøm, 1997). Regardless of the interpretation of the mechanism as 'experiences' or as strategies, Wessels (1999) indeed found that 'nationality' matters more for explaining attitudes towards representation than individual socialization models.

While scholars in this body of research aspired to explain behavior of representatives, what they actually have been trying to explain can better be characterized as 'parliamentary activity levels'. Under parliamentary activities, we understand the different activities MEPs engage in, such as speeches, questions, motions, declarations, and amendments. In addition, the common conclusion has been that this approach hardly leads to more understanding of the behavior of representatives (Blomgren, 2003: 289; Hagger and Wing, 1979; Searing, 1994). Hence, the first aim of this study is to explore to what extent the factors that are hypothesized to explain parliamentary activity levels can be used to explain representational behavior at the MEP level. We consider representational behavior to be the representative claims legislators make in the content of parliamentary activities. However, the findings regarding the socialization model and the characteristics of Member States have not been consistent across studies (Scully and Farrell, 2003; Wessels, 1999: 217). In addition, multiple scholars have indicated that representative roles are not stable phenomena (Andeweg, 1997; Hagger and Wing, 1979; Van Vonn, 2012). Hence, the inconsistent findings at the MEP-level might be due to underlying variation in their behavior. Therefore, in the second step we seek to explain the variation in the focus of representation between and within MEPs at the level of amendments. 3.591 committee amendments and their accompanying justifications from the 7<sup>th</sup> legislature of the EP (2009-2014) related to 200 MEPs have been content coded for references to seven foci of representation.

The analysis is performed in two steps. First, *on the MEP-level*, the relative presence of each focus was regressed on the explanations present in the literature. The results indicate that, indeed, pre-political and pre-MEP political experiences have some effect on the relative attention to some of the foci of representation, but across the board the explanatory power is quite low. In addition, while previous studies indicated strong Member State effects, we did not consistently find these. This indicates that the process of focus switching by representatives - as Miller and Stokes (1963), Andeweg (1997), Van Vonn (2012) found – cannot solely be explained at the level of the MEP. Rather, the analysis of the foci addressed *in amendments* shows that contextual characteristics like policy dimensions of the proposal, formal involvement in the lead committee, and co-sponsorship provide new insights in which foci are addressed by whom and when.

The paper proceeds by first introducing the dependent variables: the distribution of foci and the separate foci of representation. Subsequently we introduce the theoretical expectations for both levels of analysis before details are provided on data and methods. We end with a discussion of our findings and conclusions.

## **7.2 The distribution of foci**

The empirical study of the focus of representation has for decades been entrenched in the study of legislative roles. In their seminal work, Wahlke et al. (1962) identified three ‘core roles’ of legislators plus a series of ‘clientele roles’, ‘specialized roles’, and ‘incidental roles’. The focus of representation (i.e. who or what is represented) together with the style of representation (i.e. the degree of independence in decision making from who or what is represented) form the ‘core representational role’ in their model.

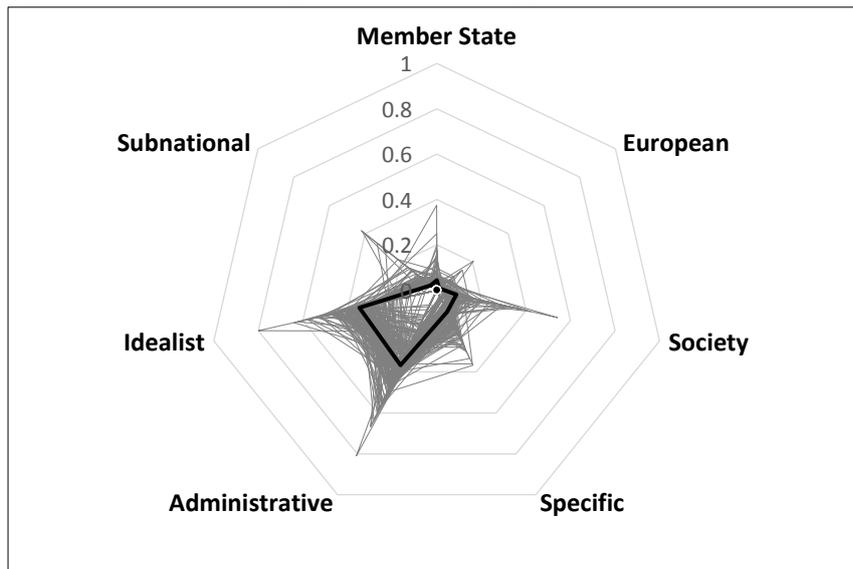
Over the last five decades, researchers have been constructing role typologies and exploring explanations for adopted ‘representational roles’ (Blomgren, 2003: 33). The focus of representation was often part of one or more of the roles in role typologies, like the ‘Constituency Members’ of Searing (1994) and the ‘Intermediaries’ of Navarro (2012: 191–192). However, concurring with Wahlke et al. (1962: 270) that the different core roles and their constituent parts should be kept distinct for analytical purposes, this study solely puts the focus of representation central.

Moreover, we assume that MEPs do not have just one representational focus, but instead they allot varying amounts of attention to multiple foci. This entails that one hypothetical MEP might have two foci of equal importance, while another MEP has one dominant focus with three additional minor foci. Therefore, the focus of representation is better captured using a ‘distribution of foci’. This is graphically presented in Figure 7.1, which shows the distributions of foci for all MEPs in the sample (grey lines), the mean distribution (black line), and the middle point (white circle).

In this contribution, the foci are conceptualized broader than just geographical. The additional foci capture two kinds of interests: attached and unattached (Pitkin, 1967: 156). For attached interests a clear reference group is indicated whose interests are put forward, including references to society in general or (groups of) citizens (Societal focus) and to specific

socio-economic interests and organized interests (Specific focus). Unattached interests, on the other hand, are not directly linked to a group of people who can hold the representative accountable. Pitkin (1967: 158) explicitly referred to ideals, like world peace, as an example of unattached interests. We include one pure unattached focus with reference to ideals (Idealist focus) and one mixed focus in which the interests of the administration are combined with references to administrative norms, like efficiency, legality, and consistency (Administrative focus).

Figure 7.1 Radar chart of the distribution of foci



### 7.3 Theoretical expectations on the MEP-level

Because of the number of dependent variables (seven foci) and the expectation that different foci might be explained by different factors, not every explanatory factor is connected to every focus. Furthermore, due to the number of expectations, hypotheses are not explicitly formulated in the text. Rather, the argumentation is explained and the expectations are summarized in Table 7.1.

Possible explanations for the distribution of foci of representation are derived from two strands of literature. First, we introduce the expected effects of socialization, which are based upon the role literature and various empirical studies of legislators. Second, we use the reinterpretation of legislative roles as strategies by Strøm (1997) to underpin the expected effects of electoral systems. Furthermore, we look at the ideological position of legislators.

#### 7.3.1 Preparatory legislative socialization

In their study of first term State legislators, Bell and Price (1975) showed that pre-political experiences matter for understanding role orientations. More specifically, Bell and Price made the distinction between preparatory legislative socialization (before becoming a politician), initial legislative socialization during the first (year of) term, and further secondary socialization while gaining more seniority. From the preparatory phase (Bell and Price, 1975:

29–31), early life experiences, formal education, and occupations are expected to shape how legislators take up their role.

The expectations are most clear for having studied or worked as a lawyer. Lawyers were originally hypothesized to be more inclined to represent interests of ‘clients’. However, results from a study into the 1960s Members of Congress (Davidson, 1969: 89) showed that - rather than defending particular interests - lawyers are more pre-occupied with making good legislation than MPs without a law background. Having studied economics or being involved in business on the other hand was – as expected – found to be related to promoting specific and ‘district’ interests (Davidson, 1969: 89). In addition, both Wahlke et al. (1962: 330) and Bell and Price (1975: 100–102) found that legislators who at least completed college were more facilitating towards interest groups than lower educated legislators.

### *7.3.2 Secondary legislative socialization*

Other studies followed a strategy of looking at political ‘first timers’. As MEPs are hardly ever ‘political virgins’ (Bale and Taggart, 2006), and thus have been socialized at the political level(s) they served at, one can expect that they will take geographical interests with them. Bell and Price (1975: 94) found that Californian state legislators became quickly less favorable towards interest groups, with some recovery towards the next state elections. This observation coincides with a shift in representational style from a ‘delegate’ interpretation towards a ‘trustee’ interpretation. Katz (1999: 78–80) found that, especially for political experience at the national level, MEPs held less of a ‘legislator role’. This means that they found making legislation, parliamentary oversight, articulation of societal needs, development of political strategies, and mediation between interests less important. Combined, these results suggest that legislative experience would lead to a relatively lower Societal, Specific interests, and Administrative focus, but an increased focus on the geographical level corresponding with the legislative experience.

This initial and secondary legislative socialization also takes place once elected. A common expectation is that legislators (or other personnel) would become more pro-European with seniority (e.g. Beyers, 2005; Scully, 2005). This idea is rooted in the hypothesis of societal learning of Inglehart and Rabier (1978). They posited that the longer a country is a Member State, the more its citizens are used to the institutions, the more pro-European they would become. However, there is hardly any evidence that this seniority effect also works this way at the individual level of the legislator. On the Member State level, nevertheless, Wessels (1999: 231–232) did find that the length of EU membership had a positive effect on expressed preference of representing all EU citizens, but that this effect was weaker the smaller the Member State. Yet, Bale and Taggart (2006: 11) observed that this changed with the accession of new Member States and found that MEPs from such states were more pro-European than new MEPs from older Member States. They ascribed this to experiences in dealing with (accession to) the EU while elected at the (sub)national level.

Nonetheless, by limiting the interpretation of secondary legislative socialization in the EP to pro-European attitudes, other socialization effects, e.g. resulting from a “leading role in

committee, on the floor, or in caucus” (Bell and Price, 1975: 30), may be overlooked. Davidson’s (1969: 92–93) study of Congressmen showed that more senior House Members and especially those in leadership positions became more likely to adopt a ‘Ritualist role’ compared to first timers and senior non-leaders, who were more likely to adopt a ‘Tribune role’. Those with a Tribune role are in their core concerned with representation, but it does not really matter “to *which* constituents the member’s ears is attuned, nor even *how* he comes to ascertain their interests” (Davidson, 1969: 81). While the Ritualists also care about representation (Davidson, 1969: 83), they primarily “concentrate of the complexities of the legislative process” (Davidson, 1969: 88). As a result we may expect senior MEPs and MEPs in a leadership position to have a more predominant Administrative focus compared to junior MEPs and non-leaders.

### 7.3.3 Institutionally induced incentives

Davidson (1969: ix) already noted that the preparatory experiences and previous political experience captured in “so-called ‘social background variables’ offer scant explanation of legislative role-taking”. Later, Wessels (1999: 217) drew a similar conclusion when summarizing the literature: “while no single variable predominated, a number of them were found to be significant in one or more studies”. His analysis indeed shows that such effects are very limited, both for MEPs and for national MPs, and that these are not consistent across countries.

As a result, scholars started to look at Member States and their characteristics to better explain the focus of representation. While some claim that country or nationality dummies explain the focus of representation better than socialization models (e.g. Wessels, 1999), others found that the impact of country dummies was low (Navarro, 2012: 194).

In a more outspoken way, Strøm (1997: 162–163) argued that these effects of Member State characteristics should be interpreted in a neo-institutional light and that the electoral systems create “institutionally induced incentives” for strategic behavior. According to his theory, M(E)Ps want re-selection, re-election, office, and policy. The opportunities for office are slim for MEPs, because of the absence of a government-opposition dynamic. The opportunities for policy are also smaller for MEPs than for MPs, because of the relatively limited powers of the EP, nowadays still reflected in the absence of formal policy initiative. Yet, as re-selection and re-election are organized via national level parties and national or subnational level electoral constituencies, the electoral system is expected to affect the foci of representation.

Specifically, being elected in a system with subnational constituencies or one nationwide constituency is expected to be linked to the respective geographical foci. Wessels (1999: 223) indeed observed that a smaller district magnitude “goes along with constituency representation”. Furthermore, the use of preferential voting provides incentives for personal vote-seeking and keeping contact with the electoral constituency. Therefore, MEPs elected in a system with preferential voting are expected to be more likely to pursue (sub)national geographical, Societal, and Specific foci.

Table 7.1 Summary of explanatory factors and expected effects at MEP-level

	Freq.	Mean (S.D.)	Subnational	Member State	European	Societal	Specific	Administrative	Idealist
<i>Preparatory socialization</i>									
University education (vs. not)	104						+		
Educational background									
• Law (vs. not)	57							+	
• Economics (vs. not)	45		+	+			+		
Political experience									
• Local	104		+				-	-	-
• Regional	58		+				-	-	-
• National	64			+			-	-	-
<i>Secondary socialization</i>									
Seniority in EP									
• Re-elected (vs. new)	87				+/0		-		
• Chair (vs. not)	28							+	
• EP(G) leader (vs. not)	18							+	
<i>Ideology</i>									
• Left-right (0-10)		5.2 (2.0)	+	+	+		-		-
• GAL-TAN (0-10)		5.2 (2.1)	+	+	+		-		-
• Anti-Pro-EU (0-7)		5.5 (1.3)			+	+			
<i>Member State characteristics</i>									
Subnational (vs. Nationwide)	80		+	-					
Preferential votes (vs. not)	82		+	+		+	+		
EU15 (vs. 27) <sup>74</sup>	162				+/-				
<b>Total</b>	<b>200</b>								

#### 7.3.4 Ideology

Yet, Navarro (2012: 186) argued that differences in role orientations among MEPs can not only be explained by strategic considerations like vote-seeking. In line with Hagger and Wing (1979), he states that the contrasting ideas about European integration and ideas about democracy in general are related to which role orientation MEPs 'choose' (Navarro, 2012: 206).<sup>75</sup> Despite that position, Navarro (2012) focused on differences in role orientation

<sup>74</sup> Croatian MEPs are not taken into account.

<sup>75</sup> Due to lack of data, the ideological stance towards democracy cannot be taken into account in this study.

between the EP Party Groups (EPGs). However, the more extreme EPGs are ideologically quite diverse (Hix and Høyland, 2013) and their composition shifts per legislature. As a solution, one may look at the ideological stance of the MEP.<sup>76</sup> More explicit expectations can be derived from Scully and Farrell (2003: 273–278), who found that right-of-center MEPs were less likely to focus on Social Arbitration, i.e. “social group representation, social mediation, and the development of common EU strategies”, while they were more likely to focus on interest articulation of geographical interests.<sup>77</sup> More pro-European attitudes, in contrast, increased the likelihood of Social Arbitration (Scully and Farrell, 2003: 278). Logically, more pro-European attitudes can also be expected to be related to a European focus.

#### **7.4 Disaggregation to the amendment-level: responding to where you are?**

We see three reasons to look beyond the socialization model and incentives based on the electoral system. First of all, most scholars point out that while there are some effects, the overall explanatory power is rather small (Scully and Farrell, 2003; Wessels, 1999). Second, it has long been acknowledged that representatives can hold multiple foci simultaneously or switch between roles (Andeweg, 1997; Van Vonno, 2012; Wahlke et al., 1962: 270–271). Therefore, different foci might have different explanations rooted at the level of the activity. More specifically, previous studies into role switching found that both the formal position of the legislator and the policy context matters (Andeweg, 1997; Miller and Stokes, 1963: 56). Thirdly, we analyze committee amendments which are essentially responses to a legislative proposal from the European Commission and a draft report by the responsible rapporteur. This means that amendments are not only nested in one or more MEPs<sup>78</sup>, who are nested in EPGs and Member States, but they are also nested in a legislative dossier, which in turn is nested in one responsible EP committee.<sup>79</sup> Therefore, we must consider the possibility that we can enhance our understanding of representational behavior by taking the legislative context into account. Table 7.2 summarizes the additional expectations based on the legislative context.

A first characteristic is co-sponsorship. Without making assumptions about the direction of causality, with whom an MEP cooperates might be related to the representative claims made in the amendment and accompanying justification. While this is unexplored in the literature on the EP, we may expect that if all MEPs represent the same Member State, the probability of a Member State focus will be larger. And if all MEPs are affiliated to the same EPG, they can be expected to bridge their different electoral constituencies by shifting to the unattached Idealist focus based on their shared ideology. As the proposals are often highly

<sup>76</sup> The ideological stance is measured using the national party of the MEP due to data availability.

<sup>77</sup> Two ideological scales are included to capture ‘right-of-center’: economic left-right placement and position on the Green-Alternative-Libertarian vs. Traditional-Authoritarian-Nationalist dimension (GAL-TAN).

<sup>78</sup> Amendments can be nested in more than one MEP via co-sponsorship.

<sup>79</sup> In rare circumstances, one dossier can be assigned to multiple committees, but these ‘joint committees’ were not included in the study.

technical (Kreppel, 2002a: 794) and the Administrative focus requires knowledge of the proposal or the policy field, one can expect a co-sponsorship of fellow committee members to be related to an Administrative focus.

Simultaneously, MEPs are formally connected to dossiers via (shadow) rapporteurship and to committees via membership and substitute status. For the effect of shadow rapporteurship two avenues of reasoning can be followed. On the one hand, shadows are more involved in the dossier and therefore can be expected to focus more on administrative norms (Lord, 2018: 7). On the other hand, shadow rapporteurs are almost exclusively appointed by EPGs that do not have rapporteurship on the dossier to monitor the rapporteur and to facilitate finding consensus (Settembri and Neuhold, 2009: 142). Therefore, different interests and ideals are likely to be pushed by shadow rapporteurs. Yet, which interests and ideals depends on the rapporteur and thus on the dossier.

Selection into EP committees is related to expertise in the policy field and this specialization is again increased by serving on the committee (Krehbiel, 1992; Yordanova, 2009). Therefore, committee members – and to a lower degree substitutes – are expected to also have a higher probability of an Administrative focus than non-members. For committee membership one can also formulate a socialization effect: as committees were found to develop their own traditions and norms over time (Ahrens, 2016: 787; Roederer-Rynning and Greenwood, 2017), outsiders, not formally and regularly involved in the process, would be less familiar or subject to those norms. This also surfaced in Searing's (1994) study of Westminster roles, who argued that the formal position of a legislator impacts the role orientation. Therefore non-committee members are expected to behave differently. Yet, how they will differ depends on the committee.

Finally, the type of dossiers differs across EP committees. Previously, a distinction was made between committees with targeted externalities, uniform externalities, and a rest category of mixed externalities (Cox and McCubbins, 2007: 179–186; Whitaker, 2005). Committees with targeted externalities, mostly address distributive policies where those affected or benefitting are homogeneous organized interests or specific electoral constituencies. Therefore, the expectation is that in these committees attached interests with a clear beneficiary will prevail: the Subnational and Member State geographical foci and the Specific focus will be more likely to be present in an amendment in those committees.

In contrast, committees with uniform externalities predominantly deal with regulatory and redistributive dossiers that affect or benefit all electoral constituencies similarly. Hence, the expectation for these committees is that diffuse and unattached interests will be more likely to prevail, which may occur in the form of the European geographical focus comprising of all electoral constituencies, the Societal focus, or the unattached Idealist focus. Furthermore, as committees with predominantly regulatory dossiers also fall in this category, the Administrative focus is expected to be more likely to be present compared to committees with targeted externalities. For committees with mixed externalities, the expectation is that the different dossiers will balance each other out.

Table 7.2 Summary of additional explanatory factors and expected effects at amendment-level

	Freq.	Subnational	Member State	European	Societal	Specific	Administrative	Idealist
Co-sponsorship								
• Single-sponsored (= ref.)	1,683							
• Within EPG	186							+
• Within MS	178	+	+					
• Within committee	373						+	
• Other co-sponsored	1,171							
Committee membership								
• Member (= ref.)	1,832							
• Substitute	1,184						-	
• Not involved	575						-	
Shadow rapporteurship	659						+	
Committee type								
• Uniform externalities (=ref.)	682							
• Mixed externalities	2,142	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
• Targeted externalities	767	+	+	-	-	+	-	-
<b>Mean</b>	3,591	0.05	0.07	0.02	0.13	0.16	0.53	0.52
<b>(s.d.)</b>		(0.22)	(0.25)	(0.15)	(0.34)	(0.37)	(0.50)	(0.50)

## 7.5 Data & methods

Amendments tabled in committee phase of the 7<sup>th</sup> legislature of the EP (2009-2014) have been content coded to analyze the foci of representation in legislative behavior. A multi-stage sampling procedure was used to sample amendments from the total of 213,236 committee amendments. In the first stage, a selection was made on five procedural criteria: tabled in a standing committee, in first reading, under the Ordinary Legislative Procedure (OLP/COD), accompanied by a justification, not introduced by an entire Committee, EP Party Group (EPG) or by the rapporteur alone. The second stage involved a random sampling of 200 MEPs from the set of MEPs who tabled at least 10 of such amendments. The final stage consisted of a random sampling of maximum 20 amendments per MEP.

The resulting 3,591 amendments were content coded on the presence of one or more foci of representation. Initially, half of the foci reached acceptable intercoder reliability using percent agreement >.80, yet Krippendorff's Alpha levels were insufficient. Using an iterative coding procedure, the codebook was stepwise refined and amendments were reassessed to ensure all amendments were validly coded (see Chapter 2). Figure 7.1 shows how the distributions of foci of the sampled MEPs are distributed, while the bottom rows of Table 7.2 provide information on the relative presence of each focus across amendments. As outlined above, seven foci were distinguished: first, the Subnational, Member State, and European

geographical foci. Second, the Societal focus: defending diffuse interests in society and specific non-economic interests of subgroups in society. Third, the Specific focus: defending specific interests of homogeneous socio-economic groups, business, and NGOs. NGOs were grouped together with trade-union interests and business interests, as they are an organized, specific organization that does not only represent another interest, but also has the self-interest of organizational survival (Lowery, 2007). If the MEP defended the interest that the NGO represents, this interest is coded separately, while specifically contributing to the visibility and insidership of an NGO is considered to be representing the organizational interest of the NGO, and is thus coded as a Specific focus.

Preparatory legislative socialization was included in the analysis via several indicators. Self-reported CVs on the EP website were coded using a slightly adapted version of the codebook of Braendle (2015).<sup>80</sup> Due to the extremely high level of education in the EP, a dummy is included for having a higher degree than a basic university degree or not (MD, PhD). Additionally, field of study/studies is included via dummies for having studied Law, and Economics. MEPs can have previous experience on more than one other geographical level, therefore variables are included indicating having prior local, regional, national, or no political experience.

Indicators for the legislative socialization in the EP were derived from the MEP Career Behavior dataset (Daniel, 2015). 'EP Leader' is a dummy indicating whether the MEP served as EP President, VP, Quaestor, party group leader or member of the EPG bureau. 'Committee Leader' captures whether the MEP served as Chair or Vice-Chair of a committee. Seniority in the EP is also captured with a dummy separating the 'first timers' from the more seasoned MEPs. Member and substitute positions in committees were derived from the September 2009 and February editions of the lists of committee members. The ideological placement of the MEP towards European integration, on the economic left-right scale and on the GAL-TAN dimension (Green-Alternative-Libertarian vs. Traditional-Authoritarian-Nationalist) was derived from the Chapel Hill expert survey scores of their national parties (Bakker, Edwards, et al., 2015; CHES; Bakker, Vries, et al., 2015).<sup>81</sup>

On the Member State level, indicators are included to capture European socialization due to length of EU membership (EU15 vs. more recent accession countries) and the incentives for personal vote-seeking. Information on the use of preferential voting (vs. closed lists) and multiple constituencies (vs. one nationwide constituency) in the 2009 EP elections was derived from Corbett et al. (2011: 17–18). At the amendment level, indicators for co-sponsorship were directly derived from the amendments.

The type of policies addressed in a committee has been classified based on the types of externalities produced (Cox and McCubbins, 2007: 179–186; Whitaker, 2005; Yordanova,

<sup>80</sup> If the CV was missing on the EP website, (archived) personal or party websites were used to retrieve the data.

<sup>81</sup> The party affiliation and scores of 2014 were used. When these were not available, the 2010 version was used. For 3 MEPs no score could be derived. Their ideological position was imputed using the mean score of the GUE/NGL, Greens-EFA, and EFD respectively.

2009: 256). For most committees, the coding of Yordanova (2009) is used, while the labels for the categories have been replaced by the original labels of Cox and McCubbins (2007) to avoid confusion over distributive and redistributive policies. The only change is the classification of the Transport and Tourism committee (TRAN) from 'uniform' to 'mixed' externalities, as this committee dealt with the important, distributive dossier of the Trans-European Transport Network (TEN-T) in this legislature.

At the MEP-level the effects of the explanatory variables on the distribution of foci was analyzed using a fractional multinomial logit model. This type of model takes into account that the percentages add up to 100% and that there is an inherent correlation between the dependent variables. To ease interpretation, average marginal effects are presented in the text, while the coefficients are included in Appendix 7A. Models were build stepwise per category of explanations (i.e. preparatory legislative socialization, legislative socialization, and Member State characteristics). To save space, only the final models are presented here (see additional appendices in replication files for full results).

At the amendment level, the dependent variables are dummies indicating whether or not that focus was found in that amendment and/or justification. These are analyzed using multilevel mixed-effects logistic regression estimating a Random Intercept Model. Amendments have a complex nesting structure as they are both nested in dossiers, which are nested in committees, and in MEPs, who are nested in EPGs and Member States. Unfortunately, the sample did not contain enough amendments per dossier and committee, or MEPs per Member State and EPG to take those levels into account. Therefore two-level models with amendments nested in MEPs and robust standard errors are presented in Table 7.4.

## 7.6 Results

### 7.6.1 Analysis of the distributions of foci

Across the board, the socialization model and Member State characteristics do not explain the distribution of foci well.<sup>82</sup> This is visible in Table 7.3 both from the modest increase in Akaike Information Criterion (AIC) in the full model compared to the empty model, and from the low pseudo-R<sup>2</sup> values. This corroborates earlier findings on the socialization model by Wessels (1999) and the lack of importance of the electoral system by Scully and Farrell (2003) and Navarro (2012). Out of the 40 expectations outlined in Table 7.1, only three effects were found in the expected direction and two were significant, but in the opposite direction. Specifically, none of the explanatory factors have a significant effect on the Member State focus. This means that neither the socialization model, nor the ideological position, nor the

<sup>82</sup> Following common practice in the literature (e.g. Wessels, 1999: 218), the analysis was also conducted with country dummies as only explanatory factor. Only Member States with at least 3 MEPs in the sample were retained (N=189). Similar pseudo-R<sup>2</sup> was found for the Member State focus, slightly higher pseudo-R<sup>2</sup> for the Subnational, Administrative, and Idealist foci, and a lower pseudo-R<sup>2</sup> for the European, Societal, and Specific foci. We should be careful with attaching much value to these results, as for some Member States a very limited number of MEPs was included.

Table 7.3 Fractional multinomial logit regression at MEP-level: Average Marginal Effects

	(1) Subnational dydx	(2) Member State dydx	(3) European dydx	(4) Societal dydx	(5) Specific dydx	(6) Administrative dydx	(7) Idealist dydx
<i>Preparatory socialization</i>							
University education vs. not	-0.003	-0.003	0.003	0.006	-0.018	0.005	0.010
Educational background							
• Law vs. not	-0.006	-0.000	0.001	0.019	0.008	-0.011	-0.011
• Economics vs. not	-0.018*	0.006	0.002	-0.022	0.041*	0.012	-0.020
Political experience							
• Local	-0.014	0.008	0.004	0.034*	-0.012	-0.019	-0.000
• Regional	0.015	-0.004	0.005	-0.031*	-0.006	-0.017	0.038*
• National	0.005	0.003	-0.002	0.002	0.017	-0.047*	0.023
<i>Secondary socialization</i>							
Seniority in EP							
• Re-elected vs. new	-0.001	0.001	-0.005	-0.028*	0.009	0.030	-0.007
• Chair vs. not	-0.007	0.003	0.003	-0.031*	0.011	0.002	0.020
• EP(G) leader vs. not	-0.009	0.006	0.011	-0.026	0.012	0.033	-0.027
<i>Ideology</i>							
• Left-right (0-10)	0.001	0.004	-0.002	0.002	0.003	-0.008	0.000
• GAL-TAN (0-10)	0.003	-0.001	0.001	-0.004	0.002	0.006	-0.007
• Anti-Pro-EU(0-7)	-0.000	-0.002	0.002	-0.004	0.015**	0.011	-0.022*
<i>Member State characteristics</i>							
Subnational vs. Nationwide	-0.005	-0.003	0.010*	0.017	0.023	-0.011	-0.031
Preferential votes vs. closed lists	-0.016	0.003	0.002	0.001	-0.007	0.007	0.010
EU15 vs. newer MS	0.010	-0.015	0.004	-0.032	0.011	0.025	-0.004
Pseudo-R2 <sup>a</sup>	.10	.05	.13	.13	.11	.09	.09
N				200			
Wald chi <sup>2</sup> (90)				265.71***			
AIC null model				612			
AIC this model				784			

<sup>a</sup> Calculated as the squared correlation between the actual data and predicted values based on the model; \*  $p < 0.05$ , \*\*  $p < 0.01$ , \*\*\*  $p < 0.001$

Member State characteristics help us understand variation in the prominence of the Member State in the distribution of foci.

Nevertheless, some of the effects give interesting insights in how the distributions of foci differ. The average marginal effects in Table 7.3 show how many percentage points the dependent variable would change on average as a result of the independent variable, while keeping the other variables at their current values. Contrary to our expectation, having studied Economics decreases the expected percentage of references to the Subnational focus with 1.8 percentage points. To give an example, keeping all else equal, if the non-Economics MEPs on average have a share of 3.4% of this focus in their distribution, this would be expected to be 1.6% for MEPs who did study Economics. Table 7.3 also shows that political experience has an inconsistent impact on the Societal focus. MEPs with local political experience score 3.4 percentage points higher than those without this experience. For MEPs with regional political experience this effect runs the other way around (3.1 percentage points lower).

As expected based on the socialization literature, MEPs that studied Economics score 4.1 percentage points higher on the Specific interests focus: those who are trained in thinking from a business perspective are also more likely to bring these interests to the table. With regards to the Administrative focus, Table 7.3 shows that only the expected negative effect of national political experience was found: MEPs who were previously elected to their national parliament or served as a minister at that level scored 4.7 percentage points lower on the Administrative focus. This indicates that having served as a national level parliamentarian decreases the importance of administrative interests and norms as a starting value, while this experience effect is not replicated through seniority in the EP.

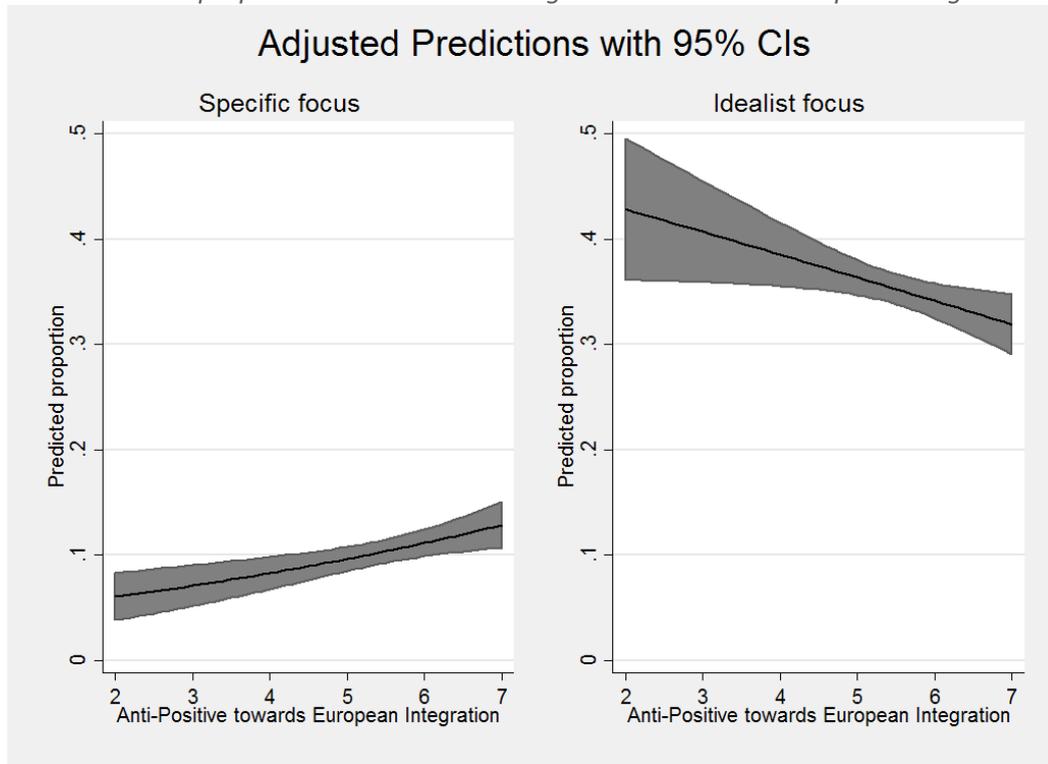
While not expected based on the literature, additional effects were found for the European, Societal, Specific, and Idealist foci. Surprisingly, MEPs elected in an electoral system using multiple, subnational constituencies score 1 percentage points higher on the European focus than MEPs elected in nationwide constituencies. In addition, re-elected MEPs and MEPs serving as committee chair score 2.8 and 3.1 percentage points lower on the Societal focus respectively. Being in favor of more European Integration has a positive effect on giving more prominence to the Specific focus, while a negative effect was found for the Idealist focus (see Figure 7.2).<sup>83</sup> This finding could be due to MEPs in favor of European Integration paying more attention to the practicalities of European Integration, while those against (further) integration take an ideological stance against it. Finally, MEPs who served at the regional political level score 3.8 percentage points higher on the Idealist focus.

As the explanatory power of the model is low, the same expectations and additional factors were tested at the amendment-level. Of course, by moving levels of analysis, we are not dealing with exactly the same phenomenon. At the MEP-level, we analyzed the relative

<sup>83</sup> As empirically no MEP in the sample scored lower than 2 on this ideological scale, the x-axis is truncated. All other variables are fixed at their means.

prominence of the foci in the distribution of foci of each MEP, while at the amendment-level we estimate the likelihood of a focus being put forward in an amendment and its justification.

Figure 7.2 Predicted proportions across the ideological scale towards European Integration



### 7.6.2 Results at amendment-level

The bottom-section of Table 7.4 shows that including extra explanatory factors in the analysis at the amendment-level increased the model fit compared to the model shown in Table 7.3 (full results of the 'MEP model' in Appendix 7C). This means that indeed the legislative context, and relation of the MEP with the dossier and his/her fellow MEPs seems to shape the likelihood of a focus of representation being present. This corroborates the findings by Miller and Stokes (1963) and Andeweg (1997) that representatives adapt to the circumstances in which they find or maneuver themselves.

First of all, Table 7.4 shows that (the shape of) co-sponsorship affects the likelihood of having a Subnational, European, Specific, Administrative or Idealist focus. Co-sponsoring together with fellow countrymen increases the likelihood of referring to a Subnational focus (compared to single sponsored amendments). This indicates that MEPs with the same electoral incentives may work together to push subnational interests. However, co-sponsoring within a Member State is not related to a Member State focus. For the European focus, the likelihood is increased by co-sponsorship coalitions of fellow countrymen, fellow committee members and more complexly composed co-sponsorship coalitions. This suggests that when working together, even when this is within the Member State, one is more likely to refer to the European polity than when amending alone.

Table 7.4 Multilevel mixed-effects logistic regression: full Random Intercept Models<sup>a</sup>

	(1) Subnational OR	(2) Member State OR	(3) European OR	(4) Societal OR	(5) Specific OR	(6) Administrative OR	(7) Idealist OR
<i>Preparatory socialization</i>							
University education vs. not	1.175	0.928	1.428	1.035	0.840	0.948	1.062
Educational background							
• Law vs. not	0.609	1.067	1.099	1.282	0.984	0.973	1.039
• Economics vs. not	0.449*	1.362	1.287	0.735	1.748**	1.236	0.980
Political experience							
• Local vs. not	0.824	1.374	1.401	1.538*	0.862	0.828	0.989
• Regional vs. not	1.258	0.808	1.555	0.671	0.877	0.956	1.289*
• National vs. not	1.028	0.958	0.812	0.929	1.267	0.850	1.178
<i>Secondary socialization</i>							
Seniority in EP							
• Re-elected vs. new	0.850	1.002	0.757	0.656*	1.073	1.196	0.908
• Chair vs. not	0.957	1.207	1.193	0.662	1.154	0.991	1.178
• EP(G) leader vs. not	0.798	1.330	1.380	0.708	1.172	0.994	0.824
<i>Ideology</i>							
• Left-right (0-10)	0.946	1.100	0.866	0.987	1.059	0.939*	1.013
• GAL-TAN (0-10)	1.060	0.973	0.979	0.962	1.012	1.080*	0.959
• Anti-Pro-EU (0-7)	0.961	0.894	1.087	1.032	1.182*	1.089	0.855**
<i>Member State characteristics</i>							
Subnational vs. Nationwide	0.760	0.975	2.316*	1.358	1.389*	1.003	0.916
Preferential votes vs. closed lists	0.499*	1.067	0.878	1.089	1.020	1.105	1.167
EU15 vs. newer MS	0.903	0.686	1.083	0.612	1.158	1.324	0.942

Continued on next page

<i>Amendment and dossier level</i>							
Co-sponsored (Single sponsored = ref)							
• Within EPG	0.735	0.779	2.342	0.559	0.471	1.378	1.654*
• Within MS	9.638***	0.909	4.908**	1.301	1.496	0.568*	1.035
• Within committee	0.527	1.571	4.686**	1.108	0.591*	0.820	1.284
• Other co-sponsored	1.078	1.319	2.167*	1.114	0.879	1.016	0.979
Shadow rapporteur vs. not	2.062	0.790	1.098	1.153	0.814	1.058	0.846
<i>Committee characteristics</i>							
Committee membership (Member = ref)							
• Substitute	1.001	0.938	2.402*	1.108	0.810	0.987	0.971
• No involvement	1.474	0.860	1.427	2.072**	0.737	0.764	0.754
Type of externalities (Uniform =ref)							
• Mixed	1.170	0.813	0.761	1.037	0.798	0.663**	0.987
• Targeted	2.315	1.897*	1.118	0.547*	1.573	0.443***	1.586**
Constant	0.035**	0.075***	0.002***	0.151*	0.043***	0.892	2.520*
$\sigma_u^2$	1.420	0.490	1.615	0.872	0.475	0.191	0.164
Observations	3591	3591	3591	3591	3591	3591	3591
Number of groups	200	200	200	200	200	200	200
Wald chi2	78.30***	39.59*	49.57**	56.65***	57.25***	67.97***	41.19*
AIC (null model) <sup>b</sup>	1413	1817	776	2781	3217	4966	4975
AIC (MEP-model)	1300	1798	750	2610	3114	4899	4939
AIC (this model)	1249	1788	743	2595	3088	4853	4916

<sup>a</sup> See Appendix 7B for log-odds and standard errors; <sup>b</sup> AIC is preferred over BIC here, since BIC penalizes heavily for the large sample size; \*  $p < 0.05$ , \*\*  $p < 0.01$ , \*\*\*  $p < 0.001$

No expectations were formulated regarding co-sponsoring and the likelihood of the Specific focus, but a negative effect of co-sponsoring with fellow committee members was found. This is in line with the informational logic that legislators cooperate to exchange expertise instead of bargaining over interests (Krehbiel, 1992: 84–85; Shepsle and Weingast, 1987). The results also show a negative effect of co-sponsoring with MEPs from the same Member State on the Administrative focus compared to single sponsored amendments. This indicates that co-sponsoring along national lines might have more to do with interest representation than with unattached interests like administrative norms. Finally, the hypothesized relation between co-sponsoring within the EPG and the Idealist focus was borne out: when MEPs work together along ideological lines, they are more likely to use ideological references.

Secondly, we focused on the role and position of the MEPs. Interestingly, non-committee members also show different representational behavior than the members of the committee as the probability of promoting a Societal focus is larger among non-committee members. This can be explained by the fact that they are less involved in the policy field and thus less likely to try to improve – for example - the consistency of the legislation, but rather more likely to push interests to the front that they think committee members may overlook. The analysis shows that this is only the case for Societal interests. The analysis of the European focus shows that substitutes are more likely than members to refer to a European focus, while there were no specific expectations in this direction. However, as the European focus is rare, the effect size is very small (see Table 7.2). Table 7.4 also shows that shadow rapporteur status is not related to the probability of having any of the foci in an amendment, which might be due to leveling out with rapporteurs being from different Member States and EPGs per dossier.

Third, Table 7.4 shows that the type of externalities produced by a committee matters. As expected, amendments tabled in committees with targeted externalities are more likely to contain the Member State focus, and less likely to contain the Societal and the Administrative focus. The likelihood of the European geographical focus in general is very low and no differences between kinds of committees were found. Surprisingly, a positive relation between targeted externalities and the Idealist focus was found, while the expected relations with the likelihood of a Subnational and Specific focus were not borne out. The unexpected direction of the relation with the Idealist focus might be due to potential backlash of defending targeted interests in the EP. The Treaty on European Union (European Union, 2016, Article 10(2)) stipulates that it is the citizens that are to be represented by MEPs, therefore they might resort to Idealist claims instead of the Subnational or Specific focus in committees with targeted externalities.

Finally, comparing the analyses at the MEP- and amendment-level shows that not all results of the fractional multinomial regression were robust. The effects of regional political experience and serving as a committee chair on the likelihood of a Societal focus, and of national political experience on the Administrative focus are not significant in these models. Nevertheless, the previously found effects of position towards European Integration on the

prominence of the Specific and Idealist focus are similar at the amendment-level. In addition, positions on the economic left-right scale and on the GAL-TAN scale were now found to be related to the likelihood of having an Administrative focus. The effects of the electoral system and moment of accession to the EU are more pronounced in this model. Running counter to the expectations, elections with subnational constituencies increase the probability of having a European focus, and now MEPs in a system with preferential voting are found to be less likely to refer to the Subnational focus as well. Yet, as expected, being elected with subnational constituencies is now significantly, positively related to the likelihood of a Specific focus in an amendment.

## 7.7 Conclusion

Understanding who or what is represented by European legislators has been subject to research for over five decades. The common conclusion is that neither socialization models, nor characteristics of the Member States help us much in understanding the foci of representation. In this paper, we argued that this lack of explanatory power is due to overlooking findings on 'role switching'. If representatives regularly switch roles depending on the policy domain (Miller and Stokes, 1963: 56) and depending on their formal position (Andeweg, 1997; Van Vonno, 2012), we should look beyond aggregated data at the MEP level to understand their distribution of foci.

In this paper, we first showed that the explanations previously tested for attitudes towards representation - legislative socialization, ideological stance, and Member State characteristics - do not explain representational behavior well when analyzed *at the MEP level*. The largest effects were found for MEPs who studied Economics, which is positively related to a Specific interests focus, and for MEPs who previously served at the national level, who were less likely to have an Administrative focus. However, the explanatory power of the model was limited. Yet, the lack of consistent findings on the hypothesized effects of electoral incentives might be due to the nature of the activity: amendments are largely hidden from the broader public, and the argumentation is mostly aimed at fellow MEPs. Therefore, we could have expected electoral incentives to play a smaller role here. Thus, these results suggest that future research should look into if the distribution of foci varies across legislative activities and if so, how and why that is the case.

Second, we found that non-members of a committee differ *in amending behavior* from the formally involved MEPs. More specifically, the likelihood of the Societal focus was larger and of the Administrative focus smaller. As on average, the share of the Societal focus was found to be much smaller than the share of the Administrative focus, this suggests a positive effect of the open rule of amendments on the diversity of interests that are represented.

In addition, we found that - like Miller and Stokes (1963) observed - the type of policy domain matters. The likelihood of a Member State and Idealist focus is larger for amendments in committees with targeted externalities, while the likelihood of a Societal or Administrative focus is lower compared to committees with uniform externalities. However, while this follows the logic of Lowi (1964: 689-690) that policy shapes politics, we should keep in mind

that different policy domains may attract MEPs with different preferences for who or what they want to represent. We know from the literature that specialization and interest in a field plays a role in committee assignment (e.g. Yordanova, 2009) and the analysis here showed that non-members amend differently than committee members. This would mean that it is not necessarily the output the committee produces that forms the relation with the representational focus, but that self-selection, committee assignment, and subsequent socialization in committee could foster norms of representational behavior. Therefore, future research could focus on the legislative socialization that takes place in the parliamentary committees and how that shapes representational attitudes and behavior. Overall, our findings show that in order to increase our understanding of representational behavior of MEPs, one should take the legislative context of the specific dossier into account.

## Chapter 8

### Conclusion

Co-sponsorship, committee membership, and the type of dossiers encountered matter to understand who and what Members of European Parliament (MEPs) represent. In other words, the research presented in this dissertation shows that MEPs have multiple foci of representation, and that these are related to the legislative context in which MEPs find or maneuvered themselves.

These main findings result from a study that aimed to *explore and explain who and what Members of European Parliament represent in their legislative behavior*. In order to achieve this goal, a novel dataset with all committee amendments tabled in the European Parliament (EP) during the 7<sup>th</sup> legislature (2009-2014) was compiled and explored. Using 1,986 documents, over 200,000 amendments related to 1,523 different dossiers were gathered. Subsequently, two key characteristics of amendments were analyzed: the (co-)sponsoring MEPs (the ‘maker’), and the representative claims (the ‘object’) in the content of the amendment these MEPs table.

It is often argued that the European Parliament is unique (e.g. Martin et al., 2014: 1). Yet, this study implicitly started from the premise that even though the EP has a history and characteristics that are different from other parliaments, we can gain a better understanding of the processes at work by using frameworks developed in other settings. Members of European Parliament are still elected representatives who meet regularly and have clearly outlined powers within a larger political system. Therefore, expectations regarding with whom MEPs would cooperate were drawn from theories of legislative organization (Cox and McCubbins, 2007; Krehbiel, 1992; Weingast and Marshall, 1988) and pre-existing types of policy (Lowi, 1972). Furthermore, I went back to the classic concept of ‘focus of representation’ and built upon the original broad conception of who or what can be represented (Eulau et al., 1959; Wahlke et al., 1962). Combined with more recent empirical insights in ‘role switching’ in the Dutch parliament (Andeweg, 1997; Van Vonno, 2012), I developed a new concept to describe how MEPs combine foci of representation: the distribution of foci. Finally, drawing from both EU-specific (e.g. Wessels, 1999) and more general literature on legislators (e.g. Bell and Price, 1975) expectations were formulated regarding how we can explain who and what MEPs represent in their legislative behavior.

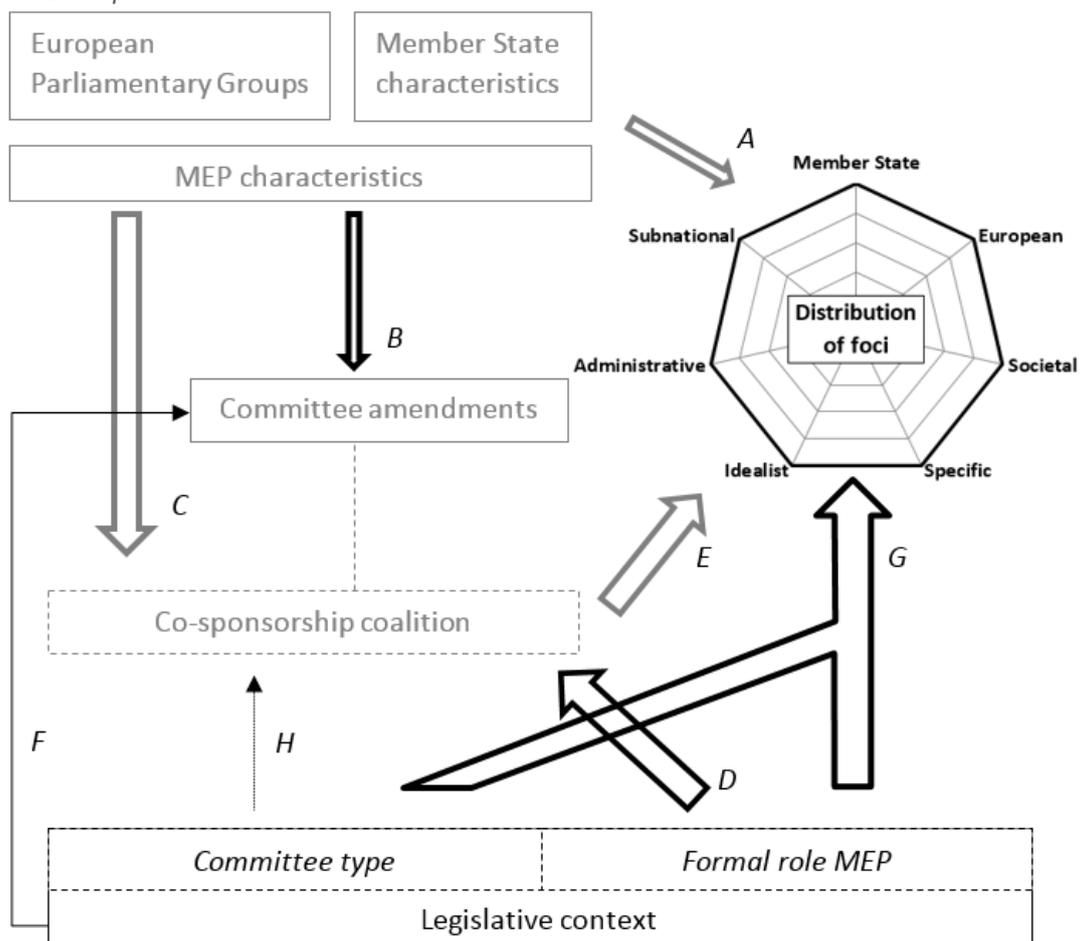
In this concluding chapter, the main findings are summarized thematically. Next, implications of these results for the role of the EP and MEPs in the legitimacy of the European Union (EU) are discussed. Subsequently, I elaborate on the limitations of my dissertation and possible opportunities for further research are outlined. Finally, I reflect on the image that surfaces when one puts all the pieces of the puzzle together: that MEPs seem to be multi-faceted, versatile legislators. In that sense, they resemble chameleons: shifting color slightly in relation with circumstances. Yet, not erratically adapting to every element of the

environment, but rather switching between a limited set of options shaped via experiences and in reaction to incentives.

### 8.1 Summary of findings

In Chapter 1 of this dissertation, the different parts of this study and their interplay were captured in a model. Reflecting on the results of this dissertation, nuance can be added to the scheme (Figure 8.1, original in grey, changes in black). The adapted model indicates that, first of all, the block with ‘Content: Foci of representation’ has been replaced with a radar graph providing more information about which foci are included in this study and how we can graphically show the distributions of foci. Secondly, the ‘Legislative context’ at the bottom of the figure has been broken down into more specific parts: the committee type, the formal role of the MEP, and further legislative context. Third, to graphically give an indication of strength of effects and to accommodate the changes to the block of the legislative context arrows have been adapted and added. Finally, letters have been added to the arrows to ease discussion of the figure.

Figure 8.1 Adapted research model



The results are structured in four sections. The first section discusses how in this dissertation ‘representational behavior in amendments’ was handled. This section outlines how the focus of representation was captured and which lessons were learned about MEPs and the (relation between) attitudes, activity levels, and representational claims in amendments. Second, a summary is provided of the ‘distribution of foci’ and it is highlighted how the literature on party systems helped to overcome methodological challenges. The third section addresses the results of including the legislative context of amendments in this dissertation. The fourth section reflects on the findings on and from the use of ‘Congressional theories’ of legislative organization.

### *8.1.1 From representational attitude to representational behavior in amendments*

#### Capturing the focus of representation in amendments

One aim of this dissertation was to move beyond using attitudes towards representation and self-reported behavior to study the focus of representation. Instead, the representative claims made in committee amendments have been analyzed to shed new light on who and what is represented by MEPs. A first finding in this regard is that amendments themselves often do not give many clues about who the represented are, but that the argumentation in justifications provides more clarity. Thus, the justifications accompanying a substantial share (32.1%) of the committee amendments under the Ordinary Legislative Procedure (OLP/COD) are crucial for assessing the representative claims made in an amendment (Chapter 2). A second finding is that the list of foci to include in analysis depends on the one hand on whether unattached interests are deemed to be possible foci of representation and on the other hand on the political system studied.

In this dissertation, these amendments were content coded for the presence of seven foci of representation to capture representational behavior (labels next to radar chart in Figure 8.1). In many studies, the geographical foci are central, i.e. as in state versus nation. Yet, Wahlke et al. (1962: 269) already added party, pressure group, and administrative organization to this list. As summarized in Table 8.1, three *types* of foci are included in this dissertation: geographical foci, foci referring to other attached interests, and foci capturing unattached interests. As the EU is a multi-level system, three geographical foci are taken into account: the Subnational focus, the Member State focus, and the European focus.

*Table 8.1 Foci of representation included in this dissertation*

<b>Type of focus</b>	<b>Label</b>	<b>Primarily based on...</b>
Geographical	Subnational	Wahlke et al. (1962)
	Member State	Wahlke et al. (1962)
	European	Hagger and Wing (1979); Wessels (1999)
Other attached interests	Societal	Naurin (2007)
	Specific	Naurin (2007)
Unattached interests	Administrative	Wahlke et al. (1962); Pitkin (1967)
	Idealist	Pitkin (1967)

The other two types of foci are based on the difference between attached and unattached interests derived from Pitkin (1967). Attached interests are *'of someone'*, meaning that there is a group of people who can be consulted about correspondence between their interests and the way in which their interests are represented (Pitkin, 1967: 210). The Societal and Specific foci, based on Naurin (2007), capture two of these groups (see Chapter 2 for a more in-depth account). The Societal focus of representation combines the representation of descriptive subgroups in society (like women, minorities, elderly), animals, and *'citizens'* in general. The Specific focus captures are more limited group: organized socio-economic interests (like farmers), business interests, and organized non-business interests.

In contrast, unattached interests are abstractions, where something is objectively at stake, but "there is no particular person or group whose interests it is" (Pitkin, 1967: 158). Typical examples of unattached interests are the ideals of *'justice'*, *'peace'*, *'fairness'*, and *'human rights'* (e.g. Bochel and Defty, 2012: 94; Halpin and McLaverty, 2010: 67–68; Pitkin, 1967: 158). These ideals are captured in the Idealist focus. The Administrative focus combines the attached interests of the "executive or administrative officers and agents" (Wahlke et al., 1962: 12) with unattached administrative norms that contribute to the technical perfection of legislation (like consistency and legal certainty).

The Party focus was not included in this dissertation. Despite its prevalence in the literature on national parliaments (e.g. Andeweg, 1997; Brack et al., 2012; Chiru and Enyedi, 2015; Converse and Pierce, 1986: 675; Wessels, 1999), this focus is less relevant for the European level. In most political systems, political parties are important vehicles in the strive for re-election and office. Therefore, the party and its voters can be a focus of representation. Yet, in the context of the EP the link of a legislator with a party and the party voters is weaker. In the EP, MEPs are grouped according to ideology in EP Party Groups (EPGs), while they are dependent on national level parties to be put on the party list for re-election. Compared to national level parties, these EPGs exert lower levels of party discipline (Kreppel, 2006: 260). Furthermore, for over decades, citizens have paid limited attention to the EP and EP elections, treating them as *'second-order national elections'* (Schmitt, 2005). Therefore, the likelihood of finding this Party focus was limited. In contrast to the literature on national parliaments, but in line with these reasons for a weaker link between MEPs and parties, the pilot phase of content coding of amendments showed that the party focus was extremely rare (Chapter 2). The code was therefore excluded from the codebook. Nevertheless, this does not mean we should disregard the Party focus altogether, but rather that we should consider that the list of foci of representation is related to the political system studied and may depend on the circumstances of an elected representative.

#### Lessons learned on attitudes, activity levels, and representational claims in amendments

The process of coding these amendments (Chapter 2), exploring the rules and use of amendments in a comparative perspective with other activities (Chapter 3), describing (Chapter 6) and explaining (Chapter 7) the (distribution of) foci of representation, and looking into the relation between attitudes towards European Integration and behavior of MEPs

(Chapters 4, 5, and 7) has generated insights in changing the dependent variable and the relation between attitudes, activity levels, and representational claims in amendments. In summary, the results indicate that 1) amending activity is different from other activities that MEPs can employ, 2) that the representational focus in legislative behavior may be different from and explained in a different way than attitudes towards representation, and 3) that the attitudes towards European Integration and thus in a way towards the own institution have inconclusive relationships with different forms of behavior of MEPs.

First of all, the results presented here have shown that studying attitudes, activity levels, or representational claims in different activities leads to different results. Chapter 3 demonstrated that activity levels vary greatly: the number of reports amended and the number of amendments tabled are only weakly related to the number of speeches made, written declarations submitted, and parliamentary questions asked. This means that when researching behavior of MEPs one should not expect different explanations to have the same effect across activities.

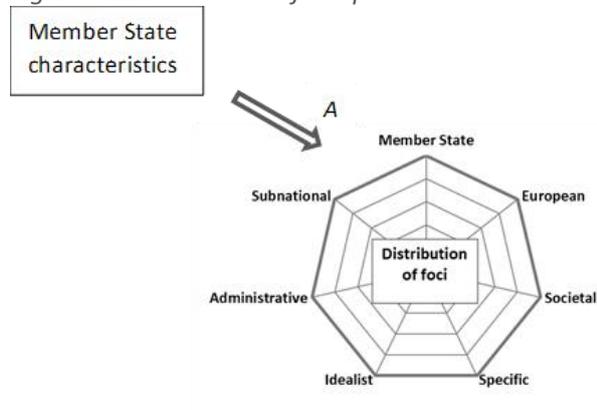
Furthermore, the mean distribution of foci found in Chapter 6 differs from the distribution found in plenary speeches (Lord and Tamvaki, 2013). The analysis of representative claims made in amendments by 200 MEPs showed that references to geographical foci are relatively scarce. This is different from Lord and Tamvaki (2013: 45), since they found the European common good to be the most prevalent in plenary speeches. Based on claims-making literature, I would argue that as speeches are not only a communication tool towards fellow MEPs but also a boost-your-profile tool towards the national party (Slapin and Proksch, 2010), these differences in findings could be due to the 'addressee': to whom the claim is directed (De Wilde, 2013: 286).

While the Societal and Specific focus were found to be more prevalent than geographical foci, Chapter 6 shows that the distributions of foci are especially skewed towards the Administrative and Idealist foci. This is surprising as the geographical foci of representation are often the central foci in analyses (e.g. Martin, 2011b; Sozzi, 2016a). These results thus show that it is important to look beyond the geographical foci and geographical constituency service in studying representation, as it can give a biased picture of who and what legislators represent. Yet, the differences observed between speeches and amendments are also a first indication that the characteristics of the context on an amendment may matter for the distribution of foci.

Secondly, another difference between previous studies into attitudes towards representation amongst MEPs and the results in this dissertation is the explanatory power of electoral incentives (arrow A in Figure 8.1.A). In Chapter 7 we attempted to explain variations in the distributions of foci using a model previously applied to explain attitudes towards representation amongst MEPs. We found that the type of electoral system used hardly had any explanatory power, while Wessels (1999: 223) found significant relations between role orientations and characteristics of the electoral system. On the one hand, this difference might be due to the changes in the electoral systems used in EP elections that happened with the Treaty of Amsterdam (1997), when the district magnitude and use of proportional

representation was more harmonized. This means that the MEPs studied in this dissertation were subject to different electoral incentives than those elected in 1994 and studied by Wessels (Schmitt and Thomassen, 1999: v).

Figure 8.1.A Section A of adapted research model



However, on the other hand, these differences might be due to the change in what we are trying to explain: attitudes towards representation and the representational foci in legislative behavior. Survey or interview questions aiming to capture the focus of representation capture two things at once: what the MEP thinks (s)he is representing and what the MEP thinks (s)he should represent. Furthermore, these measures capture an overall image across activities, which means that if the representational focus in amending behavior is distinctly different from representational focus in other activities, discrepancies between the results of this dissertation and previous studies were to be expected.

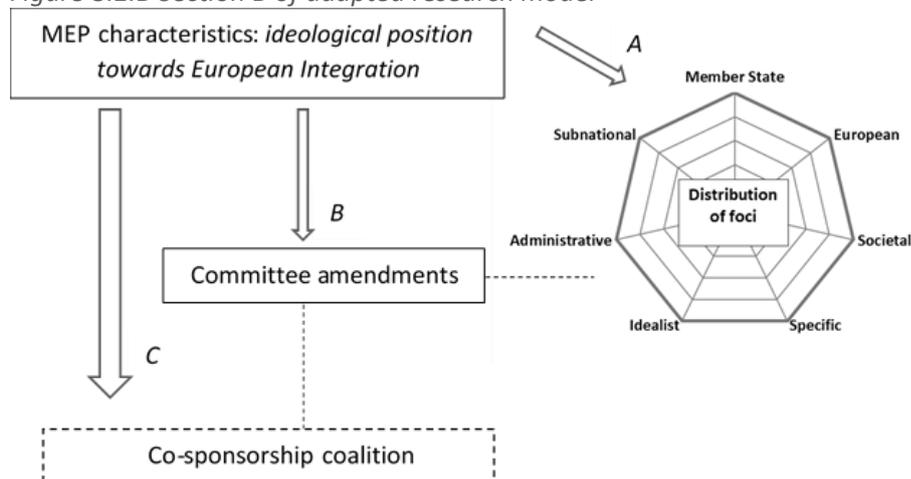
Third, regarding the relationship between attitudes and representational behavior, this relationship seems weak at best (e.g. Searing, 1994: 12; Van Vonno, 2012). Due to data availability, attitudes towards representation could not be included in this dissertation. However, following Navarro (2012), attitudes towards European Integration have been taken into account, given that the view of a legislator on the function, role, and future of the parliament is likely to shape the role orientation. The results in Chapter 3 showed that MEPs who are negative towards further European Integration are indeed less likely to table amendments (arrow B in Figure 8.1.B). This is in line with previous findings of Brack (2012) regarding exit and voice strategies of Eurosceptic MEPs.

Chapters 4 and 5 provided a different story regarding the relation between attitudes towards European Integration and behavior of MEPs: distance between two MEPs on this ideological scale was found to be unrelated to the likelihood of co-sponsorship (arrow C in Figure 8.1.B). This lack of a relationship was not only found on an aggregate level for repeated co-sponsorship (Chapter 4), but also when analyzed per EP committee (Chapter 5). In addition, the analysis of within- and across-EPG co-sponsorship (Chapter 4) showed mixed effects of ideological alikeness, with GUE/NGL MEPs being more likely to co-sponsor within the EPG and ECR MEPs less likely to do so compared to S&D MEPs.

Finally, the results of Chapter 7 showed that being more in favor of European Integration is positively related to having a more predominant Specific focus, while a negative effect was

found for the Idealist focus (arrow A in Figure 8.1.B). As argued in Chapter 7, this finding could be due to MEPs in favor of European Integration paying more attention to the practicalities of European Integration, while those against (further) integration take an ideological stance against it.

Figure 8.1.B Section B of adapted research model



### 8.1.2 From ‘focus’ and ‘role switching’ to a ‘distribution of foci’

From the start, foci of representation were not conceived to be mutually exclusive (Eulau et al., 1959; Wahlke et al., 1962). Rather, foci of representation may occur simultaneously, or “activated *seriatim* as circumstances require” (Eulau et al., 1959: 745). Combining this starting point with empirical observations into ‘role switching’ (Andeweg, 1997; Costa and Kerrouche, 2009; Miller and Stokes, 1963; Van Vonno, 2012), the concept of a ‘distribution of foci’ was introduced in this dissertation. This ‘distribution of foci’ provides a picture of the constellation of foci of MEPs (Chapter 6), which was subsequently used to serve as one phenomenon to be explained (Chapter 7).

The analysis in Chapter 6 provided a stepwise underpinning of this idea by first exploring the empirical distributions of ‘foci’ and describing the ‘distributions of foci’. These analyses showed that the unattached Administrative and Idealist foci are on average more prevalent than the other foci, but also that there is considerable variation between MEPs in their distribution of foci. Moreover, it was demonstrated that one focus is not enough to capture the representational behavior of most MEPs. The distribution of foci thus captures the complexity of the reality of representation better than focusing on the dominant focus of representation of an MEP. Still, the analysis in Chapter 7 has shown that this new concept functions best to *describe* representation, as further analysis poses methodological challenges.

This last observation is partly due to methodological challenges in working with the ‘distribution of foci’. As there was an unequal number of amendments in the sample per MEP, as the different foci of representation were not necessarily independent from each other, and

as each amendment could contain references to more than one focus of representation, analyzing this data was not straightforward. After exploring several options, the choice was made to work with a compositional approach, meaning that within one MEP the fractions of the different foci add up to one (Chapter 6). As a result, an increase in skewness towards one focus must mean a decrease towards at least one other focus. Even though the compositional data problem is extensively discussed in multiple scientific disciplines (e.g. Aitchison, 1982; Aitchison and Egozcue, 2005; Katz and King, 1999; Pawlowsky-Glahn and Buccianti, 2011), solutions are so far limited to specific analyses and types of compositional data.

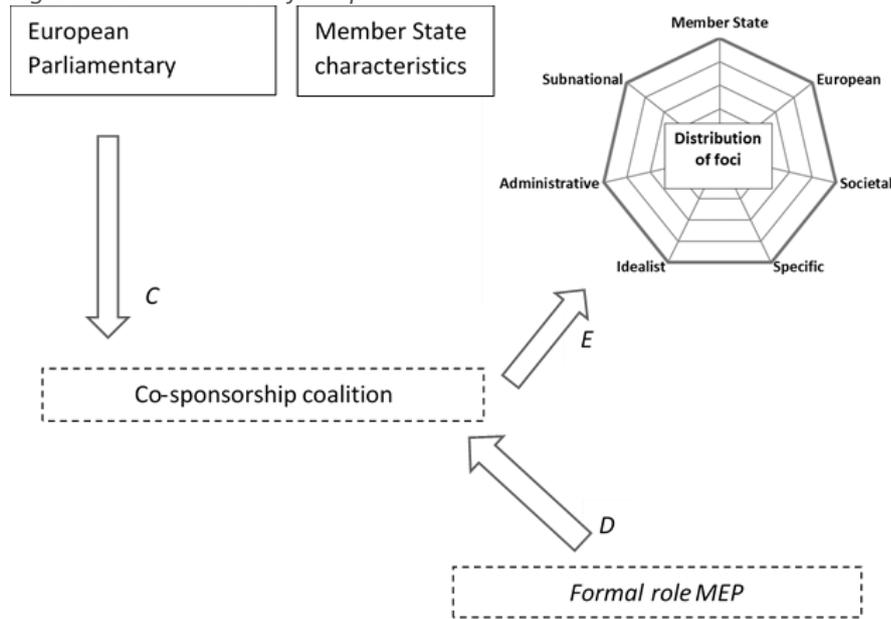
To deal with the compositional data problem, the analysis in Chapter 6 drew on the party systems literature for a measure to describe the data. In describing party systems, scholars encountered the problem that more parties compete in elections than are relevant to characterize the party system (Lijphart, 1968: 33; Sartori, 1966: 139). The formula for the effective number of parties by Laakso and Taagepera (1979) deals with this problem. Recently this formula was updated by Golosov (2010) to better capture systems with a very small effective number of parties. This formula was used in Chapter 6 to capture the effective number of foci of an MEP. The results showed that almost all MEPs had more than one focus of representation.

These results thus have three messages for us. First, that it is important to look at the foci of representation with a nuanced lens, as we should expect representatives to combine and switch between foci of representation. Second, that by asking ‘where do I recognize this problem from?’ methodological advances in one subfields of science can spill over into other subfields. Third, that the methodological challenges and explanatory analysis in Chapter 7 have shown that the new concept ‘distribution of foci’ for now functions better to describe representation than to serve as a dependent variable in analysis.

### *8.1.3 Including attention for the (legislative) context*

The research in this dissertation started from the assumption that we should not only expect differences between MEPs, but also within MEPs depending on the context in which they find or maneuver themselves. This assumption was, like the distribution of foci, based on the idea that different ‘focal orientations’ could be activated simultaneously or seriatim depending on the circumstances (Eulau et al., 1959). Empirical studies have provided evidence for this idea (Andeweg, 1997; Costa and Kerrouche, 2009; Miller and Stokes, 1963; Van Vonno, 2012), yet theoretically these findings on ‘role switching’ have hardly led to the inclusion of contextual factors in explaining the behavior of MEPs and explaining who and what is represented. In this dissertation, four contextual factors of amendments are taken into account: co-sponsorship of amendments, legislative procedure, formal role of the MEP, and committee characteristics. The most important finding in this regard is that the context matters for both co-sponsorship and foci of representation. This lends support to the ideas of ‘seriatim focal orientations’ and ‘role switching’.

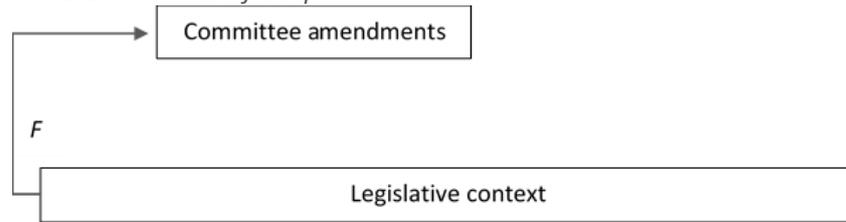
Figure 8.1.C Section C of adapted research model



First, the co-sponsorship of amendments was not only explored as an explanatory factor, but also as a phenomenon as such. The results in this dissertation show that co-sponsorship is not driven by one type of similarity between two MEPs, but rather that being elected in the same Member State, being affiliated to the same EP Party Group, and serving on the same EP committee contribute to the likelihood of a co-sponsor relationship (arrows C and D in Figure 8.1.C). I found that this is both the case when looking at recurring co-sponsorship relations (Chapter 4) and when looking at co-sponsorship per EP committee (Chapter 5). Nevertheless, for recurring co-sponsorship the effect of shared committee membership was found to be stronger than the other similarities. As we know that committee membership in the EP is to quite some degree driven by expertise and specialization (McElroy, 2006; Whitaker, 2011: 59–90; Yordanova, 2009), and as the effect of shared committee membership is stronger than the effects of similarity in Member State or EPG, these findings indicate that specialization might be the most important driving force behind co-sponsorship. Furthermore, these findings are in line with the informational theory of legislative organization, which, among other expectations, posits that expertise may be the driving force for cooperation (Krehbiel, 1992: 84–85).

The relation of co-sponsorship of amendments with foci of representation in amendments was explored in Chapter 7 (arrow E in Figure 8.1.C). The results indicate that co-sponsorship, regardless of the shape it takes, is correlated with foci of representation. The most surprising finding is that even when the co-sponsoring MEPs only share Member State affiliation, this is not related to a Member State geographical focus, but rather to a more likely Subnational or European geographical focus and a less likely Administrative focus. Even though the causality of this relation is unclear, it indicates that cooperation on side of the ‘maker’ of a representative claim should be taken into account when trying to explain the ‘object’ of the claim.

Figure 8.1.D Section D of adapted research model



Furthermore, in Chapters 2 and 3 it was shown that the type of procedure matters for the analysis of activity levels and representational behavior (arrow F in Figure 8.1.D). The process of content analysis of amendments showed that the justification was crucial for coding representational claims (Chapter 2), yet the overview of the rules of procedure indicated that these justifications are formally limited to amendments tabled under the Ordinary Legislative Procedure (Chapter 3). As a result, amendments may be used differently under different EP procedures, which the exploration of the use of amendments in Chapter 3 empirically showed. This means that the results of analyses are not necessarily generalizable, but rather that we should look at the specific rules and incentives for behavior under different EP procedures.

Another aspect of the legislative context that was explored in this dissertation are the formal roles of an MEP: *in relation to the EP, in relation to the committee, and in relation to the dossier at hand*. This trinity of formal relations of an MEP expands the ‘formal position’ of a representative beyond backbenchers and frontbenchers (e.g. Searing, 1994), or show horses and work horses (e.g. Sorace, 2018). In summary, the findings in this dissertation indicate that the relation between formal role and behavior is more intricate than a frontbencher/backbencher dichotomy, while especially that leadership effect was mostly absent.

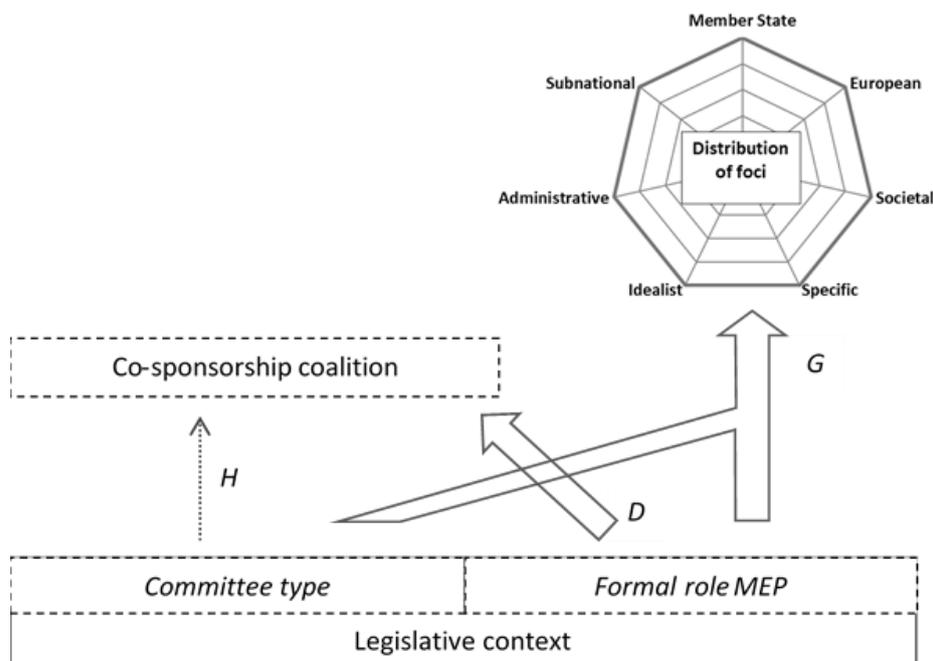
First, in the *relation of an MEP with the EP* a distinction was made between MEPs serving as EP leaders in the role of parliamentary chairmanships or leadership of an EPG, and MEPs serving as committee (vice-)chairs. Despite suggestions from the literature (e.g. Searing, 1994; Sorace, 2018), barely any effects of these formal statuses was found, as EP leadership and committee (vice-)chair was not significant in explaining the likelihood of using committee amendments (Chapter 3; not in Figure 8.1) or in explaining the likelihood of presence of any of the foci of representation in amendments (Chapter 7; arrow G in Figure 8.1.E). The only significant effect was a small, negative effect of EP leadership on the skewness of distributions of foci towards the Societal focus. This is in line with the EP as a parliament following an informational logic, where power of the individual is of a relatively limited importance.

Second, the formal *relation of an MEP with the committees* is formed by committee membership. Each committee has a limited number of members (see Chapter 2) and substitutes assigned, while the open rule of amendments enables MEPs without a formal relation to that committee to table amendments anyway. The results of Chapter 3 show that most amendments are tabled by committee members, while shadow rapporteurs and substitutes also table a substantial share of the amendments. Nevertheless, MEPs without a

formal role in that committee still table almost 6% of the committee amendments. In the most extreme case, 83 non-members of a committee tabled at least one amendment in reaction to one draft report.

In the analysis of what drives recurring co-sponsorship, committee membership had a pronounced effect (Chapter 4; arrow D in Figure 8.1.E). Compared to two committee members the likelihood of forming a co-sponsorship bond decreased as the MEPs are less involved in the committee, meaning that two MEPs that did not share any committee affiliation were the least likely to co-sponsor compared to other combinations of membership, substitute status and non-membership. When analyzed per EP committee and with a more lenient definition of co-sponsorship, these results were quite robust, although not consistently significant in every single committee (Chapter 5). Yet, the difference between two substitutes and two non-members became less pronounced. This indicates that different processes might be at work to establish a one-time co-sponsorship or a more recurring relation.

Figure 8.1.E Section E of adapted research model



Committee membership was also found to affect the likelihood of foci of representation in amendments (Chapter 7; arrow G in Figure 8.1.E), with substitutes being more likely to represent the European geographical focus and non-members more likely to represent the Societal focus compared to committee members. This indicates a positive effect of open rule of amendments in committee on the diversity of interests that are represented.

Third, the *relationship between an MEP and a dossier* is most clear via the formal roles of rapporteur and shadow rapporteur. While the role of the rapporteur has been subject of much research (e.g. Benedetto, 2005; Hurka et al., 2015; Kaeding, 2005), it only plays a minor role in this dissertation. This is because amendments tabled by the rapporteur as single

sponsor can be generated by several processes in which the rapporteur sometimes only is the messenger that delivers a compromise (Chapter 2). The results in Chapter 7 indicate that no effect of shadow rapporteurship was found (arrow G in Figure 8.1.E). Yet, as shadow rapporteurs are likely to function as a counterbalance to the rapporteur or as a compromise generating actor, their distribution of foci might shift depending on the other actors active. Therefore the lack of a systematic effect could have been expected.

The final aspect of the legislative context put quite central in this dissertation is the type and power of the committee in which the amendment was tabled. Following previous approaches in the literature (e.g. Rasmussen, 2011; Whitaker, 2005; Yordanova, 2009), committees were classified according to the type of externalities they produce (i.e. who they affect or benefit: targeting a subgroup or uniform for all those subject to the regulation) and the power of the committee based on its jurisdiction and dealing with dossiers under OLP/COD. Yet, the effects of these committee characteristics are not consistent across types of behavior. The results in Chapter 5 (arrow H in Figure 8.1.E) show that the type of externalities produced and power of a committee have no consistent significant effect on co-sponsorship between MEPs. Yet, the results in Chapter 7 (arrow G in Figure 8.1.E) show that the likelihood of the Member State geographical focus and Idealist focus are larger for amendments in committees with targeted externalities, while the likelihood of a Societal or Administrative focus is lower compared to committees with uniform externalities. This indicates that either MEPs adapt to the type of committee and dossiers they find themselves confronted with or self-select into these situations based on their preferences.

In conclusion, all these findings indicate that the context matters to understand how MEPs amend and represent. Yet, how the context matters differs per contextual factor and per element of amending behavior studied. While further research is warranted into how dossier characteristics affect amending behavior and into the relation between co-sponsorship of amendments and content of the amendment, the findings do support the idea of Eulau et al. (1959) that circumstances may lead to different 'focal orientations' to be activated simultaneously or seriatim.

#### *8.1.4 Congressional theories of legislative organization to explain co-sponsorship*

Like many other scholars, I drew upon theories of legislative organization developed in the context of the US Congress – the so-called Congressional theories – to generate new insights in the functioning of the European Parliament (Brack and Costa, 2018; Daniel and Thierse, 2018; Hermansen, 2018; Hurka, 2013; Hurka et al., 2015; Kaeding, 2004; Ringe, 2010: 36–38; Whitaker, 2018; Yordanova, 2009). Most often these theories are used to study parliamentary set-up, committee assignment and the resulting committee composition, while in this dissertation these theories have been used to derive hypotheses about rationales for co-sponsorship.

Across the different chapters, applying the Congressional theories helped to shed new light on the behavior of MEPs. Therefore, I do not join the call that we should stop using these theories outside the context of the US and should develop European theories instead

(Yordanova, 2011). Rather, I concur with Martin and Mickler (2018: 13) that with small adaptations of the theories and awareness of differences in context, we can apply theories developed for the US Congress outside of that setting. Yet, if the most important message of this dissertation is that MEPs are versatile, we should stay open for the possibility that multiple logics are at work simultaneously.

To summarize, the three dominant theories of legislative organization – the partisan, distributive, and informational perspectives – posit different rationales for organization of legislatures and behavior of legislators. The analyses of recurring co-sponsorship of amendments (Chapter 4) and co-sponsorship per EP committee (Chapter 5) showed that all three rationales contribute to explaining with whom MEPs co-sponsor. This indicates that the theories seem to be complimentary instead of competing, as they are often portrayed (Martin and Mickler, 2018: 9). Yet, the relative explanatory power of the rationales differed depending on the context.

Despite their more loose set-up and functioning, EP Party Groups (EPGs) play an important role in the EP (e.g. Roger and Winzen, 2015). The *partisan theory* of legislative organization posits that parties reward loyal legislators to make sure that the outcome in committee phase is in line with what the party wants. Anticipating this party behavior, office-seeking committee members are expected to be loyal to the party line. The expectation tested was that establishing the party line and showing loyalty to the party is done by establishing co-sponsorships within the party group. Chapters 4 and 5 provide support for this expectation as being affiliated to the same EPG increases the likelihood of a recurring co-sponsorship relation and the likelihood of co-sponsoring in general. As a Party focus was empirically rare in committee amendments, the partisan theory was not taken into account in other parts of the dissertation.

Central in the *distributive theory* is the advantage that can be won for the home constituency in committee setting. According to this rationale, elected representatives put re-election central and therefore want to please their electoral constituents. Committee setting facilitates this, because it is a venue that creates stability and credible log-rolling (Martin, 2014: 354). As re-election opportunities in the EU are situated at the Member State level, being affiliated to the same Member State was expected to contribute to the likelihood of cooperation and shared credit-claiming amongst MEPs.

While the analyses of co-sponsorship in Chapters 4 and 5 provided consistent support for this expectation, the analysis of how this is related to the representative claims in amendments (Chapters 6 and 7) showed a different image. Description of the distributions of foci and the likelihood of the use of geographical foci in amendments (Chapter 6) indicated that the Subnational and Member State geographical foci are relatively less prevalent than other foci of representation. Furthermore, while co-sponsoring within the Member State was found to be positively related to the Subnational focus, this effect was not found for the Member State focus. Moreover, surprisingly, co-sponsoring with fellow countrymen was found to be positively related to a European geographical focus, which is not in line with the

distributive theory. The different studies in this dissertation thus provide mixed support for the distributive rationale in the context of the European Parliament.

In contrast, more support is found for the *informational theory* of legislative organization. The central argument in this approach is that good policies require the processing of a lot of information about the likely effect of a policy measure. This processing can be done more efficiently in committee setting where information on the topic is (already) accumulated (Krehbiel, 1992: 84–85). As committee assignment is already partly due to expertise in a policy field (Whitaker, 2011: 77), to fulfil the 'informed production role', and to reach policy goals in committee setting, MEPs will specialize (further). Within this approach, legislators are policy seeking and they co-sponsor to signal support for a proposal and to signal information about the content of the proposal (Alemán and Calvo, 2013: 358). Therefore, they were expected to co-sponsor with fellow specialists from the EP committee.

The analysis of recurring co-sponsorship (Chapter 4) showed the strongest effect of this logic compared to other rationales for co-sponsorship. The evidence in analysis per EP committee is slightly less convincing, as not all effects were significant and relative effect sizes fluctuated. Outside of the analysis of co-sponsorship other chapters provide support for an informational logic in the EP as well. The analysis of who amends (Chapter 3) showed that the set of amending actors is mostly comprised of committee affiliates, in a (shadow) rapporteur role or not. On average, only a limited number of non-members of the lead committee tables committee amendments. This is in line with the informational theory, as this signals division of labor and activity of more specialized MEPs.

In addition, analysis of the foci of representation in amendments (Chapter 6) showed that the Administrative focus is very prevalent in EP committee amendments, while this was not expected based on previous research into plenary speeches (Lord and Tamvaki, 2013: 44). As this focus captures not only the interests of the “administrative officers and agents” (Wahlke et al., 1962: 12), but also administrative norms regarding the technical perfection of legislation, the importance of this focus suggests that the MEPs in committee setting behave even more in line with the informational logic than could be concluded from the chapters in which this theory was explicitly tested.

Despite excluding the *bicameral-rivalry theory* (Groseclose and King, 2001) in this dissertation, findings regarding cross-party co-sponsorship and the (Super) Grand Coalition do speak to this rationale for legislative organization and behavior (Chapters 4 and 5). Especially the pivotal role of ALDE in recurring cross-party co-sponsorships is an indication of Super Grand Coalition dynamics being present in the pre-trilogue and pre-plenary phase. This suggest that MEPs might already be anticipating inter-institutional negotiations this early in the legislative process, which lends support for the idea that power vis-à-vis other ‘chambers’ might be driving behavior of individual legislators (Martin, 2014: 359–360). This is further supported by observations regarding recurring co-sponsorship of the smaller, ideologically more extreme EPGs (like GUE/NGL and ECR), which suggests cooperation as some sort of ‘opposition’ against the de facto (Super) Grand Coalition. Yet, as these findings were not

found to be very robust when analyzing co-sponsorship per EP committee, future research could look deeper into under which circumstances these dynamics are most likely to surface.

The aim was not only to derive theoretically guided, testable expectations from the theories of legislative organization, but also to assess the scope and limitations of the 'Congressional theories' in the setting of the European Parliament. This aim is grounded in the ongoing scholarly debate about the possibility of letting these theories travel to other parliaments, with other incentives and slightly different institutions (Martin, 2014: 365–366; Martin and Mickler, 2018: 13). As argued by Hix and Høyland (2014: 591), the EP is the European parliament most resembling the US Congress in terms of party discipline, lack of threat of dissolution of the legislature, inter-institutional separation of powers, and committee structure. Nevertheless, some processes and patterns are different, like government-opposition dynamics, in which policy fields the parliament has competencies, and doubts regarding the strength of the electoral connection in the European Parliament. As a result, some adaptations were necessary, like downplaying the expected likelihood of finding support for the distributive theory of legislative organization in Chapter 4.

Furthermore, in this dissertation the theories did not only travel to another parliament, but also to another feature of parliament: co-sponsorship of amendments instead of committee formation. The approach in this dissertation was to distill mechanisms from the theories that could serve as drivers of behavior regardless of the specific circumstances. In order to do that, these theories were connected to the 'goals' of legislators that Strøm (1997, 2012) identified. In Chapter 1, it was argued that this combination is needed, as Strøm's theory contains too many conditionalities to derive straightforward expectations that can empirically be tested. Even though the EP is a similar case as the US Congress, by applying these theories to another activity, it remains debatable whether I have applied theories of legislative organization or have drifted too far away from the essence of these approaches.

Despite all drawbacks of applying theories developed in one context to another setting, the different chapters of this dissertation did provide new insights. To epitomize, the findings indicate that little support was found for the *partisan theory*. Additionally, mixed results regarding the *distributive theory* show that different theories might be needed to explain different aspects of amending behavior. Thirdly, across the board, the findings show considerable support for the *informational logic*. This logic surfaced both in the importance of committee membership for amending activity and co-sponsorship, and in the skewness of distributions of foci towards the Administrative focus. Finally, the findings indicate that informal government-opposition dynamics within the EP and between European institutions deserve more attention.

## **8.2 Broader implications: the European Parliament and legitimacy**

This dissertation started from the idea that studying who or what MEPs represent not only provides new insights in representation, but can also help shed new light on if and how MEPs contribute to the legitimacy of the EU. With the expansion of powers of the European Parliament and the more widespread use of the ordinary legislative procedure (OLP/COD)

since the Treaty of Lisbon, the EP is without a doubt in a position to contribute to the legitimacy of the EU. This is not only the case on the side of input legitimacy, by being a channel for governing *by* the people (Katz and Wessels, 1999: 5), but also by being able to contribute to output legitimacy via effective solutions to collective problems (Scharpf, 1999: 22), that are efficient and of high quality (Lindgren and Persson, 2010: 457), and resonate with citizens (Schmidt, 2013: 7).

Traditionally, the European Parliament was seen as the main source of input legitimacy of the EU (Horeth, 1999: 250). Yet, Scharpf (1999: 167) argued that the lack of one European public sphere hinders the MEPs in taking up their role as responsive representatives. Though scholars agree that the EP is not the only source of input legitimacy, as national governments and national parliaments also play an important role (e.g. Horeth, 1999; Katz and Wessels, 1999: 9), how MEPs contribute to responsiveness to citizens remains relevant. The prospects to serve as this channel are even improving since a recent study has shown that the attention among citizens for European issues has increased due to the economic crisis (Hobolt and De Vries, 2016), which in turn might serve as a breeding ground for one European public sphere. The question is to what extent the findings in this dissertation indicate that MEPs indeed make use of this potential?

First of all, the results presented in this dissertation show a relatively low importance of the geographical foci and the secondary role of the Societal and Specific foci compared to the Administrative and Idealist foci. This indicates that in their amending behavior MEPs do not represent (material) interests of their constituents as much as some might want to. These findings highlight that in their amending behavior, MEPs are only to a limited degree responsive to attached interests and are thus hardly contributing to input legitimacy of the EU via this parliamentary activity. This would be a problem for output legitimacy as well if one would emphasize the part of the definition that stresses that output should ‘resonate with citizens’ (Schmidt, 2013: 7). However, while responsiveness to the represented might be problematic in the European Parliament, MEPs do seem to contribute to output legitimacy of the EU. Especially the importance of the Administrative focus signifies this, as they are working towards effective, consistent, good quality legislation (Lindgren and Persson, 2010).

Secondly, the importance of shared committee membership in explaining recurring co-sponsorship ties (Chapter 4) supports the claim by Lord (2018) that the EP is functioning like a ‘working parliament’ rather than a ‘debating parliament’. While debating parliaments are “a visible forum of public debate which communicates the political system to the public, and explains and politicizes political choices” (Lord, 2018: 1), working parliaments scrutinize decisions and contribute to effective, high quality solutions. If co-sponsorship is more used as a pre-vote coalition-building tool *across the aisle*, as these findings suggest and Finke (2012) found co-sponsorship of plenary amendments to be, this suggests that co-sponsorship of amendments does not contribute that much to the ‘politicization of political choices’.

Of course, committee amendments are a parliamentary activity where a ‘working parliament’ and contributing to output legitimacy would be most visible. Nevertheless, the relative importance of attached interests in the distributions of foci and of committee

membership on co-sponsoring indicate that in aspects of committee behavior where the balance could tilt towards representing attached interests of citizens and ‘politicization of political choices’, this is not predominantly the case.

An overly strong emphasis on contributing to output legitimacy might jeopardize the overall legitimacy of the system. Shepsle (1988: 482) argued that representativeness and the ability to contribute to solutions for collective problems are *both* relevant features of a legislature. As some sort of conjoined twins, representativeness has no meaning if a parliament has no real powers, while the legitimacy of decisions would be questioned if representativeness of a legislature would be too low. Katz and Wessels (1999: 5) argued that this inevitably leads to a trade-off between “an emphasis on government *for* the people and an emphasis on government *by* the people”. I concur with Lord (2018: 13–14) that for the overall legitimacy of the EU, the EP needs to fulfill two roles: both as a ‘working parliament’ and as a ‘debating parliament’. The results presented in this dissertation indicate that in their amending behavior the balance in the EP might be towards government *for* the people, however studying other parliamentary activities might provide a more nuanced picture.

### **8.3 Limitations and opportunities for further research**

In every scientific endeavor, choices are made along the way that limit about what we can make claims or that are regretted in hindsight. Yet, these decisions are also lessons learned that are relevant for future research and these limitations provide possible avenues for future studies. In this section, the most important limitations and drawbacks are described, while speculating about future opportunities. More specifically, I zoom in on 1) generalizability of this dissertation, 2) the tension between unattached interests and claims making analysis, 3) processes behind committee amendments, 4) classifications of committees and dossiers, and 5) unexplored explanations.

#### **8.3.1 Generalizability**

In order to understand the factors that can explain who and what elected representatives represent in their legislative behavior I looked at the case of the European Parliament. More specifically, I looked mostly at committee amendments tabled during the 7<sup>th</sup> legislature (2009-2014). For the content analysis a sample of 200 MEPs was used. This introduces the question about generalizability of the findings.

On the one hand, the European Parliament is a good case to study the main question as there is an explicit tension between what MEPs express to be their (preferred) focus of representation (e.g. Scully et al., 2012; Wessels, 1999) and what the Treaty describes as their role (European Union, 2016). Furthermore, MEPs are under limited party discipline compared to other parliaments (Raunio, 1999) and have more foci available due to the multilevel structure (Wessels, 1999: 213). Therefore, we can expect visible variation between MEPs that might otherwise be masked by party discipline.

On the other hand, for some of the same reasons, the EP is a ‘most likely case’. Exactly because there is less party discipline, we could expect MEPs to co-sponsor across partisan

lines. Exactly because MEPs are cross-pressured, we may hypothesize that they will have multiple foci of representation. Exactly because MEPs are socialized in different political cultures, we may find inconclusive results regarding the effect of their background characteristics.

One part of this dissertation is based on a sample of MEPs, which poses the question of generalizability to the entire body of MEPs that served during the 7<sup>th</sup> legislature. The analysis of MEPs that did not table any committee amendments compared to those that did (Chapter 3) indicates that especially MEPs that do not serve the full term are less likely to table an amendment and thus to be included in the sample. While some of these MEPs might be systematically different from other MEPs (like Janusz Lewandowski, who was nominated to become a European Commissioner), others might have left for reasons not related to their behavior, like illness. Therefore we should be careful in generalizing the results of this dissertation to those MEPs, but, at the same time, there are no indications that MEPs that did not serve the full term are systematically different.

Yet, Chapter 3 has shown that MEPs that are anti-EU have a larger probability of being under-sampled. Ideological position towards European integration was not consistently significant in the analysis of co-sponsorship relations (Chapters 4 and 5), but it affects the likelihood of the Specific and Idealist foci (Chapter 7). Therefore, we should be careful in making claims about Eurosceptics based on the research presented in this dissertation.

In this dissertation, only one particular activity of MEPs was studied: committee amendments. This begs the question of generalizability towards representation via other activities. As the distribution of foci is expected to shift depending on the circumstances (Eulau et al., 1959: 745), it would be surprising if the same results were to be found if other parliamentary activities were studied. As discussed above, the findings in Chapter 3 indicated that committee amendments are significantly different from other activities MEPs can perform. The findings on distributions of foci in Chapter 6 also indicated that these were different from representational claims used in plenary speeches (Lord and Tamvaki, 2013: 45). One important reason for differences between parliamentary activities could be that different activities have different 'addressees', i.e. the audience of the claim (De Wilde, 2013: 286). Yet, alternative explanations could be the phase in the legislative process, the level of party discipline exerted, or the form in which the claim is made: oral or written. Future research could venture into comparing foci of representation across activities to provide more insights in how institutional arrangements affect variation in representational foci within MEPs.

Generalizability towards other legislatures of the EP is more problematic. When comparing over time, we should be aware of changing rules of procedure, institutional arrangements and powers of the European Parliament (Brack and Costa, 2018). More specifically, as more policy fields are now decided under the ordinary legislative procedure (OLP/COD), compared to previous legislatures, we should be careful in generalizing the conclusions of Chapters 5 and 7. Nevertheless, as MEPs have always operated in a multi-level setting with second-order elections (Reif and Schmitt, 1980), the incentives and opportunities to represent more than one focus have remained quite stable over time. Therefore, I would

expect similar findings for the results of Chapter 6 if I would have looked at another time frame. Furthermore, the early establishment of Intergroups in the EP (Corbett et al., 2011: 208) and organization along ideological lines (Kreppel, 2002b: 55), indicate that from the start directly elected MEPs were exchanging views and cooperating across partisan and national lines. Therefore, although effect sizes might shift slightly, I would still expect co-sponsorships between MEPs within and across Member State, EPG, and committee lines (Chapters 4 and 5).

Generalizability of the results towards other parliaments and political systems would be more challenging, as the European Parliament differs from other parliaments in quite some respects. Most other systems have stronger political parties with higher levels of party discipline and a clearer division of tasks (e.g. Louwerson and Otjes, 2015), which could potentially affect co-sponsorship and add the Party focus to the distribution of foci. Furthermore, formal government-opposition dynamics play a role in most parliaments and may shape which roles Members of Parliament can take up (e.g. Andeweg, 1997). This affects not only co-sponsorship patterns (Louwerson and Otjes, 2015), but may also influence the extent to which the foci come into play. For example, I would expect 'government' MPs to support their executive branch by focusing more on the Administrative focus, while opposition MPs do not have this task and are likely to make claims on behalf of their partisan constituency.

Nonetheless, while we may not expect substantially similar findings in other legislatures, political systems, or behaviors, this does not mean that the approach used in this dissertation cannot be applied to generate new insights in the behavior of elected representatives in other parliaments. Looking at representational claims in the behavior of MPs might shed new light in how they deal with party discipline or a higher level of incentives for personal vote seeking. Furthermore, describing the foci of representation using the 'distribution of foci' in these other settings and keeping an open mind about who and what an MP may represent, may also broaden our view on representativeness of parliaments. Finally, as in this dissertation, studies on legislative roles have shown time and time again that the formal position of a representative and legislative context matter (Andeweg, 1997; Costa and Kerrouche, 2009; Hagger and Wing, 1979; Miller and Stokes, 1963; Searing, 1994). Therefore, more comparative studies within and across legislatures could help shed new light on how the institutional setting and policy environment shape representational behavior. That knowledge would create more clarity about the degree to which we can make generalizations across countries and settings.

### *8.3.2 Unattached interests and claims making analysis*

Based on the theoretical literature on representational claims making (Saward, 2006), the 'maker' and 'object' of the claim were put central in this dissertation. My position is that unattached interests are interests as well and that these interests can be represented and thus be the 'object' of a claim. Therefore, I have included the Idealist focus as a focus of

representation. However, using different notions of what (good) representation is, may lead to another position on this issue.

More specifically, the method of claims making analysis also contains another element: the frame used (Koopmans and Statham, 1999: 207, 2010b: 55–57). Koopmans and Statham (2010b: 55–57) describe the ‘frame’ of a claim as the ‘why’, and the examples in their text show that the frame captures which interest of the ‘object’ is at stake. Therefore, one could argue that the Idealist focus does not capture a representational focus, but rather captures the frame of the claim.

De Wilde (2013: 288) points out that both Pitkin (1967: 8–9) and Koopmans and Statham (2010b: 56), like the approach in this dissertation, would consider a claim to be a representative claim even when it contains no ‘object’, but only a frame. They would, because “making present an opinion in the form of a policy demand which otherwise would not be heard is also an act of representative claims-making” (De Wilde, 2013: 288). He criticizes this approach, mainly because he does not consider ‘making something present’ without a ‘someone’ a form of representation: “as representation is about constructing a relationship between an ‘imagined community’ and its representatives” (De Wilde, 2013: 288). So, fundamentally, whether you consider the Idealist focus to be a ‘focus’ or the ‘measure of the frame’ boils down to whether you consider ‘unattached interests’ as something that can be represented or not.

Reinterpretation of the Idealist focus as the frame(s) used in the representative claim means that the same data used in this dissertation can be re-analyzed to answer questions about the substantive interests of their constituents that MEPs represent and about the discourse MEPs use to justify their position and convince their fellow MEPs.

### *8.3.3 Processes behind amendments*

A third limitation of this dissertation is that amendments are taken at face value. While I considered the MEPs whose names appear as the sponsors of the amendment as the ‘maker’ of the amendment, the sheer number of amendments indicates that this is an unrealistic assumption. We know that amendments may be pushed or ghostwritten by interest groups (Marshall, 2010), MEPs’ assistants (Pegan, 2017), officials of the permanent representation of Member States (Earnshaw and Judge, 2002), or parliament staff (Winzen, 2011). Yet, amendments or their accompanying justifications rarely give clues about the true author of the amendment. Sporadically, MEPs include a reference to the source of the amendment, but in most cases this cannot be detected from the amendment itself.

In Chapter 3, I argued that we should be aware of this, but that I did not take it into account for four reasons: MEPs consider it a sign of responsiveness, MEPs are legally liable for their amending behavior, amendments are publicly available and can thus be subject to public scrutiny, and from a claims-making perspective the author can be distinctly different from the ‘maker’ of the claim. Though it should be noted that triangulation of methods (by adding interviews and/or observational data) could have generated more empirical insights in this.

Future research may explore further to what extent amendments are directly derived from organized interests. Despite one study into interest group influence in the EP committee phase (Marshall, 2010), attention for legislative amendments has been lacking in the interest group literature. Yet, websites like LobbyPlag (LobbyPlag, n.d.) have shown that interest groups regularly chart into this territory. As we know very little about to what extent organized interests have direct impact on legislative proposals via proposed amendments and to what extent MEPs are reliant on interest groups for their amendments, future research could thus focus on this type of influence.

Additionally, the importance and role of MEP assistants is often overlooked. Yet, MEP assistants may have a lot of leeway and can obtain quite some power over the information an MEP receives and output an MEP generates (Busby, 2013: 103; Egeberg et al., 2015: 230). Previous research has focused on describing the composition of the staff and exploring their role via surveys (Egeberg et al., 2013; Pegan, 2017), while aspects like 'shared assistants' have previously been disregarded (Pegan, 2017: 313). Yet, these assistants who are employed by multiple MEPs may provide interesting insights in cooperation in the EP.

#### *8.3.4 Classifications of committees and dossiers*

One obvious limitation of this research is the use of a pre-existing classification of EP committees into committees that generate uniform externalities, mixed externalities, and targeted externalities (Chapters 5 and 7). This classification is grounded in the work of Lowi (1964, 1972) concerning types of policy. Yet, by applying these ideas to the committee-level instead of the dossier-level you make the assumption that 'uniform' and 'targeted' committees deal with a relatively homogeneous set of policies. However, this assumption can rightfully be disputed.

EP scholars have argued that the classification of EP committees within this framework can be done using the official jurisdiction as stated in the Rules of Procedures (Whitaker, 2005: 13; Yordanova, 2013: 38). While committees that deal with both regulatory and distributive issues have been classified in a 'mixed' category, this leaves out the possibility that policy dossiers can have multiple dimensions. Therefore a committee with 'uniform' externalities based on the official jurisdiction may be confronted with a salient dossier that also has a strong distributive component. This is clearly visible in dossiers that are assigned to multiple committees, i.e. where the EP acknowledges that there are multiple dimensions.

Furthermore, classifying committees does not acknowledge that assignment of a dossier to a committee is the result of a political process (e.g. Ahrens, 2016: 784; Corbett et al., 2011: 141; Thierse, 2017: 11). This means that jurisdiction of a committee is not the only determinant of assignment of a dossier. As a result, the classifications of committees are not necessarily accurate across legislatures of the EP.

Despite these observations and previous arguments that it is very hard to determine which committee has which kind of externalities (McElroy, 2006: 27), the use of this classification is persistent in the study of EP committees (e.g. Alexander, 2016; Hermansen, 2018). Even though I used this classification as well, I am aware of the drawbacks and possible

misclassifications. In an attempt to avoid this limitation, I explored two types of alternatives: automatic content analysis and using EuroVoc descriptors. A third, unexplored alternative would have been to complement the quantitative large-n study with an in-depth analysis of a limited number of dossiers. Future research could use a more qualitative design to disentangle possible mechanisms identified in this dissertation.

While none of these solutions were better than the original classification (see Chapter 2), the explorations of automatic content analysis and EuroVoc descriptors did provide suggestions for future research. First of all, as topical in legislative studies (Slapin and Proksch, 2014), I looked into the possibility of discovering policy dimensions using automatic content analysis. Several packages and approaches are available to do this, however most require an extensive dictionary, reference texts, or use the bag-of-words model. As the policy agenda of the EU is quite broad, setting up a dictionary was not feasible within this dissertation research. Furthermore, as no reliably coded reference texts are available, it is problematic to use a text-comparison approach (Slapin and Proksch, 2014: 132). In addition, as I am not convinced that the basic assumption of the bag-of-words model - that word order does not matter - is valid for legislative texts, inductive approaches are not appropriate to analyze legislative proposals.

Nevertheless, these obstacles are also possible avenues for further research. Slapin and Proksch (2014: 138–141) show that the use of machine learning techniques is spreading in legislative research and accompany this observation with five warnings for researchers. Yet, future research can follow the example of Cross and Hermansson (2017), who systematically explored to what extent we can apply minimum edit distance algorithms in the study of legislative texts.

A second alternative to the classification of committees I explored is using the characteristics of dossiers stored in EUR-Lex (*EUR-Lex - Access to European Union law*, n.d.). This database contains directory codes, subject matters, and EuroVoc descriptors for every dossier that reaches successful completion. As the codebook of the Comparative Agendas Project (CAP) is based directly on the EuroVoc thesaurus (Sevenans and Vliegienthart, 2016: 193), all completed dossiers could be coded as having one or more policy dimensions. However, as EUR-Lex only contains the dossiers that were successful, as the procedure of assigning EuroVoc codes to dossiers is not transparent, and as 21 policy dimensions are impractical in analysis, this approach was not used in this dissertation. One suggestion for future research would be to attempt to reduce the number of dimensions by classification according to the logic of Lowi (1964) into regulatory, distributive, redistributive, and constitutive policy dimensions.

### *8.3.5 Unexplored explanations*

The explored explanations in this dissertation were mostly derived from the literatures on legislative organization, classifications of committees, legislative socialization, and legislative roles. However, this also means that other possible explanations have not been explored.

First, in explaining co-sponsorship and the foci of representation, the membership of Intergroups has not been taken into account (Busby, 2013; Earnshaw & Judge, 2002). Intergroups are groups of MEPs that convene to informally exchange views and facilitate contacts with organized interests (Corbett et al., 2011: 208–217). Likeminded or at least like-interested MEPs meet each other informally in those venues (Corbett et al., 2011: 209). Therefore, one could have expected that shared membership of such an intergroup might explain co-sponsorship among MEPs. In addition, membership of an intergroup explicitly makes clear in which issues an MEP is interested and with which organized interests an MEP certainly has had contact. As a result, membership of Intergroups could be related to the distribution of foci and the likelihood of a focus being addressed in an amendment. Future research could explore the relationship between the EP and these non-parliamentary, but institutionalized bodies.

Second, another aspect of EP organization has not been taken into account: group coordinators. Even though group coordinators have been around for decades (Kreppel, 2002b: 194–198), they have only been included in the Rules of Procedure since the 7<sup>th</sup> EP (Daniel and Thierse, 2018: 940). Most EPGs appoint group coordinators per EP committee to divide tasks and coordinate the behavior of its members within and across committees (Daniel and Thierse, 2018: 941). The special status of group coordinators puts these MEPs in a role similar to EP chairs and EPG leaders. Therefore, we could have expected that group coordinators behave in ways similar to these more senior and powerful MEPs. Scholars have only paid limited attention to this phenomenon (Daniel and Thierse, 2018; Kaeding and Obholzer, 2012) and so far focused on exploring and explaining their role and appointment procedures. Yet, while these are important issues that affect the power balance between MEPs from different Member States, it tells us little about how group coordinators enable and constrain fellow committee members in their legislative behavior. An avenue for future research thus is to explore their substantial impact on the functioning and legislative outcomes of committee phase.

Finally, an important source of variation between dossiers was not included in the analyses: salience. Some dossiers are more controversial than others. It could be the case that more salient proposals receive more public attention, which could in turn influence how MEPs cooperate and which foci they put more central. For example, the General Data Protection Regulation (2012/0011(COD)) attracted an enormous amount of amendments and media attention (Brems, 2013; LobbyPlag, n.d.), while most legislative proposals receive limited media attention (Beyers et al., 2014: 165). Possible avenues to measure salience are media attention and legislative attention.

#### **8.4 Putting the pieces together: MEPs as versatile legislators**

Reflecting on all findings, one image comes to the front: Members of European Parliament are multi-faceted. In general, they balance their time between various tasks and are subject to all kinds of pressures. Simultaneously, they have the advantage or disadvantage that the public scrutiny of their legislative work is rather low. Yet, they do not go about it alone as self-interested single-minded re-election-seeking opportunists. They cooperate, not only within their Member State delegation or EP Party Group, but also across partisan and national lines. How MEPs cooperate varies across policy fields. However, we do not have good explanations for this yet.

In addition, while it is often assumed that legislators mainly represent the voters in their local or national electoral district, my dissertation shows that this is not the case for MEPs. Rather MEPs represent more than one constituency, letting Idealist, Administrative, Specific, and Societal foci prevail over geographical affiliations. How MEPs amend and represent varies and can partly be explained by context characteristics, suggesting that MEPs maneuver themselves into circumstances that fit best with their profile or adapt to the situation in which they find themselves.

Studying amendments thus provides the picture that MEPs are adaptable to the context they are confronted with or self-select into, are aware of the various interests of different constituencies, want to make proper legislation, and seem to work more towards a desired future than towards defending current interests. In that regard, they are similar to chameleons: slightly or more extremely changing color depending on the circumstances, but only taking on the colors that their subspecies has developed over time. So in order to understand how they take up their role in the European Parliament, one has to be aware of what MEPs are: versatile legislators.

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# Appendices

## Appendix 2A Coding instructions Amendments

Unit of coding = amendment + accompanying justification

Multiple codes per amendment may be selected. See instructions below for variables for which multiple values may be assigned.

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### Document/screen with cases contains:

- Id-number of the amendment: this is used to link the coded data to characteristics of the amendment.
- Committee-abbreviation: to provide context of the amendment.
- Id-number of the MEP: this is used to link the coded data to characteristics of the MEP.
- Country: Member State affiliation of the MEP to be able to code Geographical references.
- Count\_indieners: number of times an amendment may pop up in the coding process.
- PNumber2: number affiliated to the file with the original amendment. Used to check conversion.
- Procedureref: needed to find the original proposal.
- Eurovoc topic codes connected to the final text: provides context.
- K: Title of the proposal/report: provides context of the amendment.
- Q: Original text of article.
- R: Amendment.
- T: Justification.

Two fields are coded automatically:

- Date Modified
- Time Modified

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### Instructions to the coder

Per amendment follow the five steps:

1. Read all fields
2. Check for conversion mistakes: Q: Original text of article, R: Amendment and T: Justification fields
  - Select field: 'ToOriginal' when you check for a mistake
  - Enter in note field:
    - o When a fix is made: FIXED!
    - o When no fix is made: no fix needed.
3. Check for extra issue:
  - a. Check contents versus 'Eurovoc topic codes' field
  - b. Use Procedureref to find original proposal by entering it in the URL:  
[http://www.europarl.europa.eu/oeil/popups/ficheprocedure.do?reference=<HERE>\(COD\)&l=en](http://www.europarl.europa.eu/oeil/popups/ficheprocedure.do?reference=<HERE>(COD)&l=en)
  - c. Use Procedureref to find rapporteur amendments to see whether it was this MEP that introduced the issue.
  - d. If there is a new issue: select field 'Extra\_issue'
  - e. Enter string version of new issue in 'Which\_issue\_open'
  - f. Select the closest CAP-code in 'Which\_issue\_closed'

- g. Select: 'ToOriginal'
- 4. Code 'Goal' (instructions in codebook below):
  - a. In case of doubt: check via PNumber2
  - b. Coded 'Unclear'? -> move on to next amendment
- 5. Code the other fields (instructions in codebook below)

**In codes below:**

- are answer options that are mutually exclusive: only one of the answers can be selected
- + are answer options that allow for multiple answers to be given

**Q1: Geographical level**

- + Q1a: local (town, 'home', subregional entity)
- + Q1b: regional - subnational
- + Q1c: national - member state
- + Q1d: national - non-EU country
- + Q1e: subgroup of member states within the EU (like: the south, MS on the outside border)
- + Q1f: Europe / all member states
- + Q1g: global / world / all countries

A reference '(electoral) constituents' can be regional or national level: depending on the type of electoral districts in EP elections: nationwide or subnational. *Can be that level in general or specific, see standardization scheme at the end of this codebook for the empirically present options.*

Not coded for every amendment, only:

- When a (clear) geographical level is indicated in the added text, which would otherwise not be present in the proposal;
- When a geographical level is deleted from the text and not present in the proposal anymore after the amendment would have been approved;
- When the amendment+justification clearly mentions a geographical level/region as having interest in the proposed change

**Q2-Q6: Non-geographical references**

Main question: The combination of amendment and justification introduces a reference to:

Q2: ideal-regarding: reference is made to principles, values, norms, ideal, rights and normative expectations without reference to a specific group to which it should apply. Naurin (2007: 53): "while self- and other regarding justifications only deal with interests and satisfaction of wants (...) ideal-regarding motives (...) what we all should want". We don't mean technical norms about effectivity, efficiency and feasibility of a policy proposal (Q5 below).

Examples: transparency, equality, liberty/freedom, democracy, legitimacy, human rights, proper governance, flexibility, individual responsibility of citizens/member states, active citizenship, sustainability, tradition, (national) sovereignty, furthering European Integration, enhancing cooperation, market competition, solidarity, budget neutrality, deregulation, reducing red tape, reducing risks, reducing costs, monitoring, compliance with international standards.

*See standardization scheme for empirically present options.*

<p>Q3: other-regarding</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>+ Q3a: solidarity-regarding: reference to beneficiaries that cannot be a voting constituency member of the MEP (the developing countries, future generations, animals, migrants ...).</li> <li>+ Q3b: public-regarding: public opinion, the general public, a diffuse constituency (using broad categories such as 'the taxpayers', 'public health'. 'the consumers', 'pensioners', 'women', poor, disabled).</li> </ul>
<p>Q4: Specific-regarding</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>+ Q4a: Specific1: reference to homogenous, specific, economically clearly defined groups, such as farmers, dockworkers, some professions</li> <li>+ Q4b: Specific2: Business and industries</li> <li>+ Q4c: Specific3: Organized non-business pressure groups</li> </ul> <p>NB. It does not concern specific geographically bounded electoral constituency, since this is covered by the geographical code.</p>
<p>Q5: Technical-regarding</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>+ Q5a: Tech1: technical norms about consistency, legality, proportionality, subsidiarity, effectiveness, efficiency and feasibility of a policy proposal, legal certainty, coherence. Consistency and coherence can be within the legislative proposal and across, but not in reference to a white paper, green paper, an own-initiative report or EC communication. Proportionality and subsidiarity are placed here since they are codified norms entrenched in the Treaties instead of pure ideals.</li> <li>+ Q5b: Tech2: Representing the views of the commission, agencies or the council</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>+ Q6: Politics-regarding: the EP: playing the political game of making sure the council and commission will agree. Only use this code when explicitly mentioned in the justification.</li> </ul>

<p>Follow up questions to reference coding <i>Use ; to delimit multiple entries</i></p>
<p>Geographical regarding:  Q1_which: If a specific geographical entity is mentioned: Which entity is referred to? (open question)  Enter: &lt;standardized string&gt;; &lt;substantial geographical label&gt;</p>
<p>Ideal regarding:  Q2_which: Which value/norm is referred to? (open question or drop down menu which allows multiple choices)  <i>See standardization scheme for empirically present options coders preferably stick to.</i></p>
<p>Other-regarding  Q3_which: Which diffuse group is referred to? (open question)</p>
<p>Specific-regarding  Q4_which: Which specific group is referred to? (open question)</p>
<p>Technical-regarding  Q5a_norm: Which norm is referred to? (open question)  <i>See standardization scheme for empirically present options coders preferably stick to.</i></p> <p>Q5a_actor: Which actor would benefit from the change: the executive or the actor(s)/sector to which the legislation applies?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Executive</li> <li>- Actor/sector</li> <li>- Both</li> <li>- Unclear</li> </ul> <p><i>Consistency almost always leads to unclear. Feasibility+Executive is selected when the amendment stipulates that the budget needs to be enlarged to achieve the proposed goals.</i></p>

Q5b\_which: Which actor/agency is referred to? (open question)

Politics-regarding

Q6\_which: versus which actor is position taken?

Q7: Issue

Q7: Is there an extra issue introduced via the amendment/justification that was not part of the original proposal?

Q7\_which\_issue\_open: Which issue is introduced? (open question)

Q7\_which\_issue\_closed: Which CAP-coded issue is closest related? (drop down menu, multiple choices allowed)

Q8: Goal:

This is the type of change, not in terms of substantive policy, but in terms of scope of change that the actor seeks. (ordinal variable)

1. Block (part of) the proposal

The regulation or that part of the proposal should not be taking place. Mostly takes the form of:

- motion for rejection,
- deletion of the article or
- complete replacement of the article.

This code shall not be used for amendments to the recital, citations, or annexes.

2. Make a major change to the proposal/article

Specific elements are raised that should be included or excluded. Mostly takes the form of:

- Adding a new article (that is not added to accommodate another proposed amendment or previously existing article)
- Adding a new issue
- Making the proposal applicable to a larger/smaller group for the main target of the original proposal
- Have direct and mentioned effect on other pieces of legislation or other proposals
- Changing the geographical level or executive that should deal with the proposal/monitoring/execution

3. Shape parts of the proposal/article

Specific elements are raised that should be adapted in the proposal.

- Small changes, without altering the scope
- Adding an article that accommodates another proposed amendment
- Adding/deleting a recital, citation, or annex
- Adding a geographical level
- Changing applicability for something of secondary importance

4. Supporting the proposal/article

An amendment supporting the proposal/article; small changes are proposed to make the proposal even better (as indicated by the justification).

- Proposing changes to improve consistency with other pre-existing legislation or proposals
- Providing clarity with regard to a pre-existing article
- Adding/deleting an article based on other pre-existing articles

5. Unclear

Interessant\_vb

*This case is interesting, could be one to include in presentations/text.*

#### ToOriginal

*Went back to original amendment text or commission proposal to check whether a fix was needed, whether a new issue was introduced or to understand the amendment better.*

#### Q9: Note

Use this field to give some extra explanation when the amendment is impossible to code, when something interesting is encountered or something should be remarked.

*CHECK! = check at the end of coding process whether you still agree with the coding*

*SPLITSPEC! = strings of two spec-codings are included in one field, check this and split accordingly before analysis*

*ONDERWEG! = coding was done on the road without access to the original files with amendments, check!*

*FIXED! = a fix was needed and was done*

*No fix needed. = it seemed like there might be a problem with the entry, but checking showed that this was not the case*

*No justification! = the justification field was used for something else than a justification -> should not have been in the sample.*

#### Standardization scheme

After the first batch of coding, it was decided to standardize the strings for Q1\_which, Q2\_which and Q5a\_norm as far as possible. The option remained to add extra categories during the coding process.

#### Q1\_which: non-exhaustive list of codes for the geographical strings

For the 'lower levels' all combinations are thought through, but for the higher levels this was not done (yet), since they are empirically rare. When coding: enter both this standardized code and the substantial indicator.

Major level	Minor code	Description
Local level	Local general	References to the local level/population in general = no reference to a specific city, ward, municipality
	Local authorities	References to the government of the local level in general = no reference to a specific city, ward, municipality
	Local characteristic	References to a group of cities, wards, municipalities etc. that share a characteristic (like: capitals, poor...). Also include the name of the specific characteristic. Empirically not found yet.
	Local specific	References to a specific city, ward, municipality etc. Also include the name of the specific entity.
Regional	Regional general	References to the (population of the) provinces, regions, länder, gewesten, etc. in general = no reference to a specific entity
	Regional authorities	References to the government of the provinces, regions, länder, gewesten, etc. in general = no reference to a specific entity
	Regional OCTs	References to the Overseas Countries and Territories (OCTs) and Overseas Regions (ORs) in general = no reference to a specific entity
	Regional characteristic	References to a group provinces, regions, länder, gewesten, etc. that share a characteristic (like: rural, border, poor...). Also include the name of the specific characteristic.

	Regional specific	References to specific provinces, regions, länder, gewesten, etc. Also include the name of the specific entity.
Member State	MS general	References to the Member States in general = no reference to a specific entity.
	MS authorities	References to the national level government authorities. Empirically not found yet.
	MS characteristic	References to a Member State that has a characteristic (like: rural, border, poor...). Also include the name of the specific characteristic.
	MS specific	References to a/more specific Member States. Also include the name of the specific entity/entities.
Nation states not member of the EU	NonMS General	References to countries that are not EU members in general = no reference to a specific entity. Most often in the form of 'third countries'.
	NonMS characteristic	References to country/countries that are not EU members that share a characteristic (like: developing, members of CARIFORUM). Also include the name of the specific characteristic.
	NonMS specific	References to a/more specific countries that are not EU members. Also include the name of the specific entity/entities.
Group of countries	Group neighbours	Reference to a subgroup of non-Member States that share a characteristic (like: EEA member, neighbouring states)
	Group within general	Reference to a subgroup of Member States without specifying why that group is listed.
	Group within specific	Reference to a subgroup of Member States that share a characteristic.
Europe	EU general	Reference to all the citizens of the union.
Global	Global general	Reference to the citizens of the world in general (like: global cooperation, globally)
	Global specific	Reference to a specific region in the world, but still in quite abstract terms (like: Asia)

#### Q2\_which: non-exhaustive list of codes for the ideal strings

ID	Ideal	Explanation/Coding instructions
1	accountability	Safeguarding/improving accountability
2	ambitious	Making ambitious legislation
3	betterlawmaking	A specific ideal referred to regarding how laws should be made
4	competitiveness	Bettering or safeguarding the position of the EU/EU-companies/markets compared to the world market
5	competition	Increasing/safeguarding market competition within the EU/internal market
6	democracy	Safeguarding/improving democracy/participation of citizens/civic participation
7	deregulation	Reducing the complexity and number of laws applicable to firms
8	development	Improving the (economic) situation, only in reference to areas outside the EU or rural development within the EU
9	economicgrowth	Safeguarding/improving economic growth
10	employment	Safeguarding/improving employment and employment standards

11	environment	Safeguarding/improving the environment
12	equality	Safeguarding/improving equality
13	europeanintegration	Safeguarding/furthering European integration
14	fairness	Safeguarding/improving fairness. Often in reference to business.
15	fairtrade	Safeguarding/improving the availability of fairtrade goods and market access for fairtrade goods. This ideal is not about fairness in trade, but about the specific 'fair trade' goods and fairness in payment of employees in the product chain.
16	flexibility	Safeguarding/improving flexibility of the proposed legislation to suit differences between Member States/regions
17	foodsecurity	Safeguarding/improving food availability in the EU
18	freedom	Safeguarding/improving the fundamental right of freedom
19	humanrights	Safeguarding/improving human rights
20	inclusiveness	Safeguarding/improving the inclusion of previously excluded/isolated people without reference to a specific group
21	independence	Safeguarding independence of authorities, experts
22	innovation	Safeguarding opportunities and improving circumstances for innovation.
23	internatcompliance	Safeguarding/improving compliance with internationally agreed standards and treaties.
24	justice	Safeguarding/improving justice and the position of courts without specifically referencing to a court.
25	leanlegislation	Safeguarding/improving the proposed legislation with the goal of reducing 'waste' (superfluous parts) and making the legislation concise.
26	lessdiscretpower	Reduce the discretionary power of the EC. Often in favor of the EP/national parliaments. Also applied when a proposal for a directive is changed into a regulation; when the EC is stopped from giving themselves the power to impose delegated acts; when to discretionary power of an agency is limited.
27	lessredtape	Reducing the administrative burdens for companies. Not applicable for the executive/EC/Member States -> use reducing costs
28	monitoring	Safeguard/improve the possibilities for monitoring the application of legislation or the monitoring of indicators.
29	morediscretpower	Increase the discretionary power of the EC. Delegating certain decisions to the EC or other executive authorities. Also applied when a proposal for a regulation is changed into a directive; when the EC is given the power to impose delegated acts; when to discretionary power of an agency is increased.
30	peace	Safeguarding/improving peace.
31	polluterpays	A reference to the 'polluter pays principle'.
32	povertyreduction	Reducing poverty.
33	pricestability	Safeguarding/improving price stability.
34	privacy	Safeguarding/improving privacy of citizens.
35	propergov	Safeguarding/improving how public institutions conduct public affairs and manage public resources. This thus refers to a good and proper process of

		governance, a good and proper process of decision-making and implementation.
36	proportionality	Safeguarding that the proposed legislation is not unfair or too harsh. Not to be confused with the legal European proportionality principle: the action of the EU must be limited to what is necessary to achieve the objectives of the Treaties. In other words in the EU-principle, the content and form of the action must be in keeping with the aim pursued. This is captured in the technical norm of 'proportionality'. This ideal is reserved for the plain, normal day use of proportional.
37	protectionism	Safeguarding/improving the market position of the EU
38	quality	Safeguarding/making good legislation
39	reducingcosts	Reducing costs or bureaucratic burdens for the executive/EC/Member States. Do not apply to companies.
40	reducingrisk	The original proposal was too risky or not tackling risks well enough. The proposed changes serve to reduce the risk.
41	safety	Safeguarding/improving safety
42	sovereignty	Safeguarding sovereignty of the Member States/regions
43	stability	Safeguarding/improving financial, market, and price stability
44	standardisation	Safeguarding/improving standardization: working in the same way, uniform
45	stronggov	Explicit mentioning of a preference for strong government
46	sustainability	Safeguarding/improving sustainability in reference to the environment or sustainable growth
47	trade	Safeguarding/improving international trade (not referring to the internal market)
48	tradition	Safeguarding and protecting the traditions and culture of Member States/regions
49	transparency	Safeguarding/improving the transparency of government
50	understandability	Safeguarding/improving the understandability of the legislation for the citizens
51	mobility	Safeguarding/improving mobility within the EU
52	socialcohesion	Safeguarding/improving social cohesion
53	education	Safeguarding/improving the quality and accessibility of education
54	health	Safeguarding/improving health, healthcare, disease prevention

**Q5\_which: non-exhaustive list of codes for the technical-norms strings**

Code	Other versions	Meaning
Clarity	Clarification	To fix typos, to add a definition from somewhere else just to make it clearer.
Consistency	Coherence	Making the article/recital fit with other articles/recitals or with previously adopted proposals. Consistency/coherence can be within the legislative proposal and across, but not in reference to a white paper, green paper, an own-initiative report or EC communication.

Effectiveness		Making reference to the article/recital contributing or hindering reaching the goal of proposal.
Efficiency		Making reference to how the article/recital affects how easy/timely/low-cost it will be to implement it.
Feasibility	Feasibility ( <i>sic</i> )	Making reference to whether it is feasible to reach the goal or adhere to the stipulation of the article/recital. For example: the deadline for implementation is shifted to a later date, because it is unfeasible to implement it this fast. Feasibility+Executive is selected when the amendment stipulates that the budget needs to be enlarged to achieve the proposed goals.
Legality		Slightly different than the principle of proportionality: a reference to whether the EU has the power to regulate that. For example a justification may state: that the proposed article touches upon a policy field that is not Europeanized.
Legal certainty		The general law interpretation of legal certainty: those subject to the regulation must receive a reasonable degree of certainty that the rules will not be altered retroactively (no possibility for ex post facto law), that the expectations shaped by the rules are protected, that decisions are binding and that the article/recital is not subject to change in the near future. As a result justifications may refer to creating legal certainty or refer to protecting the legal certainty of the subject that was derived from previous versions of the legislation or other pieces of legislation.
Proportionality		The principle of proportionality (not to be confused with the common usage of the word proportionality) stipulates that the action of the EU must be limited to what is necessary to achieve the objectives of the Treaties. In justifications the phrase 'principle of proportionality' occurs.
Subsidiarity		The principle of subsidiarity stipulates that the EU does not take action (except in the areas that fall within its exclusive competence), unless it is more effective than action taken at national, regional or local level. In justifications the phrase 'principle of subsidiarity' occurs, but may also surface as 'the member states are better equipped to regulate this'.

## Appendix 2B Coding instructions MEP characteristics

The coding instructions for characteristics of MEPs are based on the codebook used by Braendle (2015). Additions to the original codebook are included in italics.

### Education

Note: select the highest obtained level of studies and only select one value per MEP.

1	Low-middle	Incomplete school degree, intermediate school degree, apprenticeship or job training, high school degree or still studying.
2	<i>High: college/applied</i>	College or higher school of applied sciences
3	<i>High: Ba/Ma degree</i>	Degree obtained at university, also postgraduate studies ( <i>including MBA</i> )
4	PhD or MD	Ph.D. or M.D.; Ph.D. and further qualifications such as university lecturer or diplomatic college; assistant or full professor.
0	Missing	

### Field of study

Note: multiple values possible; select each field of study the MEP ventured into after high school.

0	No studies	For instance apprenticeship
1	Law	Degree in law
2	Economics	Degree in economics or business administration or accountancy <i>or commerce. Including marketing.</i>
3	Social Sciences	Political science and international relations, sociology, psychology, history ( <i>not ancient history/archaeology</i> ), journalism, <i>public administration, communication science, European studies, social work, media studies</i>
4	Others	Natural sciences, medicine, engineering and architecture, mathematics and informatics, philology (all language studies), pedagogics, theology, <i>ancient history/archaeology</i> , etc.
99	Missing	

### Political experience

Note: multiple values possible; select each level/organization in which the MEP was active before entering the EP for the first time.

0	None/missing	MEP does not indicate any previous political position.
1	Local	Member of the local legislative assembly/local council, borough/county, or elected executive positions such as mayor.
2	Regional	Member of the regional parliament and executive positions such as president/head of government of the region or regional minister.
3	National	Member of the national parliament or senate as well executive positions such as president, prime minister, chancellor, and national minister.
4	<i>Party</i>	<i>Member of party committees, the board of the party, chairman of a local/regional branch of the party, advisor to the party</i>
5	<i>Trade/Labor Union</i>	<i>Leading in a trade/labor union/student union, in contact with politicians as result of the activity</i>

## Previous occupation

Note: select one value per MEP. Select the last held occupation before entering the EP for the first consecutive time; i.e. the last not-MEP occupation. Exception: when this last occupation was a very brief stint (less than 1 year) and there is mentioning of a previous career path over a substantial amount of time. In case of multiple employments held simultaneously opt for the one with the largest amount of time spend on or in case that is unclear the longest held position. For MEPs coded based on the EP-page: Job title at the top of the CV is leading unless this was the job before a full-time political career at another level than the EU, then the code is 'politicians'.

Occupations are numbered following the logic of four major occupational categories: 1.) Political positions, 2.) Lobby/activist positions, 3.) Highly skilled occupations, and 4.) other occupations, level hard to define.

0	None/missing	No information available
<b>Political positions</b>		
11	Politicians	Positions such as head of government, minister or member of parliament or senate during the 10 years prior to election to the EP and no other simultaneous employment. <i>Plus those that held local and/or regional political positions to such a degree that other simultaneous employment did not occur.</i>
12	Party officials	Full-time party official, employee of a politician, <i>policy advisor to the party, parliamentary assistant to person X.</i>
13	Senior public officials	Leading position in various fields of public administration, judge, ambassador or diplomat. <i>(including special policy advisor in a ministry and press offices in a ministry)</i>
<b>Lobby/activist positions</b>		
21	Trade/Labor Union	Employee of a trade/labor union or a trade/labor association.
22	Political activist	<i>Full time political activist or leader of an NGO</i>
<b>Highly skilled occupations</b>		
31	Professors	<i>Full time lecturer, assistant or full professor or dean at an institution of tertiary education. Also senior researchers in independent research institutes.</i>
32	Senior managers	Senior employee position in the private sector.
33	Liberal professions	Legal professions such as lawyer and notary as well as pharmacist, physician, architect and accountant <i>and pastor.</i>
34	Self-employed and entrepreneurs	MEP indicates being self-employed or running his or her own business. <i>Including consultant and freelancer not attached to a specific firm.</i>
<b>Other occupations</b>		
41	Low/middle public sector/servant	Public servant or public sector employee who indicates teacher, public servant or employee in public administration, employee of the judiciary, member of the army and police official (senior official positions excluded). <i>Including special advisor to a subnational level public authority or semi-public institution.</i>
42	Media	Editor, journalist, publisher and author, <i>or public relations consultant.</i>
43	Farmer	Farmer and employee in the agricultural sector.
44	Employee	Employee in the private sector (senior employees excluded).
45	Engineers	MEP indicates career as engineer.
46	Others	Athlete, singer, pastor <i>(excluding political activist).</i>

**LateArriver** (newly added variable)

Note: all Croatians get this code.

0	No	MEP was elected at the beginning of the 7 <sup>th</sup> legislature, start date 14 July 2009
1	Yes	MEP entered the parliament later to fill an empty seat, extra seat or because the member state joined the EU mid-term

**PartySwitcher** (newly added variable)

0	No	MEP was affiliated with the same party during the entire term
1	Yes	MEP switched national or EP party group mid-term

**Interest Group connection (IGlink)** (newly added variable)

Note: Add all names of organizations in the corresponding string variable.

Post-coding note: for quite some cases time indications were scarce, so it was hard to distinguish whether the affiliation was before, during or after the MEP's time in the EP. Use with caution.

0	No	MEP's CV does not indicate an explicit link with an organization during the MEP's time in the EP
1	Yes	MEP's CV indicates an explicit link with an organization during the MEP's time in the EP

**IG**

String field to add interest group connections.

Note: sometimes also used to put 'Agriculture!' in this field, to explicate the still existing link of the MEP with the farming community (instead of only a previous occupation).

**AlternativeSource**

String field indicating the source of additional information when data supplementary to the EP-pages was sourced.

**Appendix 4A Summary statistics of the nodes and dyads in the full network of the 652 co-sponsoring MEPs**

	<b>Level</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Std.dev.</b>	<b>Min</b>	<b>Max</b>	<b>Mode</b>
Leaving EP before 07/2014	Nodal	8%			0	1	
Entering EP later than 07/2009	Nodal	10%			0	1	
Mean level of education	Nodal		3.32	0.78	1	4	4
Seniority	Nodal		1.66	1.03	1	7	1
Same Member State	Dyadic	7%					
Same Gender	Dyadic	52%					
Difference in EU-position (1-7)	Dyadic		1.20	1.23	0	5.67	
Difference in economic position (0-10)	Dyadic		2.31	1.68	0	8.37	
Difference in GAL-TAN position (0-10)	Dyadic		2.42	1.73	0	9.17	
Same EP Party Group	Dyadic	26%					
Committee membership:							
Member-Member	Dyadic	9%					
Member-Substitute	Dyadic	16%					
Substitute-Substitute	Dyadic	7%					
No shared membership	Dyadic	68%					

**Appendix 4B Full table of Wald statistics for within- and cross-party co-sponsorship**

	GUE/NGL- GUE/NGL	Greens- Greens	ALDE- ALDE	EPP- EPP	ECR- ECR	GUE/NGL- S&D	Greens- S&D	ALDE- S&D	EPP- S&D	ECR- S&D	GUE/NGL- Greens	ALDE- GUE/NGL	EPP- GUE/NGL	ECR- GUE/NGL	ALDE- Greens	EPP- Greens	ECR- Greens	ALDE- EPP	ALDE- ECR	ECR- EPP
GUE/NGL-GUE/NGL	-	-6.99	-4.35	-12.99	-9.57	-15.33	-18.67	-17.40	-20.51	-13.72	-12.83	-9.99	-12.50	-6.27	-12.94	-16.58	-7.90	-18.31	-13.59	-17.50
Greens-Greens	6.99	-	4.54	-5.43	-3.59	-9.76	-14.03	-11.83	-15.78	-9.50	-7.43	-5.72	-8.65	-3.89	-7.90	-12.35	-5.21	-12.41	-8.61	-12.19
ALDE-ALDE	4.35	-4.54	-	-16.04	-7.21	-13.12	-20.00	-21.01	-25.18	-12.36	-10.61	-8.41	-11.15	-4.98	-12.87	-16.72	-6.59	-24.24	-12.70	-19.64
EPP-EPP	12.99	5.43	16.04	-	0.07	-8.07	-12.29	-11.57	-18.03	-7.90	-5.28	-3.81	-6.96	-2.73	-5.65	-10.97	-3.88	-14.35	-6.84	-11.54
ECR-ECR	9.57	3.59	7.21	-0.07	-	-6.79	-8.67	-6.99	-10.23	-7.30	-4.28	-3.46	-6.12	-2.70	-4.20	-8.35	-3.72	-6.62	-5.55	-7.04
GUE/NGL-S&D	15.33	9.76	13.12	8.07	6.79	-	0.24	1.91	-0.33	-0.92	2.44	2.07	-0.38	0.42	3.57	-0.88	-0.04	2.63	1.15	2.01
Greens-S&D	18.67	14.03	20.00	12.29	8.67	-0.24	-	2.21	-0.82	-1.27	2.71	2.18	-0.63	0.33	4.13	-1.33	-0.17	3.51	1.19	2.43
ALDE-S&D	17.40	11.83	21.01	11.57	6.99	-1.91	-2.21	-	-4.08	-2.75	1.12	0.98	-2.13	-0.36	2.57	-3.36	-1.01	1.10	-0.49	0.22
EPP-S&D	20.51	15.78	25.18	18.03	10.23	0.33	0.82	4.08	-	-0.89	3.56	2.93	-0.21	0.59	6.15	-0.88	0.12	6.02	1.87	4.04
ECR-S&D	13.72	9.50	12.36	7.90	7.30	0.92	1.27	2.75	0.89	-	3.15	2.84	0.51	0.93	4.22	0.24	0.55	3.38	1.93	2.87
GUE/NGL-Greens	12.83	7.43	10.61	5.28	4.28	-2.44	-2.71	-1.12	-3.56	-3.15	-	0.06	-2.50	-0.78	0.77	-3.51	-1.44	-0.54	-1.31	-0.95
ALDE-GUE/NGL	9.99	5.72	8.41	3.81	3.46	-2.07	-2.18	-0.98	-2.93	-2.84	-0.06	-	-2.28	-0.78	0.57	-3.04	-1.40	-0.47	-1.13	-0.83
EPP-GUE/NGL	12.50	8.65	11.15	6.96	6.12	0.38	0.63	2.13	0.21	-0.51	2.50	2.28	-	0.61	3.45	-0.34	0.22	2.56	1.42	2.13
ECR-GUE/NGL	6.27	3.89	4.98	2.73	2.70	-0.42	-0.33	0.36	-0.59	-0.93	0.78	0.78	-0.61	-	1.15	-0.84	-0.37	0.61	0.15	0.41
ALDE-Greens	12.94	7.90	12.87	5.65	4.20	-3.57	-4.13	-2.57	-6.15	-4.22	-0.77	-0.57	-3.45	-1.15	-	-4.88	-1.90	-1.90	-2.21	-2.26
EPP-Greens	16.58	12.35	16.72	10.97	8.35	0.88	1.33	3.36	0.88	-0.24	3.51	3.04	0.34	0.84	4.88	-	0.46	4.40	2.23	3.47
ECR-Greens	7.90	5.21	6.59	3.88	3.72	0.04	0.17	1.01	-0.12	-0.55	1.44	1.40	-0.22	0.37	1.90	-0.46	-	1.31	0.70	1.07
ALDE-EPP	18.31	12.41	24.24	14.35	6.62	-2.63	-3.51	-1.10	-6.02	-3.38	0.54	0.47	-2.56	-0.61	1.90	-4.40	-1.31	-	-1.16	-0.82
ALDE-ECR	13.59	8.61	12.70	6.84	5.55	-1.15	-1.19	0.49	-1.87	-1.93	1.31	1.13	-1.42	-0.15	2.21	-2.23	-0.70	1.16	-	0.61
ECR-EPP	17.50	12.19	19.64	11.54	7.04	-2.01	-2.43	-0.22	-4.04	-2.87	0.95	0.83	-2.13	-0.41	2.26	-3.47	-1.07	0.82	-0.61	-

Note: Highlighted cells indicate a significant difference between the two coefficients based on a critical value of 1.96.

### Appendix 5A Explaining co-sponsorship among MEPs per committee – full table

Power	Uniform									Mixed						Targeted			
	BUDG high	IMCO high	JURI high	TRAN high	AFCO low	CONT low	AFET low	DEVE low	INTA low	ENVI high	ECON high	ITRE high	CULT high	LIBE high	FEMM low	EMPL high	REGI low	AGRI low	PECH low
Edges	-1.99 *	-3.94 *	-3.00 *	-4.65 *	-4.58 *	-1.80 *	-3.24 *	-4.87 *	-0.62	-3.04 *	-4.32 *	-4.05 *	-6.15 *	-2.54 *	-1.96 *	-2.86 *	-3.72 *	-4.23 *	-1.56 *
GWDegree ( $\alpha=0.5$ )	-1.89 *	-1.36 *	-0.45	-1.63 *	-1.18 *	-0.95 *	-3.00 *	-0.54	-0.85	-1.35 *	-1.57 *	-1.28 *	-1.06 *	-2.87 *	-0.89 *	-1.87 *	-2.03 *	-1.28 *	-2.64 *
Same MS	1.38 *	2.19 *	1.33 *	3.24 *	2.79 *	1.32 *	1.30 *	1.65 *	1.58 *	2.20 *	2.19 *	1.69 *	2.00 *	1.08 *	1.63 *	2.15 *	2.79 *	2.61 *	0.89 *
Same EPG	1.14 *	1.78 *	1.58 *	1.43 *	1.43 *	1.79 *	1.40 *	1.99 *	1.93 *	1.01 *	1.51 *	1.44 *	2.21 *	1.73 *	2.73 *	1.97 *	1.22 *	1.83 *	0.69 *
Grand coalition																			
<i>Ref: yes-yes</i>																			
Yes- no	0.84 *	0.32	0.52	-0.36 *	0.31	0.83 *	0.22 *	0.30	0.82 *	-0.45 *	-0.08	-0.25	-0.15	0.88 *	2.00 *	1.06 *	-0.44 *	-0.55 *	0.90 *
No - no	0.63 *	0.32	1.26	0.81 *	0.71 *	2.85 *	0.62 *	2.82 *	-0.45	-0.61 *	0.03	0.01	0.44	1.48 *	0.87 *	1.44 *	2.08 *	0.12	1.56 *
Committee membership																			
<i>Ref: Members</i>																			
Mem-sub	-0.84 *	-0.43 *	-1.22 *	-0.63 *	-0.76 *	-0.57 *	-0.48 *	-0.33	-0.82 *	-0.73 *	-0.50 *	-0.84 *	-0.33	-0.40 *	-0.35	-0.70 *	-0.24	-0.74 *	-0.90 *
Sub-sub	-1.61 *	-0.76 *	-1.18 *	-0.97 *	-0.93 *	-0.94 *	-0.98 *	-0.83 *	-1.09 *	-1.40 *	-0.55 *	-1.59 *	-1.22 *	-0.65 *	-0.88 *	-1.08 *	-0.76 *	-1.18 *	-1.35 *
No shared	-1.79 *	-0.97 *	-1.56 *	-0.59 *	-0.77 *	-1.33 *	-0.66 *	-0.54	-1.48 *	-1.28 *	-0.56 *	-1.30 *	-0.82 *	-0.86 *	-1.01 *	-1.30 *	-0.35	-0.74 *	-1.47 *
Specific	0.52 *	1.96 *	1.07 *	1.99 *	0.75 *	0.18	0.95 *	1.03 *	1.67 *	2.09 *	1.56 *	1.96 *	1.20 *	0.91 *	0.11	0.72 *	1.35 *	2.45 *	0.87 *
Committee																			
Same Gender	0.00	-0.07	-0.24	-0.20 *	-0.16	0.22	0.08	0.37	-0.20	-0.00	-0.06	-0.04	0.05	0.06	-0.15	0.07	0.19 *	-0.09	-0.00
EU position	-0.02	0.13 *	0.03	0.29 *	-0.19 *	-0.47 *	0.12 *	0.04	-0.13	0.18 *	-0.04	-0.11 *	0.15 *	-0.01	0.05	-0.08	0.12	0.02	-0.24 *
Economical	0.03	-0.15 *	-0.00	-0.17 *	-0.06	0.13	-0.12 *	-0.07	-0.40 *	-0.30 *	-0.20 *	-0.17 *	0.08	-0.02	-0.24 *	-0.16 *	-0.02	-0.05	0.08
position																			
GAL-TAN position	-0.21 *	-0.16 *	-0.35 *	-0.07 *	-0.13 *	0.10	-0.15 *	0.02	-0.14 *	-0.08 *	-0.13 *	-0.08 *	0.01	-0.23 *	-0.06	-0.11 *	-0.24 *	-0.01	-0.15 *
Leaving EP	-0.16	-0.03	-0.04	-1.60 *	-0.23	-0.71 *	-0.28 *	0.01	-1.56 *	-0.12	-0.16	-0.18	0.28	-0.03	-0.92 *	-0.28	-0.42 *	-0.72 *	-0.80 *
Entering EP later	-0.11	-0.70 *	-0.00	-0.07	0.14	-0.93 *	-0.28 *	-0.39	-0.16	-0.40 *	0.15	-1.19 *	0.04	-0.22 *	-1.06 *	-0.07	-0.06	-0.29 *	0.07
Level of education	-0.07	0.10 *	0.08	0.11 *	0.24 *	-0.15	0.05	0.26 *	-0.26 *	-0.00	0.25 *	0.16 *	0.29 *	-0.06	-0.13	-0.03	0.03	0.12 *	0.14 *
Seniority in EP	0.06 *	-0.11 *	0.00	-0.04	-0.00	-0.04	-0.08 *	-0.20 *	-0.03	0.03	-0.19 *	0.00	-0.02	-0.04	-0.16 *	-0.00	-0.09	-0.09 *	-0.16 *
AIC null model	4184.69	5961.69	1051.69	6941.66	4055.60	1129.94	10355.02	1100.75	1640.11	12556.49	5685.95	8639.28	2017.60	7003.60	1190.94	4481.35	4469.26	9290.41	1933.30
AIC this model	3505.36	4179.12	842.29	4575.07	2941.34	956.55	8571.08	858.64	1168.11	8869.04	4099.86	6168.45	1591.41	5682.38	966.26	3343.17	3162.88	6231.94	1610.94
MEPs	144	158	69	183	144	67	234	59	69	227	151	182	94	170	69	146	140	192	66
Edge-count	531	805	138	889	509	156	1285	169	261	1709	781	1208	268	952	164	577	593	1281	357
Density	0.052	0.065	0.059	0.053	0.049	0.071	0.047	0.099	0.111	0.067	0.069	0.073	0.061	0.066	0.070	0.055	0.061	0.070	0.166

\* p<0.05

## Appendix 6A Robustness check with only 'attached' foci

Figure 9.6.1 Boxplots of relative number of references (robustness check of Figure 6.2)

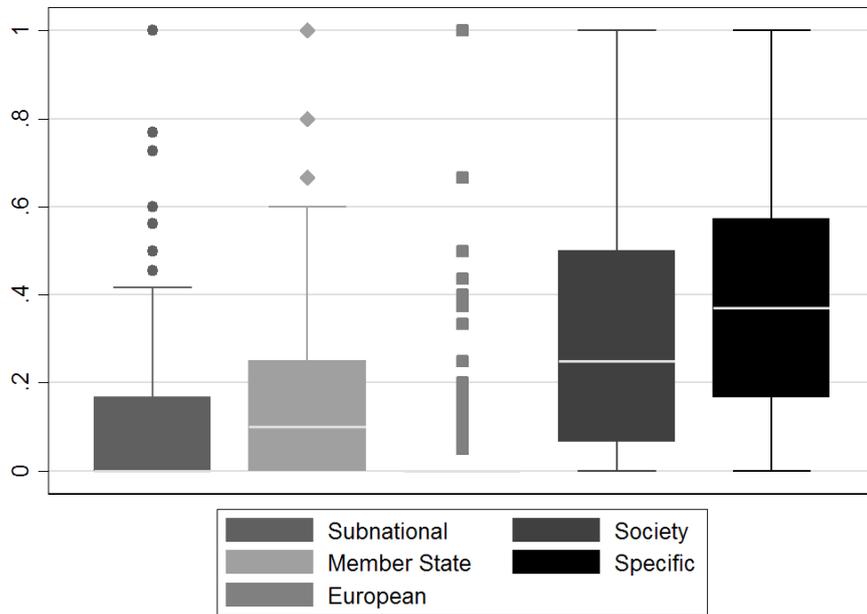


Figure 9.6.2 Boxplots of rank-ordered foci (robustness check of Figure 6.4)

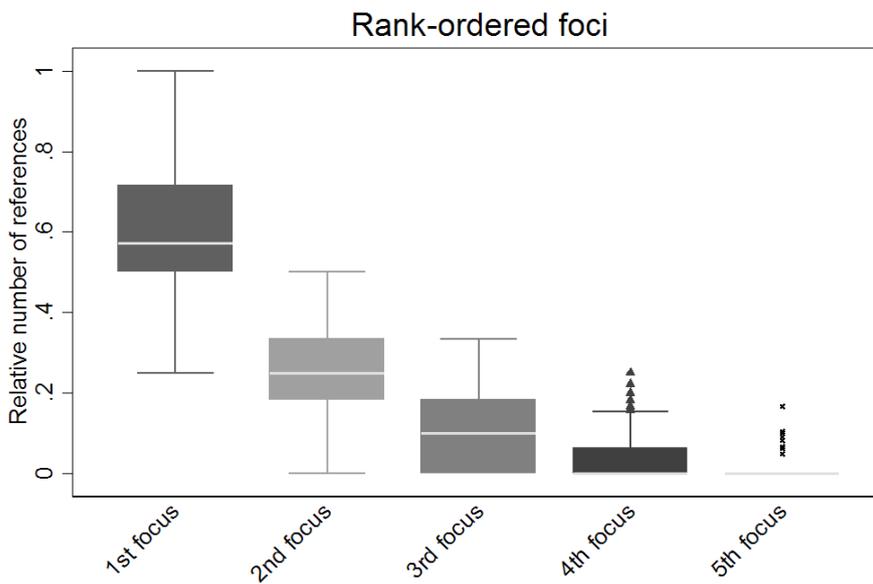


Figure 9.6.3 Boxplots of the differences between rank-ordered foci (robustness check of Figure 6.5)

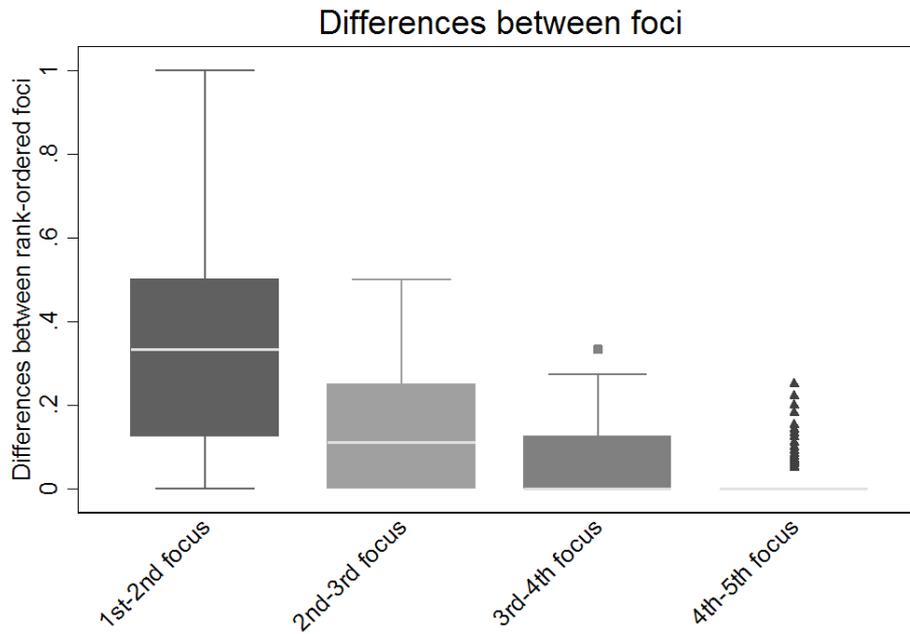
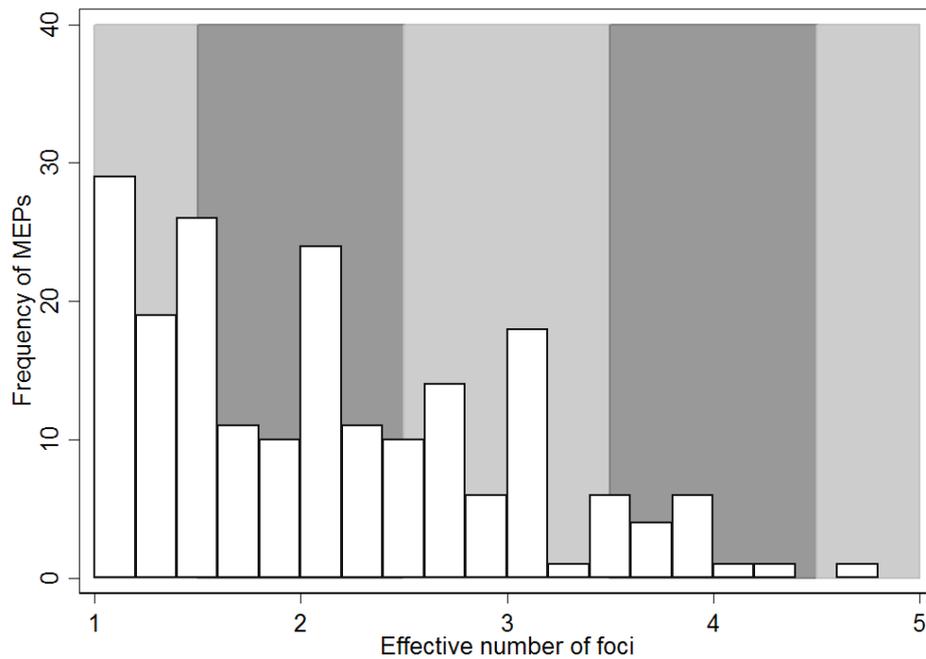


Figure 9.6.4 Histogram of the effective number of foci (robustness check of Figure 6.4)



Effective number of foci	Freq.	Percent
1	69	34.85
2	65	32.83
3	43	21.72
4	17	8.59
5	4	2.02
Total	198	100

Cluster	N	N <sub>f</sub>	Subnational	Member State	European	Societal	Specific
1	28	1					X
2	31	1				X	
3	29	2				X	X
4	1	1			X		
5	4	2			X		X
6	7	3			X	X	X
7	5	1		X			
8	17	2		X			X
9	4	2		X		X	
10	14	3		X		X	X
11	2	3		X	X		X
12	1	3		X	X	X	
13	2	4		X	X	X	X
14	4	1	X				
15	7	2	X				X
16	1	2	X			X	
17	10	3	X			X	X
18	1	3	X		X	X	
19	1	4	X		X	X	X
20	3	2	X	X			
21	5	3	X	X			X
22	3	3	X	X		X	
23	9	4	X	X		X	X
24	4	4	X	X	X		X
25	1	4	X	X	X	X	
26	4	5	X	X	X	X	X
Total	198		53	74	28	118	115
Share of MEPs			27%	37%	14%	60%	58%

### Appendix 6B Overview of empirically present configurations of relevant foci

Cluster	N	N <sub>f</sub>	Subnational	Member State	European	Societal	Specific	Administrative	Idealist	Relative frequency
1	1	1							x	0.01
2	1	1						x		0.01
3	56	2						x	x	0.28
4	2	2					x		x	0.01
5	2	2					x	x		0.01
6	46	3					x	x	x	0.23
7	4	2				x			x	0.02
8	1	2				x		x		0.01
9	29	3				x		x	x	0.15
10	2	3				x	x	x		0.01
11	10	4				x	x	x	x	0.05
12	2	3			x			x	x	0.01
13	2	4			x		x	x	x	0.01
14	1	4			x	x		x	x	0.01
15	9	3		x				x	x	0.05
16	6	4		x			x	x	x	0.03
17	2	5		x		x	x	x	x	0.01
18	1	5		x	x	x		x	x	0.01
19	1	6		x	x	x	x	x	x	0.01
20	1	2	x					x		0.01
21	5	3	x					x	x	0.03
22	1	3	x				x		x	0.01
23	1	3	x				x	x		0.01
24	2	4	x				x	x	x	0.01
25	2	4	x			x		x	x	0.01
26	1	4	x			x	x		x	0.01
27	4	5	x			x	x	x	x	0.02
28	2	3	x	x					x	0.01
29	1	5	x	x			x	x	x	0.01
30	1	6	x	x		x	x	x	x	0.01
31	1	6	x	x	x		x	x	x	0.01
Total	200		22	24	8	59	85	189	192	
Share of MEPs			11%	12%	4%	30%	43%	95%	96%	100%

**Appendix 7A Coefficients of fractional multinomial logit regression as presented in Table 7.3, Subnational focus as base category**

	Member State	European	Societal	Specific	Administrative	Idealist
	b/se	b/se	b/se	b/se	b/se	b/se
University education vs. not	0.031 (0.27)	0.338 (0.36)	0.170 (0.29)	-0.072 (0.27)	0.115 (0.26)	0.129 (0.26)
Law vs. not	0.176 (0.34)	0.268 (0.44)	0.392 (0.33)	0.256 (0.30)	0.152 (0.30)	0.149 (0.28)
Economics vs. not	0.793* (0.33)	0.765 (0.49)	0.384 (0.39)	1.010** (0.36)	0.687 (0.37)	0.596 (0.34)
Local Political Experience vs. not	0.600 (0.37)	0.680 (0.47)	0.807* (0.38)	0.306 (0.36)	0.365 (0.36)	0.418 (0.34)
Regional Political Experience vs. not	-0.521 (0.34)	-0.100 (0.41)	-0.810* (0.32)	-0.475 (0.31)	-0.467 (0.31)	-0.312 (0.31)
National Political Experience vs. not	-0.080 (0.38)	-0.321 (0.43)	-0.110 (0.37)	0.024 (0.36)	-0.268 (0.34)	-0.072 (0.33)
Re-elected vs. new	0.058 (0.33)	-0.333 (0.46)	-0.301 (0.35)	0.110 (0.33)	0.109 (0.32)	0.007 (0.32)
EP(G) leader vs. not	0.410 (0.52)	0.915 (0.54)	-0.046 (0.44)	0.407 (0.39)	0.378 (0.41)	0.209 (0.38)
Chair vs. not	0.300 (0.40)	0.464 (0.58)	-0.176 (0.40)	0.344 (0.41)	0.247 (0.38)	0.298 (0.38)
Left-right (0-10)	0.061 (0.07)	-0.176 (0.12)	-0.003 (0.10)	0.006 (0.09)	-0.046 (0.09)	-0.024 (0.08)
GAL-TAN (0-10)	-0.092 (0.09)	-0.038 (0.13)	-0.127 (0.10)	-0.055 (0.09)	-0.061 (0.09)	-0.096 (0.09)
Anti-Pro-EU(0-7)	-0.029 (0.12)	0.153 (0.18)	-0.045 (0.15)	0.151 (0.13)	0.034 (0.13)	-0.058 (0.13)
EU15 vs. newer MS	-0.631 (0.38)	-0.042 (0.59)	-0.657 (0.51)	-0.216 (0.48)	-0.259 (0.48)	-0.339 (0.44)
Preferential votes vs. closed list	0.583 (0.32)	0.633 (0.39)	0.534 (0.35)	0.449 (0.33)	0.538 (0.31)	0.548 (0.30)
Subnational vs. Nationwide	0.082 (0.32)	0.877* (0.41)	0.350 (0.34)	0.372 (0.32)	0.128 (0.31)	0.067 (0.31)
Constant	0.450 (1.10)	-1.899 (1.39)	1.826 (1.23)	0.064 (1.12)	2.458* (1.11)	2.999** (1.13)
N	200					
Wald Chi2 (df=90)	265.71					
p	0.000					
AIC	783.8					

\*  $p < 0.05$ , \*\*  $p < 0.01$ , \*\*\*  $p < 0.001$

**Appendix 7B Table 7.4 with standard errors: Multilevel mixed-effects logistic regression: Full model**

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
	Subnational	Member State	European	Societal	Specific	Administrative	Idealist
University education vs. not	0.162 (0.27)	-0.074 (0.18)	0.359 (0.34)	0.034 (0.19)	-0.174 (0.15)	-0.053 (0.10)	0.060 (0.10)
Law vs. not	-0.498 (0.32)	0.065 (0.21)	0.095 (0.39)	0.249 (0.22)	-0.016 (0.17)	-0.027 (0.12)	0.038 (0.12)
Economics vs. not	-0.803* (0.37)	0.309 (0.21)	0.254 (0.44)	-0.307 (0.23)	0.558** (0.18)	0.212 (0.13)	-0.020 (0.11)
Local Political Experience vs. not	-0.194 (0.33)	0.318 (0.20)	0.337 (0.37)	0.430* (0.20)	-0.148 (0.16)	-0.189 (0.12)	-0.011 (0.11)
Regional Political Experience vs. not	0.229 (0.33)	-0.213 (0.20)	0.443 (0.35)	-0.399 (0.21)	-0.131 (0.17)	-0.045 (0.11)	0.254* (0.12)
National Political Experience vs. not	0.029 (0.33)	-0.043 (0.22)	-0.210 (0.37)	-0.073 (0.20)	0.236 (0.18)	-0.162 (0.11)	0.164 (0.12)
Re-elected vs. new	-0.163 (0.30)	0.002 (0.18)	-0.279 (0.40)	-0.420* (0.18)	0.070 (0.15)	0.179 (0.10)	-0.097 (0.10)
EP(G) leader vs. not	-0.227 (0.46)	0.285 (0.35)	0.325 (0.61)	-0.345 (0.34)	0.158 (0.28)	-0.006 (0.19)	-0.193 (0.16)
Chair vs. not	-0.046 (0.37)	0.181 (0.26)	0.209 (0.56)	-0.385 (0.27)	0.146 (0.21)	-0.012 (0.15)	0.161 (0.13)
Left-right (0-10)	-0.056 (0.08)	0.095 (0.06)	-0.145 (0.11)	-0.013 (0.06)	0.057 (0.05)	-0.063* (0.03)	0.013 (0.03)
GAL-TAN (0-10)	0.058 (0.10)	-0.027 (0.06)	-0.021 (0.12)	-0.039 (0.07)	0.012 (0.05)	0.077* (0.03)	-0.042 (0.04)
Anti-Pro-EU(0-7)	-0.040 (0.12)	-0.112 (0.09)	0.084 (0.15)	0.032 (0.09)	0.167* (0.07)	0.085 (0.05)	-0.157** (0.05)
EU15 vs. newer MS	-0.099 (0.43)	-0.377 (0.28)	0.083 (0.51)	-0.491 (0.27)	0.146 (0.25)	0.281 (0.15)	-0.059 (0.15)
Preferential votes vs. closed list	-0.698* (0.32)	0.065 (0.19)	-0.129 (0.39)	0.085 (0.20)	0.020 (0.15)	0.100 (0.10)	0.155 (0.10)
Subnational vs. Nationwide	-0.275 (0.32)	-0.025 (0.20)	0.846* (0.37)	0.306 (0.19)	0.328* (0.16)	0.003 (0.10)	-0.087 (0.11)
Co-sponsored: Same EPG	-0.310 (0.49)	-0.249 (0.49)	0.850 (0.59)	-0.582 (0.36)	-0.753 (0.42)	0.320 (0.18)	0.503* (0.20)
Co-sponsored: Same MS	2.265*** (0.55)	-0.096 (0.41)	1.599** (0.55)	0.263 (0.36)	0.403 (0.39)	-0.566* (0.25)	0.034 (0.27)
Co-sponsored: In committee	-0.642 (0.45)	0.452 (0.32)	1.544** (0.53)	0.103 (0.32)	-0.525* (0.27)	-0.198 (0.16)	0.250 (0.18)
Co-sponsored: Other cosponsored	0.075	0.277	0.775*	0.108	-0.129	0.016	-0.021

	(0.29)	(0.22)	(0.37)	(0.20)	(0.16)	(0.13)	(0.12)
Shadow rapporteur vs. not	0.723	-0.236	0.091	0.142	-0.206	0.056	-0.168
	(0.47)	(0.29)	(0.52)	(0.25)	(0.23)	(0.14)	(0.13)
Committee Membership: Not involved	0.388	-0.151	0.356	0.728**	-0.305	-0.269	-0.283
	(0.42)	(0.31)	(0.42)	(0.26)	(0.23)	(0.16)	(0.18)
Committee Membership: Substitute	0.002	-0.064	0.876*	0.103	-0.211	-0.013	-0.030
	(0.36)	(0.20)	(0.39)	(0.20)	(0.19)	(0.12)	(0.10)
Type of externalities: Mixed	0.158	-0.207	-0.271	0.036	-0.226	-0.412**	-0.013
	(0.50)	(0.27)	(0.48)	(0.25)	(0.21)	(0.15)	(0.14)
Type of externalities: Targeted	0.842	0.640*	0.115	-0.604*	0.453	-0.814***	0.461**
	(0.60)	(0.29)	(0.56)	(0.27)	(0.23)	(0.19)	(0.17)
Constant	-3.345**	-2.588**	-5.996***	-1.886*	-3.149***	-0.114	0.924*
	(1.18)	(0.81)	(1.36)	(0.79)	(0.60)	(0.42)	(0.47)
$\sigma_u^2$	1.416***	0.490**	1.583**	0.875***	0.476***	0.191***	0.164***
	(0.40)	(0.16)	(0.51)	(0.16)	(0.12)	(0.05)	(0.05)
N	3591	3591	3591	3591	3591	3591	3591
groups	200	200	200	200	200	200	200
df	24	24	24	24	24	24	24
chi2	78.55	39.56	47.10	56.58	57.25	67.97	41.19
p	0.000	0.024	0.003	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.016
AIC	1249.6	1788.5	743.6	2595.2	3087.7	4852.6	4915.7

Standard errors in parentheses

Note: Cells contain coefficients instead of odds-ratios. This is the same model as presented in Table 7.4.

\*  $p < 0.05$ , \*\*  $p < 0.01$ , \*\*\*  $p < 0.001$

### Appendix 7C Full results of ‘MEP model’: Multilevel mixed-effects logistic regression

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
	Subnational	Member State	European	Societal	Specific	Administrative	Idealist
University education vs. not	-0.021 (0.28)	-0.119 (0.19)	0.272 (0.32)	0.052 (0.18)	-0.241 (0.15)	0.030 (0.10)	0.036 (0.10)
Law vs. not	-0.258 (0.33)	0.045 (0.22)	0.132 (0.40)	0.336 (0.22)	0.061 (0.17)	-0.004 (0.13)	-0.009 (0.12)
Economics vs. not	-0.612 (0.38)	0.244 (0.22)	0.240 (0.42)	-0.300 (0.22)	0.531** (0.19)	0.161 (0.13)	-0.037 (0.11)
Local Political Experience vs. not	-0.212 (0.33)	0.244 (0.20)	0.271 (0.35)	0.481* (0.19)	-0.165 (0.16)	-0.139 (0.12)	-0.050 (0.11)
Regional Political Experience vs. not	0.388 (0.33)	-0.101 (0.21)	0.452 (0.36)	-0.425* (0.21)	-0.034 (0.17)	-0.100 (0.11)	0.264* (0.12)
National Political Experience vs. not	0.187 (0.34)	0.072 (0.23)	-0.154 (0.36)	-0.071 (0.21)	0.305 (0.19)	-0.269* (0.12)	0.205 (0.12)
Re-elected vs. new	-0.204 (0.32)	0.038 (0.20)	-0.353 (0.38)	-0.415* (0.18)	0.077 (0.16)	0.165 (0.10)	-0.083 (0.10)
EP(G) leader vs. not	-0.332 (0.46)	0.120 (0.34)	0.382 (0.58)	-0.334 (0.35)	0.075 (0.28)	0.163 (0.21)	-0.232 (0.16)
Chair vs. not	-0.043 (0.42)	0.184 (0.27)	0.177 (0.52)	-0.410 (0.27)	0.196 (0.20)	0.060 (0.15)	0.143 (0.12)
Left-right (0-10)	-0.024 (0.09)	0.058 (0.06)	-0.155 (0.10)	0.010 (0.06)	0.044 (0.05)	-0.048 (0.03)	-0.007 (0.03)
GAL-TAN (0-10)	0.086 (0.10)	0.005 (0.06)	0.047 (0.10)	-0.039 (0.07)	0.029 (0.05)	0.047 (0.03)	-0.023 (0.04)
Anti-Pro-EU(0-7)	-0.095 (0.14)	-0.049 (0.09)	0.106 (0.15)	0.009 (0.10)	0.189** (0.07)	0.074 (0.05)	-0.122* (0.05)
EU15 vs. newer MS	0.322 (0.47)	-0.297 (0.29)	0.349 (0.48)	-0.406 (0.26)	0.212 (0.25)	0.179 (0.16)	-0.057 (0.16)
Preferential votes vs. closed list	-0.556 (0.32)	0.066 (0.20)	0.111 (0.35)	0.151 (0.20)	-0.024 (0.16)	0.089 (0.11)	0.131 (0.10)
Subnational vs. Nationwide	-0.296 (0.34)	-0.010 (0.21)	0.859* (0.35)	0.327 (0.19)	0.320 (0.17)	0.010 (0.10)	-0.079 (0.11)
Constant	-3.276** (1.14)	-2.915*** (0.76)	-5.700*** (1.10)	-1.916** (0.74)	-3.638*** (0.57)	-0.410 (0.38)	0.829* (0.41)
$\sigma_u^2$	2.129*** (0.51)	0.678*** (0.17)	1.522*** (0.43)	0.929*** (0.17)	0.558*** (0.12)	0.245*** (0.05)	0.173*** (0.05)
N	3591	3591	3591	3591	3591	3591	3591
groups	200	200	200	200	200	200	200
df	15	15	15	15	15	15	15

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chi2	12.93	9.98	21.52	28.56	27.37	19.30	18.40
p	0.607	0.821	0.121	0.018	0.026	0.200	0.242
aic	1299.8	1798.2	750.4	2610.4	3113.5	4899.1	4938.8

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Standard errors in parentheses

Note: Cells contain coefficients instead of odds-ratios.

\*  $p < 0.05$ , \*\*  $p < 0.01$ , \*\*\*  $p < 0.00$

## Summary

*'Who or what do Members of European Parliament represent?'* The Treaty on European Union is very clear about it: "Citizens are directly represented at Union level in the European Parliament." Although representation at any political level is a complex given, the multi-level structure of the European polity provides even more incentives to deviate from the Treaty.

Members of European Parliament (MEPs) are, amongst other affiliations, born and raised in a Member State, grouped in EP Party Groups, affiliated to national level political parties, targeted by lobbyists, and can operate under less public scrutiny as citizens pay limited attention to European politics. Therefore, MEPs have the incentives and freedom to broaden the scope of who or what is represented. As the powers of the EP have expanded, the role of MEPs within the European framework has become more important. Therefore, the aim of this dissertation was to *explore and explain who and what Members of European Parliament represent in their legislative behavior*.

The starting point in this dissertation is that one representative can defend the interests and promote the views of more than one constituency. Who and what someone represents is known in the literature as the 'focus of representation'. Theoretically, this dissertation draws on the one hand on the 'Functionalist' approach to legislative roles. In this approach, the focus of representation is one of the constituent parts of the role of a legislator. On the other hand, I draw on multiple strands of literature to explain with whom MEPs cooperate and to explain who and what MEPs represent. Amongst these literatures are the 'Congressional theories' of legislative organization, strategic motivations of electoral representatives, institutionally induced incentives, theories on legislative socialization, and characteristics of the (legislative) context.

MEPs have a multitude of activities available they can use for representation. For example, MEPs may ask parliamentary questions, hold speeches, and organize meetings. However, as plenary activities are quite restricted by rules and procedures, this dissertation focuses on committee amendments. These legislative amendments have a larger impact on the output of the European Union. Two characteristics of amendments were especially important in this dissertation. First, the MEPs that appeared as (co-)sponsor(s) on the amendments: 'makers' of the representational claim. Second, the content of the amendments and their accompanying justifications.

The first part of the dissertation explores the use and characteristics of these committee amendments. Using web scraping techniques, over 200.000 committee amendments from the 7th legislature (2009-2014) were retrieved. The analysis of who amends shows that the set of amending actors is mostly comprised of committee affiliates, in a (shadow) rapporteur role or not. On average, only a limited number of non-members of the lead committee propose committee amendments. This is in line with the informational theory of legislative organization, as this signals division of labor and activity of more specialized MEPs.

Inferential network analysis of co-sponsorship of amendments shows that that being affiliated to the same EP Party Group, Member State delegation, and EP committee all

contribute to the likelihood of cooperation in the tabling of amendments. This means that MEPs do not simply cooperate within their Member State delegation or ideological group, but that shared specialization, meeting regularly in a venue, and/or responding to the same proposal shape their behavior. Further analysis indicated that how important each type of affiliation is differs across parliamentary committees, but is not related to characteristics of these committees.

The second part of the dissertation zooms in on representational behavior in the content of the committee amendments. To capture 'who and what' is represented in one measure, I developed the concept of a 'distribution of foci'. Using descriptive information, I provided a step-by-step empirical underpinning of this new way to describe who and what legislators represent. I included seven foci of representation. Besides the geographical electoral constituencies (subnational, countries, entire EU) we often think about with the word 'constituency', I included a societal focus (citizens in general and descriptive subgroups like women, minorities, and the elderly) and a specific focus (organized socio-economic interests, business, interest groups). Additionally, besides these attached interests, there are interests that are not owned by someone who may judge whether the interest was well defended: unattached interests like the ideals of justice and fairness (idealist focus) and administrative norms like legal certainty and efficiency of the legislation (administrative focus).

The results show that MEPs consistently put administrative and idealistic foci more central than geographical foci, which sheds new light on representative behavior in the European Parliament. Finally, re-testing explanations for differences in representational focus between MEPs showed that results are still inconclusive. Yet, by looking at the distribution of foci and assuming that MEPs may switch roles depending on the policy field and their formal position, we found that who and what is represented is related to characteristics of the activity.

Reflecting on all findings, a clear picture emerges: Members of European Parliament are multi-faceted. In general, they balance their time between various tasks and are subject to all kinds of pressures. The importance of committee membership and context characteristics suggests that MEPs maneuver themselves into circumstances that fit best with their profile or adapt to the situation in which they find themselves. So in order to understand how they take up their role in the European Parliament, one has to be aware of what MEPs are: versatile legislators.

## Samenvatting

*‘Wie of wat vertegenwoordigen Europarlementariërs?’* Het Verdrag betreffende de Europese Unie is hier helder over: “De burgers worden op het niveau van de Unie rechtstreeks vertegenwoordigd in het Europees Parlement.” Terwijl vertegenwoordiging op elk politiek niveau een complex fenomeen is, geeft de meerlagige structuur van het Europees systeem nog meer mogelijkheden en impulsen om af te wijken van het Verdrag.

Europarlementariërs (MEP’s) zijn, onder andere, geboren en opgegroeid in een lidstaat, gegroepeerd in Europese partijgroepen, geaffilieerd aan nationale politieke partijen, worden benaderd door lobbyisten en werken relatief onder de radar doordat burgers maar beperkt aandacht aan Europese politiek besteden. Hierdoor hebben MEP’s de vrijheid en prikkels gehad om wie of wat ze vertegenwoordigen te verbreden. Doordat de machten van het EP uitgebreid zijn, is de rol van MEP’s in het Europees systeem belangrijker geworden. Daarom was het doel van dit doctoraat om te exploreren en te verklaren wie en wat Europarlementariërs vertegenwoordigen in hun wetgevend gedrag.

Het startpunt van dit doctoraat is dat een volksvertegenwoordiger de belangen en visies van meer dan één achterban kan verdedigen. Wie en/of wat iemand vertegenwoordigt staat in de literatuur bekend als de ‘focus van vertegenwoordiging’. Theoretisch start dit doctoraat vanuit de ‘functionalistische’ benadering van legislatieve rollen. Binnen deze benadering is de ‘focus van vertegenwoordiging’ een van de constituerende delen van de rol van een parlementariër. Tegelijkertijd gebruik ik ‘Congress’-theorieën over parlementaire organisatie, strategische motivaties van volksvertegenwoordigers, institutioneel geïnduceerde prikkels, theorieën over parlementaire socialisatie en de kenmerken van de (parlementaire) context om te verklaren met wie Europarlementariërs samenwerken en te verklaren wie en wat Europarlementariërs vertegenwoordigen.

MEP’s hebben verschillende activiteiten ter beschikking die zij kunnen gebruiken voor vertegenwoordiging. MEP’s kunnen bijvoorbeeld parlementaire vragen stellen, speechen en bijeenkomsten organiseren. Wetgevende amendementen hebben echter een veel grotere impact op de output van de Europese Unie. Aangezien in de plenaire vergadering activiteiten beperkt zijn door strengere regels en procedures, is hier de nadruk gelegd op amendementen in parlementaire commissies. Twee kenmerken van amendementen waren bijzonder belangrijk in dit doctoraat. Aan de ene kant de MEP’s die als (co-)auteurs de amendementen schreven: de makers van de vertegenwoordigende claim. Aan de andere kant de inhoud van de amendementen en rechtvaardigingsargumenten.

In het eerste deel van het doctoraat verken ik het gebruik en de kenmerken van amendementen in parlementaire commissies. Door middel van webscraping verzamelde ik meer dan 200.000 amendementen ingediend tijdens de zevende legislatuur (2009-2014). De analyse van wie amendeert laat zien dat vooral commissieleden en plaatsvervangers amenderen, ongeacht of ze (schaduw)rapporteur zijn of niet. Gemiddeld genomen participeert maar een klein aantal niet-leden. Dit ligt in lijn met de ‘informatie-theorie

van parlementaire organisatie, aangezien dit laat zien dat er arbeidsverdeling is tussen gespecialiseerde MEP's.

Netwerkanalyse van samenwerking in amendeergedrag laat zien dat tot dezelfde EP partijgroep behoren, dezelfde lidstaat vertegenwoordigen en geaffilieerd zijn aan dezelfde parlementaire commissie bijdraagt aan de kans dat MEP's samenwerken. Dit betekent dat MEP's niet simpelweg samenwerken op basis van nationaliteit of ideologie, maar dat gedeelde specialisatie, elkaar ontmoeten en/of reageren op hetzelfde wetsvoorstel gedrag vormgeven. Verdere analyse laat zien dat het belang van elke overeenkomst verschilt over de commissies heen, maar dat dit niet verklaard kan worden door kenmerken van de commissies.

In het tweede deel van dit doctoraat stond vertegenwoordigend gedrag in de inhoud van amendementen centraal. Om 'wie en wat' vertegenwoordigd wordt te vangen in één maat ontwikkelde ik het concept van de 'distributie van foci'. Door middel van beschrijvende statistiek onderbouwde ik deze nieuwe manier van beschrijven van vertegenwoordigend gedrag stap-voor-stap. Hierin nam ik zeven verschillende 'foci' mee. Ten eerste waren dit drie 'geografische' kieskringen (subnationaal, nationaal en gehele EU). Ten tweede nam ik een maatschappelijke focus (burgers in het algemeen en subgroepen zoals vrouwen, minderheden en ouderen) en specifieke focus (georganiseerde economische belangen, bedrijven, belangengroepen) mee. Verder bestaan er nog 'ongebonden belangen' waarvan niemand kan oordelen of ze goed verdedigd zijn of niet. Dit zijn bijvoorbeeld idealen zoals rechtvaardigheid en eerlijkheid (idealistische focus) of administratieve normen zoals rechtszekerheid en efficiënte wetgeving (administratieve focus).

De resultaten laten zien dat MEP's consistent deze administratieve en idealistische foci meer centraal plaatsen dan geografische foci. Dit zet volksvertegenwoordiging in het EP in een nieuw daglicht. Om dit te kaderen zijn oude verklaringen opnieuw getest. Net als in het verleden leveren deze geen eenduidige resultaten op. Echter, door te kijken naar de 'distributie van foci' en ervan uit te gaan dat MEP's van rol kunnen wisselen afhankelijk van het beleidsveld en hun formele machtspositie, vonden we dat wie en wat vertegenwoordigd is gerelateerd is aan kenmerken van de context.

Reflecterend komt een beeld naar voren van flexibele Europarlementariërs. In het algemeen balanceren ze hun tijd tussen verschillende taken en wordt er vanuit verschillende hoeken druk op hen uitgeoefend. Het belang van lidmaatschap van parlementaire commissies en kenmerken van de context in het verklaren van vertegenwoordigend en amendeergedrag laat zien dat MEP's zichzelf in situaties manoeuvreren die bij hun profiel passen of zich aanpassen aan de omstandigheden waarin ze zich bevinden. Daarom is het belangrijk om mee te nemen wat Europarlementariërs zijn wanneer je wilt begrijpen hoe ze hun rol opnemen: veelzijdige parlementariërs.

