Party Group Re-affiliation in the European Parliament: Analysing the Individual- and System-Level Determinants of Switching

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Abstract

Party switching in national parliaments has become an established field of political science research entailing studies of single legislatures as well as cross-national analyses. In the case of the European Parliament (EP), approximately ten percent of all members (MEPs) change their party group label each session. When compared to national parliaments, only Brazil and Italy surpass this level of member volatility. The literature analyzing this phenomenon includes descriptive accounts and qualitative case studies, as well as single- and multi-session examinations. While this research produces valuable insights, the results have not yet provided scholars with a clear explanation for why so many MEPs change group labels.

This cumulative dissertation analyzes and explains the causes of party group switching in the EP. In order to fully understand why MEPs re-affiliate so frequently, I examine not only the individual correlates of switching, but I also re-evaluate the EP's system of party groups. In order to characterize the incentive structure MEPs face when choosing whether or not to switch groups, the first two papers examine the components of the EP party group system, including its format and mechanics. The second two papers then apply what is learned about the EP's unevenly institutionalized party group system to the analysis of party group switching. These four papers conclude that the EP depends on the fully institutionalized core of EPGs to carry out its legislative responsibilities; however, the instability endemic to the weakly institutionalized periphery remains a serious impediment to the Parliament's efficacy as a representative assembly.

Party group switching in the EP is defined as the process by which a parliamentarian, or a national party delegation (NPD), leaves a home group to re-affiliate with a new, target group. Theories of party switching fall into two broad categories. The first pertains to the individual determinants of switching whereby politicians actively attempt to change their situation in order to satisfy political goals. Scholars in this school generally rely on Müller and Strøm's (1999) theoretical tool kit to explain re-affiliation; that is, we assume that politicians who change their party label mid-career do so in an attempt to increase their odds of (re)election, to angle for key leadership positions, or to place themselves in a better position to influence policy. The second theory of switching addresses system-level conditions which make re-affiliation less costly to politicians because party labels and voter identification remain unconsolidated. The literature

using this theory observes an increased incidence of switching where parties and party systems are weakly institutionalized, such as in post-Communist, Central and Eastern Europe, or in Latin American states during their transition to democracy.

I advance the state of the art in the study of party group switching in the EP by proposing that, in an unevenly institutionalized party group system, both of these processes occur simultaneously. To explain the causes of party group re-affiliation, therefore, it is necessary to differentiate between switches caused by the collapse of inchoate groups and those originating from rational, individual motivations. Ambitious moderates change groups in search of policy influence or prestige. Yet, in parallel to these archetypal switchers, we also observe the involuntary ejection of a disintegrating group's members, MEPs who must then find a new affiliation. In order to model the determinants of the first type, it is essential to control for the second.

The first two papers use mixed methods to describe the historical emergence of the EP's two-tiered party system and to identify the sources of party group institutionalization. The second two papers rely on statistical models to determine which variables significantly increase or decrease the odds of re-affiliation among ambitious MEPs after controlling for group collapse. In what follows, I briefly detail the findings of each paper.

The first paper uses the analytical narrative approach and recounts the evolution of the EP's party group system, 1979-2009. Analytical narratives combine the benefits of historical institutionalism with rigorous quantitative analysis by employing a model to identify an equilibrium position and the then testing the historical record against hypotheses derived from that model. In this paper, I introduce the concept of cartelization to describe the patterns of behavior responsible for the development of a bifurcated party system. Unlike previous scholarship which applies the cartel party theory to the EP, I divide cartelization into two separate processes—collusion and exclusion. Analyzing every roll-call vote from the first 30 years of the EP to determine whether or not collusion among the EPP and S&D increased over time, this paper illustrates how these groups gradually became a unified voting bloc. Further, the analysis of exclusion using mixed effects models reveals that periphery groups are much less likely to gain committee leadership positions or reports than core groups. The results, therefore, indicate that the concept of cartelization best defines the patterns of behavior observed in the first 30 years of the EP, a

finding which calls into the question the long-standing belief that EPGs value consensus-building above all else.

The second paper produces a typology of EPGs using fuzzy set Ideal Type Analysis (fsITA). In this analysis, I construct four original conditions derived from the literature on institutionalization, including consistency, concentration, volatility, and fragility, as well as a measure of tenure. From these factors, the fsITA identifies five distinct types of EPGs, two of which reflect developmental phases of fully institutionalized groups, and three which are associated with weak institutionalization. The second section of this paper traces the different developmental trajectories of several party families and illustrates cases of institutional consistency, progress, regress, and collapse. Finally, based on the results of the typology I create an indicator variable for fully institutionalized groups and include this in a negative binomial analysis of rapporteurship allocation, 1979-2014. The results show that members of fully institutionalized groups have many more opportunities to impact policy by managing multiple legislative reports than do their colleagues from weakly institutionalized groups. This paper, therefore, identifies endogenous, exogenous, and inter-parliamentary dimensions of weak institutionalization, and it extends the findings from the first paper regarding the exclusion of periphery members.

Using a pooled logistic regression analysis to analyze between- and within-session switches (1979-2014), the third paper makes two vital contributions to the study of party group re-affiliation. First, the data set includes DW-Nominate scores which are used to measure delegation-to-group and member-to-group policy distances. Second, I include indicator variables which operationalize three types of party group collapse—mergers, dissolutions, and failure to reconvene following an election. In so doing, this paper accounts for both system- and individual-level determinants of re-affiliation. After controlling for weak institutionalization, the results provide original insights into the causes of switching. Most significantly, the analysis shows that large national delegations change group labels, not because they are seeking offices or policy influence, but rather because they are over-represented in collapsing, weakly institutionalized groups. The benefits of considering the impact of an unevenly institutionalized party system are clearly on display in this paper.

The final paper uses multi-level logistic regression models to study party group re-affiliation, and it tests directly the conclusion made by Hix and Noury (2018) which states that ideologically outlying MEPs are the most likely switchers. In this paper, I differentiate between cascade switchers, those members who re-affiliate following the collapse of their group, and ambitious switchers, members who switched only once during a term and who were not involved in a cascade. All members of collapsing groups, no matter their age, tenure, or position within the EPG, are forced to re-affiliate; therefore, in order to properly estimate the effect of policy-outlying on switching, it is necessary to restrict cascade switchers from the dependent variable and focus only on ambitious switchers. The results show that, in fact, outliers are often viewed as unreliable partners, and according to multiple measures, they are statistically less likely to succeed in switching party groups. Alternatively, ambitious moderates are the most likely MEPs to change groups.

In sum, these papers identify the collapse of weakly institutionalized groups as the primary explanation for the high frequency of party group switching in the EP. After controlling for cascade switches, the evidence shows that delegations are more likely to re-affiliate when they are ideologically incongruent with their group, but MEPs have higher odds of exiting if they oppose their EPG on issues associated with European integration. Finally, the evidence implies that to successfully complete a switch, ambitious MEPs have to present themselves to potential targets as reliable partners. Therefore, outliers have lower odds of switching than more moderate members who only disagree with their group on a single policy dimension.

This research rests on an original dataset compiled from several sources. The Høyland, Sircar, and Hix (2009), Automated Database for the European Parliament provides me with all of the party switching variables, as well as the original, aggregated, EPG-level variables used for the institutionalization typology. Furthermore, the roll call voting data from Hix, Roland, and Noury (2007), are pivotal for calculating the DW-Nominate scores. I used Daniel's (2015) data set for the MEP gender variable, and his replication files were also used for the report allocation model found in the second paper. Hix and Noury (2018) made their NPD in government and commissioner variables available to me for the third paper. Party positions were collected from the ParlGov dataset (Döring and Manow 2016).

My dissertation views the EP through the lens of party group switching, and the results should inspire scholars to re-evaluate some of the long-standing assumptions found in the literature. For example, the evidence of exclusion makes it difficult to argue that MEPs and EPGs are primarily consensus-oriented and focused on building over-sized, inclusive coalitions. Additionally, the disproportionate allocation of reports to members of weakly institutionalized groups counters the literature's claim that under-representation results primarily from self-exclusion. Most importantly, however, this collection of papers provides a historical and empirical account for explaining how rational political decisions, made by self-interested politicians, unintentionally created a cartelized party group system, bound together by the dual processes of collusion and exclusion. On one hand, collusion among members of the grand coalition ensured that the EP would become a functional, legislative organ within the European Union's political system. On the other hand, exclusion makes it very difficult for members of periphery groups to advocate for the interests of their constituents and therefore diminishes the EP's ability to function as a representative assembly. Further, the marginalization of non-core members encourages the emergence and reproduction of an unevenly institutionalized, two-tiered party group system. Though not the first to identify trade-offs faced by parliaments tasked with undertaking multiple responsibilities, the interpretation presented here does provide an endogenous explanation for how and why the EP came to privilege legislative efficiency over parliamentary representation.

The literature draws a clear line connecting cartelization and uneven institutionalization to the attenuation of a parliament's ability to represent its electorate. If my conclusions are accurate, then the price paid for the EP's well-documented investment in increasing its law-making effectiveness, is its inability to provide substantive representation, especially to the growing number of citizens who do not support the pursuit of an "ever closer union." Therefore, to appreciate the strength of the EP as a legislative body, one must focus on cooperation and collusion among the core groups; yet to understand the reasons why the Parliament has a had a much harder time connecting with the European electorate and acting as a representative assembly capable of imbuing the EU with input-oriented legitimacy, it is necessary to analyze the exclusion of the weakly institutionalized groups.

Zusammenfassung

Parteiwechsel in nationalen Parlamenten ist zu einem etablierten Feld der politikwissenschaftlichen Forschung geworden, die sich auf Einzelfälle wie auch länderübergreifende Analysen von Legislativen konzentriert. Im Fall des Europäischen Parlaments (EP) wechseln innerhalb jeder Legislaturperiode ungefähr zehn Prozent aller Mitglieder (MEPs) ihre Fraktion. Im Vergleich zu nationalen Parlamenten überschreiten nur Brasilien und Italien dieses Niveau an Mitgliedervolatilität. Bisherige Literatur zu diesem Phänomen beinhaltet deskriptive Analysen, qualitative Fallstudien und Untersuchungen von einzelnen und mehreren Legislaturperioden. Während diese Forschung wertvolle Erkenntnisse liefert, geben die Ergebnisse noch keine klare Erklärung dafür, warum so viele MEPs ihre Fraktionszugehörigkeit wechseln.

Die vorliegende kumulative Dissertation analysiert und erklärt die Ursachen vom Fraktionswechsel im Europäischen Parlament. Ich ziele darauf zu zeigen, warum Mitglieder des EP ihre Fraktionszugehörigkeit so oft wechseln und untersuche zu diesem Zweck nicht nur individuelle Korrelate von Fraktionswechseln, sondern evaluiere auch das Fraktionensystem im EP. Die ersten zwei Artikel untersuchen Aspekte des EP- Fraktionensystems – darunter sein Format und die Mechanik – um Anreizstrukturen zu beschreiben, mit denen MEPs bei ihrer Entscheidung für oder gegen einen Wechsel konfrontiert sind. Die weiteren zwei Artikel wenden die Befunde einer Untersuchung der unausgeglichenen Institutionalisierung des EP-Fraktionensystems auf die Analyse vom Fraktionswechsel an. Das Fazit dieser vier Artikel ist es, dass das EP den vollkommen instutionalisierten Kern von europäischen Fraktionen benötigt um seine legislativen Aufgaben zu erfüllen; die endemische Instabilität der schwach institutionalisierten Peripherie bleibt jedoch ein ernstes Hindernis für die Effizienz des EP als eine repräsentative Versammlung.

Ich definiere Fraktionswechsel im EP als ein Prozess, in dem einzelne Abgeordnete oder die Delegation einer mitgliedstaatlichen Partei ihre bisherige Gruppe verlassen und sich einer anderen Zielgruppe anschließen. Bisherige Theorien von Parteiwechsel können in zwei breite Kategorien aufgeteilt werden. Die erste erörtert individuelle Faktoren des Wechsels, wonach Politiker*innen aktiv versuchen ihre Situation zu verändern um politische Ziele zu erfüllen.

Dieser Ansatz erklärt das Wechselverhalten basierend auf der theoretischen Grundlage von Müller und Strøm (1999); es wird angenommen, dass Politiker*innen ihre Partei mitten in ihrer Karriere wechseln um zu versuchen, ihre Chancen auf (Wieder)wahl zu erhöhen, relevante Führungspositionen zu erzielen, oder sich in einer besseren Position zu stellen um Policy-Inhalte zu beeinflussen. Die zweite Theorie des Wechselverhaltens fokussiert auf Bedingungen auf systemischer Ebene, die die Kosten eines Wechsels reduzieren, da Parteibezeichnungen und Wähleridentifikation nicht konsolidiert bleiben. Dieser Forschungszweig beobachtet ein zunehmendes Vorkommen an Wechselverhalten dort, wo Parteien und Parteiensysteme schwach institutionalisiert sind, beispielsweise in postkommunistischem Mittel- und Osteuropa oder in lateinamerikanischen Staaten während ihrer demokratischen Transformationsphasen.

Mein Forschungsbeitrag zum Fraktionswechsel im EP besteht in der Behauptung, dass in einem ungleichmäßig institutionalisierten Fraktionensystem diese beiden Prozesse gleichzeitig auftreten. Um die Ursachen von Fraktionswechselverhalten zu verstehen, ist es daher relevant zwischen zwei Typen von Wechsel zu unterscheiden: Wechsel, die durch einen Zusammenbruch von schwach institutionalisierte Gruppen verursacht sind; und solche Wechsel, die ihren Ursprung in rationalen, individuellen Motivationen haben. Ambitionierte gemäßigte Mitglieder wechseln ihre Fraktion auf der Suche nach Policy-Einfluss oder Prestige. Parallel zu diesen archetypischen Wechslern beobachten wir allerdings ein unfreiwilliges Ausscheiden aus einer auseinanderfallenden Fraktion, deren MEPs eine neue Zugehörigkeit finden müssen. Um die Determinanten des ersten Wechseltyps zu modellieren, ist zugleich der zweite Wechseltyp zu kontrollieren.

Die ersten zwei Artikel verwenden gemischte Forschungsmethoden um die historische Entwicklung des zweistufigen Fraktionensystem zu erörtern und die Quellen der Institutionalisierung des EP-Fraktionensystem zu identifizieren. Die weiteren zwei Artikel basieren auf statistischen Modellen und bestimmen, welche Variablen signifikant die Chancen von Wechselverhalten ambitionierter MEPs erhöhen oder senken, und dabei für Fraktionszusammenbruch kontrollieren. Im Folgenden erläutere ich kurz die näheren Ergebnisse jeden Artikels.

Der erste Artikel benutzt den Ansatz des Analytischen Narrativen und erörtert die Evolution des EP-Fraktionensystems zwischen 1979 und 2009. Analytische Narrative verbinden die Vorteile des historischen Institutionalismus mit einer rigorosen quantitativen Analyse und verwenden ein Modell um eine Equilibrium position zu identifizieren. Mit ihnen lassen sich dann die historischen Daten mit den aus diesem Modell abgeleiteten Hypothesen vergleichen. Um Verhaltensmuster zu beschreiben, die zur Entwicklung eines gabelförmig geteilten Parteiensystems führen, stelle ich den Konzeptbegriff der Kartellierung vor. Im Unterschied zur bisherigen Forschung, die die Kartellparteitheorie auf das EP anwendet, unterteile ich Kartellierung in zwei separate Prozesse – Kollusion und Exklusion. Ich analysiere jede namentliche Abstimmung in den ersten 30 Jahren des EP um zu bestimmen, ob die Kollusion in der EVP und S&D mit der Zeit zunahm oder nicht und illustriere, wie diese Gruppen graduell zu einem einheitlichen Abstimmungsblock geworden sind. Weiterhin zeigt die Analyse von Exklusion mithilfe von Mixed-Effects-Modellen, dass periphere Fraktionen viel weniger wahrscheinlich Positionen der Ausschussleitung oder Berichterstattung erhalten als die Kernfraktionen. Die Ergebnisse zeigen daher, dass die Verhaltensmuster in den ersten 30 Jahren des EP am besten mit dem Begriff der Kartellierung definiert werden können. Dieser Befund stellt auch die anhaltende Überzeugung in Frage, dass Fraktionen im EP in ihrer Arbeit den Wert vor allem auf Konsensbildung legen.

Der zweite Arikel bietet eine Typologie von EP-Fraktionen und verwendet dafür die fuzzy set Ideal Type Analysis (fsITA). Abgeleitet aus der Institutionalismusforschung konzipiere ich vier originelle Bedingungen, darunter Konsistenz, Volatilität und Fragilität sowie eine Maßeinheit für die Dauer des Mandats. Die fsITA identifiziert anhand dieser Faktoren fünf unterschiedliche Typen von EP-Fraktionen. Zwei davon spiegeln die Entwicklungsphasen vollkommen institutionalisierter Gruppen wieder, drei davon sind assoziiert mit schwacher Institutionalisierung. Im zweiten Teil analysiert das Paper unterschiedliche Entwicklungsabläufe mehrerer Parteienfamilien und illustriert Fälle von institutioneller Konsistenz, Fortschritt, Rückschritt und Kollaps. Schließlich entwickle ich auf der Grundlage der Typologie einen Indikator für vollkommen institutionalisierte Gruppierungen und integriere ihn in eine negative binomiale Analyse von Berichterstattungszuweisung im Zeitraum von 1979 bis 2014. Die Ergebnisse zeigen, dass Mitglieder vollkommen institutionalisierter Gruppen mehr Möglichkeiten an Policy-Einfluss durch die Verwaltung mehrfacher legislativer Berichte haben als ihre

Kolleg*innen aus schwach institutionalisierten Gruppen. Das Paper identifiziert so endogene, exogene und inter-parlamentarische Dimensionen schwacher Institutionalisierung. Es erweitert die Ergebnisse des ersten Artikels bezüglich der Exklusion peripherer Mitglieder.

Der dritte Artikel verwendet eine zusammengeführte logistische Regressionsanalyse um Wechselverhalten innerhalb und zwischen den Legislaturperioden zu untersuchen (1979-2014). Es liefert dadurch zwei wesentliche Beiträge zur Analyse von Fraktionswechsel. Erstens beinhaltet der Datensatz DW-Nominate-Werte, die zur Messung von Policy-Distanzen zwischen Delegationen und Fraktionen sowie zwischen Mitgliedern und Fraktionen verwendet werden. Zweitens verwende ich Indikatoren für drei Typen von Fraktionskollaps – Fusion, Auflösung und fehlendes Wiederzusammenkommen nach einer Wahl. Dadurch berücksichtige ich sowohl systembezogene als auch individuelle Determinanten von Wechselverhalten. Ich kontrolliere das Auftreten vonschwacher Institutionalisierung und biete danach Einblicke in die Ursachen von Wechselverhalten. Ich zeige, dass große nationale Parteidelegationen ihre Fraktion nicht deswegen wechseln, weil sie nach Ämtern oder Policy-Einfluss streben, sondern vielmehr weil sie in auseinanderfallenden, schwach institutionalisierten Gruppen überrepräsentiert sind. Darin erweist sich die Berücksichtigung von asymmetrisch institutionalisierten Parteiensystemen als vorteilshaft für die weitere Forschung.

Der letzte Artikel analysiert Fraktionswechsel unter Anwendung logistischer Mehrebenenmodelle. Es untersucht direkt den Befund von Hix und Noury (2018), dass ideologisch vom Parteikern distanzierte MEPs am wahrscheinlichsten ihre Fraktion wechseln. In diesem Artikel unterscheide ich zwischen Kaskade-Wechslern, also den Mitgliedern die nach einem Zusammenbruch ihrer Fraktion wechseln, und ambitionierten Wechslern, also den Mitgliedern, die nur einmal innerhalb einer Legislaturperiode gewechselt haben und nicht Teil einer Kaskade waren. Alle Mitglieder von auseinanderfallenden Gruppierungen sind zum Wechsel gezwungen, unabhängig von ihrem Alter, der Dauer ihres Mandats oder ihrer Position innerhalb der Gruppe; um den Effekt von Policy-Abweichung auf Wechselverhalten zu schätzen ist es daher notwendig, Kaskaden-Wechsler von der abhängigen Variable zu trennen und nur ambitionierte Wechsler zu beobachten. Die Ergebnisse zeigen, dass Ausreißer oft als unzuverlässige Partner angesehen werden. Ferner ist es anhand mehrerer Messungen statistisch

weniger wahrscheinlich, dass sie ihre Fraktion erfolgreich wechseln. MEPs, die am wahrscheinlichsten ihre Fraktion wechseln, sind wiederum gemäßigte ambitionierte Mitglieder.

Zusammengefasst identifizieren diese Artikel den Kollaps von schwach institutionalisierten Gruppen als die primäre Erklärung für die hohe Häufigkeit von Fraktionswechsel im EP. Nachdem wir Kaskaden-Wechsler kontrolliert haben, zeigt sich, dass Delegationen wahrscheinlicher wechseln, wenn sie innerhalb ihrer Gruppe ideologisch inkongruent sind. Die Chancen für MEP-Wechsel sind wiederum dann höher, wenn sie mit der Position ihrer Gruppe zur Frage der Europäischen Integration nicht übereinstimmen. Schließlich suggerieren die Ergebnisse, dass ambitionierte MEPs sich als zuverlässige Partner präsentieren müssen, um erfolgreich zu wechseln. Daher sind die Chancen für einen Wechsel für Ausreißer geringer als die von eher gemäßigten Mitgliedern, die mit ihrer Gruppe nur in einer Policy-Dimension nicht übereinstimmen.

Dievorliegende Forschung basiert auf einem originellen Datensatz, der aus mehreren Quellen zusammengestellt wurde. Die Automated Database for the European Parliament von Høyland, Sircar und Hix (2009) bietet alle Variablen zum Parteiwechsel, darunter auch die originalen auf der Ebene der Fraktion aggregierten Variablen zur Typologie von Institutionalisierung. Daten für namentliche Abstimmungen von Hix, Roland, und Noury (2007) sind wiederum essenziell für die Berechnung der DW-Nominate-Werte. Für die Gender-Erfassung bei den MEPs verwende ich den Datensatz von Daniel (2015). Ich benutzte seine Replikationsdaten für das Modell zu Berichtserstattungszuweisung im zweiten Artikel. Für den dritten Artikeln haben mir Hix und Noury (2018) ihre Variablen zu nationalen Delegationen an der Regierung sowie Kommissare-Variablen zur Verfügung gestellt. Für die Parteipositionen verwende ich den ParlGov-Datensatz (Döring und Manow 2016).

Meine Dissertation untersucht das EP mit Fokus auf das Fraktionswechselverhalten der MEPs. Die Ergebnisse laden dazu ein, einige bestehende Annahmen der Literaturen neu zu bewerten.. Beispielweise zeige ich anhand von Exklusion, dass es schwierig zu argumentieren ist, dass MEPs und nationale Parteidelegationen primär konsensorientiert sind und dass sie ihren Fokus auf die Bildung von übergroßen, inklusiven Koalitionen legen. Zusätzlich spricht die ungleich verteilte Zuweisung von Berichterstattungsaufgaben an Mitglieder von schwach

institutionalisierten Gruppen gegen die Behauptung der Forschung, dass Unterrepräsentation primär durch Selbstausschluss bedingt ist. Vor allem bieten diese Artikel historische und empirische Erklärungen dafür, wie rationale politische Entscheidungen von eigen-interessierten Politiker*innen unwillentlich ein kartelliertes Fraktionensystem geschaffen haben, das durch duale Prozesse von Kollusion und Exklusion zusammengehalten wird. Einerseits stellt Kollusion der Mitglieder die Großen Koalition sicher, so dass das EP zu einem funktionsfähigen legislativen Organ im politischen System der Europäischen Union wird. Andererseits können Mitglieder peripherer Gruppen wegen der Exklusion sich viel schwerer für die Interessen ihrer Wählerschaft einsetzen, was die Handlungs- und Wirkfähigkeit des EP als eine repräsentative Versammlung verringert. Weiterhin fördert die Marginalisierung von Mitgliedern außerhalb des Kerns zur Erscheinung und Reproduktion eines ungleichmäßig institutionalisierten zweistufigen Fraktionensystems. Die hier präsentierte Interpretation ist nicht die erste, die Trade-offs zwischen unterschiedlichen Verantwortlichkeiten von Parlamenten identifiziert. Sie bietet aber eine endogene Erklärung dafür, wie und warum das EP die legislative Effizienz der parlamentarischen Repräsentation vorgezogen hat.

Die Literatur sieht eine klare Verbindung zwischen Kartellierung und ungleichmäßiger Institutionalisierung einerseits und der Schwächung der repräsentativen Fähigkeit eines Parlaments andererseits. Wenn meine Schlussfolgerungen zutreffen, ist der Preis für die gut dokumentierte Investition in die Erhöhung der legislativen Effektivität die Unfähigkeit des EP, substanzielle Repräsentanz zu bieten, insbesondere für die wachsende Anzahl der Bürger*innen, die das Ziel einer „immer engeren Union“ nicht unterstützen. Um die Stärke des EP als legislative Institution zu verstehen, muss der Fokus auf die Zusammenarbeit und die Kollusion der Kern-Gruppen gelegt werden; um allerdings zu verstehen, warum das EP sich bislang schwer tat, eine Verbindung mit der europäischen Wählerschaft herzustellen und als repräsentative Versammlung zu handeln, die imstande wäre, die EU mit Input-Legitimität zu füllen, ist es relevant, die Exklusion von schwach institutionalisierten Gruppen zu analysieren.

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Introduction

Following the 2019 European election, the seat share of the two largest European Political Groups (EPGs), the Christian (EPP) and Social (S&D) Democrats, fell to a combined 44 percent, representing the first time in the history of the European Parliament (EP) that their joint membership failed to reach an absolute majority. By re-naming themselves Renew Europe (RE), the Liberal Democrats (ALDE) abandoned a political label present in the EP since 1958. To these breaks in continuity, consider the inevitable (Br)exit of several, large UK delegations from the S&D (10 members), the Greens (11 members), and RE (17 members), and observers would justifiably conclude that the EP is entering a period of pronounced instability. The papers presented in this dissertation provide valuable historical and empirical context for clarifying how and why the EP can maintain its effectiveness as a legislative body and a representative assembly during this turbulent time.

My research project began with the goal of better understanding party group switching in the EP; yet, it became clear that to fully appreciate the high rates of re-affiliation by members of the European Parliament (MEPs), I must also re-evaluate the system of party groups. The first two papers, therefore, examine the components of the EP party group system, including its format and mechanics (Sartori, 2005), in order to describe the incentive structure MEPs face when choosing whether or not to change groups. The second two papers apply what is learned about the EP's unevenly institutionalized party group system to the analysis of party group switching. When considered alongside the EP's current state of affairs, these four papers conclude that, even when confronted by a shock similar to the 2019 election, the fully institutionalized core EPGs should have the capacity to stabilize the EP as a legislative body. However, the uncertainty endemic to the weakly institutionalized periphery remains a serious impediment to the Parliament's efficacy as a representative assembly.

In comparison to the existing literature, the first two papers offer a significantly revised interpretation of the EP's party group system, which, according to my research, is not weakly institutionalized, but rather aligns more closely with what Randall and Svåsand (2009) describe as uneven institutionalization. Thus, when characterizing the EP, observers should neither discount the consistent leadership and reliability of the Social and Christian Democrats' Grand

Coalition, nor should they exaggerate the negative impact that weakly institutionalized groups have on the consolidation of the party group system. Further, by providing compelling evidence that groups such as the Liberals, the Greens, and the Leftists, reached active institutionalization by the end of the Fifth EP session, the second paper offers evidence to counter the long-standing belief that size, measured by seat share, correlates perfectly with a group's level of institutionalization (Hix and Lord, 1995). More importantly, however, the first two papers show that MEPs from weakly institutionalized groups are less likely to become committee leaders or rapporteurs, and that this asymmetry cannot be attributed solely to the self-exclusion of disinterested parliamentarians. This disparity between weakly and fully institutionalized groups represents a system-level explanation for why ambitious, policy-seeking members may be motivated to leave a periphery group and switch into a core group. The exclusion of some MEPs from leadership positions and policy influence not only reproduces weak institutionalization among EPGs, but it incentivizes the centripetal movement of members from the weakest to the strongest groups.

Papers three and four draw directly on these insights by identifying group collapse as the causal mechanism connecting weak group institutionalization to high rates of party group switching. The disintegration of weakly institutionalized EPGs comes in three forms, including mid-session dissolution, mergers, or the failure to reconvene following an election; however, the literature has yet to link these processes to the analysis of party group switching. Because members of collapsing groups change parties no matter their level of ambition or political preferences, in both of these papers, I control for weak institutionalization before proceeding to evaluate the relationship between policy-seeking and party group switching. Among the multiple findings related to party switching, these two papers provide evidence that large delegations re-affiliate primarily because they are over-represented in weakly institutionalized groups that collapse; that MEPs from weakly institutionalized groups are the members most likely to switch groups multiple times, because they often get caught in cycles of group formation and disintegration; and, finally, that moderate MEPs are more likely to complete a successful switch than extremists because EPGs do not view outliers as reliable partners.

In all of these cases, my results differ substantially from the contemporary literature which claims that large delegations re-affiliate to gain power and policy influence, and that the most extreme

ideological outliers are the most likely members to switch groups (Hix and Noury, 2018). These dissimilarities originate from the emphasis my research places on party group institutionalization. By including the system-level into the analysis, the theory and methods used here allow me to differentiate between policy-seeking members, or delegations, and those caught in the roil of group collapse. In what follows, I outline the theories used in this dissertation, and then explain how the key concepts introduced here advance our understanding of party group switching in the EP. I then discuss the research design and methods found in the corresponding papers.

Theories of Party Switching

Party group switching in the EP is defined as the process by which a parliamentarian, or a national party delegation (NPD), leaves a home group to re-affiliate with a new, target group. The process does not imply that the MEP also changes his or her national party affiliation, but this type of dual switch does sometime occur. During the first seven EP sessions, ten percent of MEPs, on average, changed their party label per term. When compared to national parliaments, only Brazil and Italy surpass the EP's average level of member volatility (O'Brien and Shomer, 2013; Heller and Mershon, 2005). The frequency of party switching in the EP, therefore, demands an explanation.

Scholars generally rely on Müller and Strøm's (1999) theoretical tool kit to explain party re-affiliation; that is, we assume that politicians who change their party label mid-career do so in an attempt to increase their odds of (re)election (Aldrich and Bianco, 1992), to angle for key leadership positions (Yoshinaka, 2016), or to place themselves in a better position to influence policy (Laver and Benoit, 2003). While the literature on party switching in national parliaments is quite deep and fully developed (Heller and Mershon, 2009)[1], the research on re-affiliation in the EP is more limited and often reaches conflicting or indeterminate conclusions (Hix and Noury, 2018; McElroy, 2008; McElroy and Benoit, 2009). My project addresses these ambiguities by analyzing the EP's party group system in order to better understand the different incentives and

[1] National case studies of party switching include analyses of Italy (Heller and Mershon, 2005; 2008), Brazil (Desposato, 2006), Japan (Kato and Yamamoto, 2009; Reed and Scheiner, 2003), the UK (Webb and Bale, 2014), Poland (Hug and Wuest, 2011; Zielinski, Slomczynski, and Shabad, 2005), the Baltic States (Kreuzer and Pettai, 2003), Ukraine (Thames, 2007), South Africa (McLaughlin, 2011), and the United States (Yoshinaka, 2016; Nokken, 2009; Grose and Yoshinaka, 2003).

constraints faced by members of fully and weakly institutionalized party groups; furthermore, I ask the question: When do MEPs make the strategic, rational decision to switch groups and when are these transitions pre-determined by the collapse of a group? In other words, when is switching a variable and when is it a constant?

Theories of party switching fall into two broad categories. The first pertains to the individual determinants of switching whereby politicians actively attempt to change their situation in order to satisfy political goals. The second theory of switching addresses system-level conditions which make re-affiliation less costly to politicians because party labels and voter identification have yet to consolidate. Scholars observe an increased incidence of switching where party systems are weak, or inchoate, such as in post-Communist Central and Eastern Europe (McMenamin and Gwiazda, 2011; Shabad and Slomczynski, 2004; Zielinski et al., 2005) or in Latin American states during their transition to democracy (Mainwaring and Scully, 1995). I advance the state of the art in the study of party group switching in the EP by proposing that both of these processes occur simultaneously in an unevenly institutionalized party system. Some members may be ambitious moderates who change groups in search of policy influence or prestige, yet in parallel to these archetypal switchers, we also observe members and delegations who are involuntarily ejected from disintegrating, weakly institutionalized groups.

The literature specific to EP party group switching includes research that is descriptive (Evans and Vink, 2012), qualitative (Evans, 2009), or grounded in the study of individual-level motivations (Hix and Noury, 2018; McElroy and Benoit, 2009; McElroy, 2008). Scholars generally dismiss vote-seeking as a motive for switching in the EP (McElroy and Benoit, 2009), but both McElroy (2008) and Hix and Noury (2018) test hypotheses based on office- and policy-seeking behavior. McElroy's (2008) study of switching in the Third EP session determines that having seniority, being on an important committee, being a member in one of the two largest party groups, and holding an EPG leadership position, significantly inhibits switching. Unlike McElroy (2008), who finds no relationship between policy distance variables and switching, Hix and Noury's (2018) analysis of between- and within-session switches, 1979-2014, determines that MEPs who are incongruent with their group's median position are more likely to change group labels. Further, members from larger groups with more access to leadership positions are less likely to re-affiliate. None of these treatments include a discussion of the party group system,

party group institutionalization, or how these impact a member's motivation, or necessity, to switch. Therefore, because these analyses do not control for party group collapse, they find it difficult to accurately estimate the individual correlates of re-affiliation, especially those related to policy-seeking behavior.

A party system consists of a format, the number and types of parties, and its mechanics, the patterns of interaction that take place between those parties (Sartori, 2005). Bardi (2002) identifies three types of EP political groups: transnational, multi-party, and one-party. When a single national delegation accounts for more than one half of the group's membership, it is characterized as a one-party group. Because these groups are mainly vehicles for national (party) interests, they rarely attain full institutionalization; further, the presence of one-party groups hinders the entire system from becoming fully consolidated (Bardi, 2002). He argues that electoral shocks disproportionately disrupt the membership integrity of multi- and one-party groups; contrariwise, he claims that the transnational party groups make consistent gains at election time and consolidate their power during the parliamentary session. Bardi concludes that "the two combined effects appear to have had contrasting impacts on the number and size of party groups, thus contributing to the creation of a two-speed party system in the EU, characterized by an increasingly institutionalized core and a mutable and unstable periphery" (Bardi, 2002: 64).

The field has not yet fully explored the implications of this very important insight regarding the asymmetry of the political groups. If it is true that the EP is divided between fully and weakly institutionalized groups, then this should have implications for the system's mechanics as well as observable parliamentary behavior among members (Thames, 2007). Kreppel (2002) determines that as the EP gained competences, the newfound powers accreted disproportionately to the Christian and Social Democrats. By changing the rules of procedure to benefit themselves, and by coordinating their voting behavior, the Grand Coalition intentionally set about marginalizing the minor groups. Two things are worth noting here. First, Kreppel (2002) explicitly differentiates between major and minor group types, a classification which corresponds with Bardi's two-speed hypothesis (2002). Second, the inter-group relations that she describes reflect the patterns he identifies in reference to consolidating power during the course of the parliamentary term.

The literature observes significant differences between "niche" and "major" groups' behavior (Jensen and Spoon, 2010) and contends that EPGs "vary significantly" in their degree of institutionalization (McElroy and Benoit, 2007: 6), but the scholarship has neither characterized these disparities by using Randall and Svåsand's (2002) concept of uneven institutionalization, nor has it empirically determined the origin of these differences. Research on EPGs skews heavily towards the analysis of core groups which makes it difficult to triangulate the presence or absence of characteristics associated with institutionalization, such as adaptability, complexity, autonomy, and coherence (Huntington, 1968), in the periphery groups.[2] For example, Bresannelli (2014) analyzes the effects of enlargement on the EP party system by outlining how the Christian Democrats, the Socialists, and the Liberals (ALDE) employed vertical and horizontal differentiation to increase their legislative efficiency and systemness; yet, of all the minor groups, he only discusses the Greens. In this respect, McElroy's claim that "smaller parties are very fluid in nature and are probably not promoting party discipline in the manner exhibited by the two dominant groups" (2008: 368) is important for two reasons. First, it assumes a significant difference between small- and large-group behavior; and, second, the characterization of small groups—fluid and lacking the ability to constrain members—implies that the source of this variation is institutionalization. For these reasons, it is necessary to examine not only the causes of institutionalization, but to determine how it relates to party group switching.

The current research project takes seriously Bardi's "two-speed" hypothesis, and Kreppel's determination that marginalization is a defining characteristic of the party system, by incorporating both of these insights into the study of party group institutionalization. The first two papers offer empirical evidence to support the claim that EPGs have varying levels of institutionalization and analyzes the interactions between the core and the periphery to determine how they produce a stable yet unevenly institutionalized party group system. Only after reaching these conclusions is it possible to estimate the effect of policy-seeking on ambitious switchers, an exercise performed in papers three and four.

[2] Notable exceptions include the growing body of work on the extreme right-wing groups in the EP from Almeida (2010), Startin (2010), Brack (2015), and Bale et al. (2010).

Research Design

To explain the causes of party group re-affiliation in the EP, I first differentiate between switches caused by group collapse and those originating from rational, individual motivations. The first two papers, therefore, describe the historical emergence of the EP's two-tiered party system and both use a mixed methods approach. The second two papers rely on statistical models to determine which variables significantly increase or decrease the odds of re-affiliation among ambitious MEPs.

The analytical narrative approach combines the benefits of historical institutionalism with rigorous quantitative analysis by using a model to identify an equilibrium position and then testing hypotheses derived from that model. The first paper uses this method to recount the evolution of the EP's party group system, 1979-2009. Specifically, I introduce the concept of cartelization to describe the patterns of behavior responsible for the development of a bifurcated party system (Detterbeck, 2005; Koole, 1996; Katz and Mair, 1995). Unlike previous scholarship which applies the cartel party theory to the EP (Bressanelli, 2014; Rose and Borz, 2013; Hix, Kreppel, and Noury 2003), I divide cartelization into two separate processes—collusion and exclusion. Analyzing every roll-call vote from the first 30 years of the EP to determine whether or not collusion among the EPP and S&D increased over time, this paper illustrates how these two groups gradually became a unified voting bloc. Further, the analysis of exclusion using mixed effects models reveals that periphery groups are much less likely to gain committee leadership positions or reports than core groups. The results, therefore, indicate that the concept of cartelization best defines the patterns of behavior observed in the first 30 years of the EP, a finding which calls into the question the long-standing belief that EPGs value consensus-building above all else.

The second paper produces a typology of EPGs using fuzzy set Ideal Type Analysis (fsITA) (Kvist, 2007). In this analysis, I construct four original conditions derived from the literature on institutionalization, including consistency, concentration, volatility, and fragility, as well as a measure of tenure. From these factors, the fsITA identifies five distinct types of EPGs, two of which reflect developmental phases of fully institutionalized groups, and three which are associated with weak institutionalization. I then create an indicator variable for fully

institutionalized groups based on the results of the typology, which is introduced into Daniel's (2015) negative binomial analysis of rapporteurships, 1979-2014. The results show that members of fully institutionalized groups have many more opportunities to impact policy by managing multiple legislative reports than do their colleagues from weakly institutionalized groups. This paper, therefore, identifies endogenous, exogenous, and inter-parliamentary dimensions of weak institutionalization, and it extends the findings from the first paper regarding the exclusion of periphery members.

The third paper, a pooled logistic regression analysis, builds on the research of Hix and Noury (2018), who analyze between- and within-session switches (1979-2014), and makes two vital contributions. First, I measure delegation-to-group and member-to-group policy distances using DW-Nominate scores. Second, I include indicator variables which operationalize three types of party group collapse—mergers, dissolutions, and failure to reconvene following an election. In so doing, this paper accounts for both system- and individual-level determinants of switching. After controlling for weak institutionalization, the results of this paper provide original insights into the causes of switching. Most significantly, the analysis shows that large national delegations switch groups, not because they are seeking offices or policy influence, but rather because they are over-represented in collapsing, weakly institutionalized groups. The analytical benefits gained from operationalizing weak institutionalization and group disintegration are clearly on display in this paper.

The final paper uses multi-level logistic regression models to study party group re-affiliation, and it tests directly the conclusion made by Hix and Noury (2018) which states that ideological outlying MEPs are the most likely switchers. In this paper, I differentiate between cascade switchers, those members who re-affiliate following the collapse of their group, and ambitious switchers, members who switched only once during a term and were not involved in a cascade. All members of collapsing groups, no matter their age, tenure, or position within the EPG, are forced to re-affiliate; therefore, in order to properly estimate the effect of policy-outlying on switching, it is necessary to analyze only ambitious switchers. The results show that, in fact, outliers are often viewed as unreliable partners, and according to multiple measures, they are statistically less likely to succeed in switching party groups. Alternatively, ambitious moderates are the most likely MEPs to change groups.

These analyses rely on data from several sources. The Høyland, Sircar, and Hix (2009), Automated Database for the European Parliament, was the most important data set because it allowed me to create all of the party switching variables, as well as the original, EPG variables used to for the institutionalization typology. Furthermore, the roll call voting data from Hix, Roland, and Noury (2007), were pivotal for calculating the DW-Nominate scores, a process which was undertaken for me by Keith Poole. I used Daniel's (2015) data set for the MEP gender variable, and the replication files were necessary for the analysis of report allocation in the second paper. Hix and Noury (2018) made their NPD in government and commissioner variables available to me for the third paper. Finally, I use the ParlGov data set for party position estimates (Döring and Manow, 2016).

Implications

These papers view the EP through the lens of party group switching, and the results, when aggregated, provide a characterization at odds with many standard interpretations of parliamentary behavior found in the contemporary literature. In this section, I explain the significance of my revised description of the EP's party group system before discussing how the research presented in this dissertation relates to the broader study of political science.

The first paper concludes that the EP has a cartelized party group system whereby the dual processes of collusion and exclusion produce a stable, yet highly asymmetrical, set of relationships between the core and periphery EPGs. The second paper determines that the two core groups, the EPP and S&D, as well as three smaller groups, the Liberals, the Greens, and the Leftists, have become fully institutionalized, while the rest of the EPGs remain weakly institutionalized. These combined results describe the EP's two-tiered structure and explain why certain MEPs face distinct disadvantages. More importantly, they run counter to two bedrock assumptions found in the literature: First, that consensus-seeking operates as the guiding principle in the EP (Bowler and McElroy, 2015; Burns, 2013; Settembri and Neuhold, 2009; Ringe, 2010), and second, that the disproportionate allocation of leadership positions and report assignments results from the principled "self-exclusion" of MEPs who willingly choose not to engage with parliamentary work (Hurka and Kaeding, 2012; Almeida, 2010; Benedetto, 2005).

If by consensus-seeking, scholars mean that EPGs orient themselves primarily towards building inclusive, over-sized coalitions, then the results of the first paper provide substantial historical evidence to counter this position. The observable trends of silencing, obstructing, and under-representation detailed below do not correspond with the standard definition of consensus-building. Put simply, exclusion and consensus-seeking cannot co-exist in the same system as they are concepts diametrically opposed to one another. Prior to 2019, an agreement by the Grand Coalition to vote together assured an absolute majority and the successful passing of legislation. Such coordination should be viewed as a minimum winning coalition, and inconsequential minor group support for these bills should be considered bandwagoning, not evidence of an over-sized voting coalition.

Furthermore, the idea that MEPs elect to forego their parliamentary responsibilities by choice conforms with the narrative of consensus-seeking. If we assume that the core party groups work to form the broadest, most inclusive, voting coalitions possible, then it follows logically that marginalized members have only themselves to blame. Citing self-exclusion, therefore, makes it easier for observers to ignore the unequal legislative opportunities available to periphery MEPs. However, the empirical findings, which cover at least thirty years of parliamentary activity, provide strong counter-evidence to this interpretation of disproportionality. The results from the analysis of report allocation, 1979-2014, show that, when measured by individual EPG indicators, members from all groups except the radical right, receive a statistically significant number of reports. When these individual dummies are replaced with an indicator for full institutionalization, the subsequent disparity, under-estimated in previous research, is too large, covers too many sessions, and includes too many different types of groups, to be attributable primarily to self-exclusion. Even after controlling for group size, the analysis shows that members from weakly institutionalized groups face substantial exclusion and receive statistically fewer leadership positions.

The dual concepts of consensus-orientation and self-exclusion serve primarily to de-politicize the EP. Indeed, consensus-seeking, the practice of prioritizing decision-making processes intended to satisfy as many participants as possible, is inherently a-political. Likewise, arguing that exclusion takes place only on a voluntary basis demands the acceptance of an utterly a-political premise:

Preeminent politicians consistently refrain from using their influence to disadvantage competitors because they prefer including even political rivals in broad coalitions. Based on this dissertation's findings, these arguments do not stand up to scrutiny, and the evidence rebuts many of these assumptions. Consequently, these finding suggest that the EP has always been a politicized parliament where politicians, parties, and groups use their advantages to gain preferred outcomes, sometimes at the expense of their competitors.

Because it entails exclusion, and exclusion is incompatible with Lijphardtian consensus-seeking, cartelization rules out the a-political. Therefore, this dissertation provides the literature with a way to understand how political decisions, made by self-interested politicians, had the unintended consequence of creating two institutions simultaneously. First, collusion among the members of the Grand Coalition insured that the EP would become a functional, legislative organ within the European Union's political system. Second, exclusion makes it very difficult for members of weakly institutionalized periphery groups to advocate for the interests of their constituents and therefore diminishes the EP's ability to function as a representative assembly. Though not the first to identify the trade-offs faced by parliaments tasked with undertaking multiple responsibilities, such as providing social linkage, offering constituents representation, contributing to government oversight, and crafting legislation (Kreppel, 2014; Wessels and Katz, 1999), this interpretation does provide an endogenous explanation for how and why the EP came to privilege legislative efficiency over parliamentary representation.

The literature draws a clear line connecting cartelization and uneven institutionalization to the attenuation of a parliament's ability to represent its electorate. For example, Bressanelli (2014) warns that "the consolidation of cartel parties would not be good" because "efficient as they are in managing financial resources…[they] are not interested in providing the link between civil society and government" (54). Rose argues that consensus among Grand Coalition members equates to a *transformismo*, whereby national parties campaign on one set of issues and then vote against those positions as soon as they enter the Hemisphere. He concludes that "consensus in the European Parliament is repressive," and that "European voters cannot rely on parties…to represent their views when votes are taken" in the EP (2013: 126-7). Finally, when highlighting uneven institutionalization's potential effects, Randal and Svåsand determine that asymmetry "detracts from the competitiveness of the party system" and that "significant social sectors are

excluded not only from power but from any meaningful party representation" (2002: 9). So, if the conclusions presented here are accurate, then the price paid for the EP's well-documented investment in increasing its legislative effectiveness (Kreppel, 2002), is its inability to provide substantive representation (Pitkin, 1967), especially to the growing number of citizens who do not support the pursuit of an "ever closer union." Therefore, to appreciate the strength of the EP as a legislative body, one must focus on cooperation and collusion among the core groups; yet to understand the reasons why the Parliament has a had a much harder time connecting with the European electorate and acting as a representative assembly capable of imbuing the EU with input-oriented legitimacy, it is necessary to analyze the exclusion of the weakly institutionalized groups.

The four papers in the dissertation present an ambiguity that may be interesting for political scientists to consider going forward. On one hand, the first paper relies on a method associated with rational choice theory to explain how asymmetry among EPGs can produce equilibrium. By examining why MEPs made specific decisions at critical junctures, the analysis assumes that these leaders are both self-interested and strategically motivated. Despite many unintended consequences, the members of the Grand Coalition undoubtedly succeeded in their goals by raising the profile of the EP and cementing its role as a powerful actor within the European political system.

On the other hand, papers three and four illustrate a case where concentrating only on individuals', or political parties', rational decisions causes observers to arrive at counter-intuitive conclusions. In the case of party group switching, the literature has not yet considered what role group disintegration plays in causing cascade switches. Because the literature has thus far overlooked group-level collapse, observers generally assume individuals and parties change labels in order to maximize their political capital. In the case of the EP, this is demonstrably not the case, however. Therefore, it is prudent to consider how the system impacts agents' ability to act rationally, or at least, to act in accordance with the theories of parliamentary behavior found in most studies.

In the case of an unevenly institutionalized party group system, it is necessary to recognize that members of fully institutionalized groups work under a much different set of expectations than

periphery members. For example, core MEPs can be relatively confident that their group will endure past the next election. This sense of security provides members with the time necessary to marshal a bill through the legislative process as a rapporteur, even if this process takes more than one session. The same cannot be said for members of weakly institutionalized groups who work under a much different set of incentives. In other words, what may appear rational to a core member would seem like a waste of resources to periphery members. This is not to say that one is rational and the other is not. More precisely, it means that when a system bifurcates into two tiers, as is the case in the EP, it is necessary to consider how that asymmetry shapes members' expectations about what role they can successfully fulfill as a parliamentarian.

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Paper One

Consolidated Asymmetry: On the Emergence and Reproduction of the EP's Cartelized Party Group System

Abstract

How has the European Parliament become an effective political actor vis-à-vis the Council and Commission while also failing to mature into a representative body capable of providing the European Union with sufficient input-oriented legitimacy? To address this puzzle, I present an analytical narrative, based on the economic theory of agglomeration, to identify endogenous inflection points which initiated the emergence of a cartelized party group system, founded on the twin institutions of collusion and exclusion. I present two empirical analyses. The first focuses on collusion and examines every roll call vote in the EP, 1979-2009, to construct the Agreement Index for the cartel and periphery clusters. The second presents a mixed-effects regression model and provides evidence that periphery groups are under-represented as committee leaders and rapporteurs. The implications of these findings are directly applicable to any discussion regarding the EP's role as a legitimating body or a representative chamber.

Key Words: European Parliament, Party Systems, Cartel Theory, Analytical Narrative

Introduction

By constructing the popularly elected European Parliament (EP), European elites intended to establish an assembly capable of representing constituents' interests and deliberating over legislation. In carrying out these important tasks, the EP would also provide the European Union (EU) with input-oriented legitimacy and government by the people (Rittberger 2005). Following multiple treaty reforms, the EP has become equal in standing to the Commission and the European Council; today, no ordinary regulation passes into law without its approval. Nevertheless, Eurosceptic political parties continue to gain growing support in national and European elections by shouting down Brussels' bureaucrats who they claim make laws without the consent of the governed. Therefore, it appears many voters and politicians have failed to recognize the EP as the legitimating, representative, and deliberative body European leaders envisioned upon first negotiating its formation.

How can we explain this puzzle? How can the EP be an effective institution within the EU political system yet struggle to represent its constituents? Rather than relying on extra-parliamentary interpretations, such as exogenous shocks or the second order election theory, to explain the EP's disappointing performance (Kreppel 2002; Reif and Schmitt 1980), I trace the source of this problem to internal decisions made by members of the European Parliament (MEPs) at specific points during its development. These inflection points, in turn, created and sustained a bifurcated, or two-tiered, party group system. I present an analytical narrative (Bates et al. 1998), based on the economic theory of agglomeration (Krugman 1991), which concentrates on three, critical junctures. The discussion of each decision point examines the emergence of an institution, the alternative paths open to the EP had a different decision been met, the primary source of opposition in the EP at the time, and an empirical analysis substantiating how this institution was reproduced into the future.

Using this approach, I adapt the theory of cartelization to explain the mechanics of the EP's party group system (Katz and Mair 1995; Sartori 2005). Cartelization can be disaggregated into two distinct patterns of behavior—collusion and exclusion. Collusion among the two largest European Parliamentary Groups (EPGs), the European People's Party (EPP) and the Social Democrats (SOC/PES/S&D), determines which members gain access to decision-making levers and policy-influencing mechanisms. Exclusion clarifies which parliamentarians will be under-represented or placed out of bounds. Applying the concept of cartelization helps to explain the establishment and reproduction of the informal, grand coalition which is, in turn, responsible for the asymmetry in the EP's party group system. The chamber's inability to adequately represent its constituencies originates from this, the parliament's unbalanced competitive structure.

Bressanelli (2014) offers the best overall summary of how the cartel theory applies to the EP party system. Focusing only on collusion, he finds insufficient evidence to confirm that a cartel controls the EP. Rose and Borz (2013), however, demonstrate the presence of collusion and determine that that the red-black coalition between the EPP & S&D diminishes the EP's ability to represent voters. By taking a two-dimensional approach to examining cartelization, one entailing both collusion and exclusion, this analysis adds to the previous research by describing how these processes crystallized during the development of the party group system, thus providing the literature with an innovative application of the party cartel theory to the EP.

Building on Bardi (2002), I categorize EPGs as either members of the core or the periphery. This asymmetry works at cross purposes. On one hand, the collusive core, consisting of the EPP and S&D, provides the Parliament with stable leadership and represents its institutional interests during negotiations with the Commission and the Council. Hence, the core should receive much of the credit for the EP's effectiveness as a European political body. On the other hand, the presence of non-core, periphery members who have limited influence over policy and restricted access to leadership positions, mitigates the EP's effectiveness as a representative assembly.[3]

Equality among members is a sine qua non of parliaments, as even Prime Ministers are generally *primus inter pares*. A two-tiered system, however, lacks such parity. Parliamentarians from small, challenger parties enter the EP as equals but soon find themselves excluded from the legislative process. Predictably, these periphery members use the EP plenary as a soap box to amplify their criticism of the EU's democratic deficit (Brack 2015).

Identifying this asymmetry should motivate scholars to rearticulate their standard claims regarding the EP as a consensus-seeking body (Benedetto 2007). If this study provides evidence of both collusion and exclusion, then the EP does not meet the standards of consensus, based on inclusivity and the formation of oversized majorities, articulated by Lijphart (2012). Therefore, the theory of cartelization, when applied to the EP, should inspire future scholarship to address not only the impact of party system bifurcation on electoral and parliamentary behavior but also to revise the standard argument which claims that the EP orients itself primarily towards building consensus among groups.

Analytic Narrative

In this paper, I use the analytic narrative approach to explain how rational decisions led to the formation of the grand coalition, the periphery, and a two-tiered party group system (Bates et al. 1998). The puzzle under investigation asks: How has the EP become such an effective external actor vis-à-vis the other European institutions while also failing to mature into a representative

[3] I use periphery here as heuristic device to describe the non-cartel groups. While these groups share many characteristics, it should not be assumed that they view themselves, or behave, as a unified entity.

body capable of providing the EU with sufficient input-oriented legitimacy? I hypothesize that cartelization results in the bifurcation of the EP party system. This process splits EPGs into two, unbalanced clusters, and because a two-tiered party system cannot represent its citizens effectively, this division contributes to the EP's inability to garner legitimating support from European voters. The first part of the narrative, therefore, introduces the theory of cartelization, a necessary starting point for examining this puzzle.

Analytic narratives take a formal model, and use it as a structuring device to explain why rational actors behaved as they did and how these actions generated an equilibrium. The second section presents the economic model of agglomeration and clarifies what explanatory leverage it offers to the analysis. I first translate the model into the context of the EP and then present the historical narrative.

Unlike previous scholarship, this paper does not rely solely on exogenous shocks to explain variation within the party group system; rather, I focus on the emergence and reproduction of endogenous parliamentary institutions, originating from deliberate calculations made by members or party groups (Weingast and Wittman 2006). I use Schwartz's definitions of inflection points as, "critical junctures [which] permit the identification of the beginning and end of a given path, and thus the isolation of specific institutional structures generating increasing returns" (2004, 5). This historical narrative discusses three critical junctures, including: first, the decision to sit in trans-national groups taken in 1953; second, the informal agreement reached by the Socialists and Christian Democrats to vote as a single parliamentary bloc; and third, the 1999 dissolution of the Technical Group for Non-attached Members – Mixed Group (TDI). In examining these turning points, the narrative offers an original explanation for the development of the EP's consolidated, yet asymmetrical, party group system.

Cartelization

Katz and Mair's (1995) seminal article on the theory of cartel parties spurred authors to define a related, but separate, idea—the party cartel (Koole 1996; Detterbeck 2005). This concept describes how parties cooperate with one another to maintain access to state aid, protect themselves from electoral shocks, and construct barriers intended to keep new parties weak. Party system cartelization entails two relevant conditions: first, "that the established parties

…collaborat[e] with each other," and second, that they "try to prevent the entry of newcomers," (Koole 1996, 515-516). Applying these criteria to the study of party systems, the twin behaviors of *collusion* and *exclusion* must be present to produce *cartelization*.

The literature on the EP often conflates these two processes. For example, Hix et al. suggest that the "EPP and PES collude to prevent the smaller groups from securing influence in the internal workings of the Parliament" (2003, 320). Yoshinaka et al. confirm this hypothesis, finding that "members of the EP who are opposed to further integration are systematically excluded from the report allocation process" (2010, 475), and that this inequality "may be produced by collusion to keep the extreme right-wingers on the sidelines" (2010, 463). By defining collusion and exclusion as two distinct institutions, the origin and advance of which may be identified and evaluated, this paper contributes to the study of cartelization in the EP.

Bartolini examines the relationship between competition and collusion and determines that "the proper starting question is how much collusion (i.e. non-competition) is necessary to set, to keep in motion, and to defend competitive interaction" (Bartolini 1999, 436). Therefore, the term need not imply pathology. However, the EP literature defines collusion as "the formation of the grand coalition between the EPP and PES" (Kreppel and Hix 2003, 87), a construct also referred to as a metaphorical, or "virtual 'cartel'" (Hix et al. 2003, 318). Bressanelli notes the potential negative consequences of such collaboration, contending that "a 'cartel' between the EPP and the PES makes it more difficult for the European citizens to understand what is at stake in the EU and contributes to the decline in turnout for the EP elections" (2014, 149). Although many parliaments rely on instances of cooperation between nominal party competitors to pass legislation or to form a governing coalition, in the case of the EP, scholars view collusion as potentially harmful.

Likewise, some form of exclusion is present in every parliament. For example, de jure exclusion, legitimized by democratic elections, occurs when a ruling coalition takes control of government leadership positions, thus marginalizing the opposition. De facto exclusion, legitimized by democratic norms, arises when mainstream parties collectively agree to ostracize challengers deemed "beyond the pale" by prohibiting them from entering into government (Van Spanje 2010). However, in the case of a party cartel, cooperation should supplant competition as the

primary mode of legislating, and this collaboration must be paired with various forms of illegitimate exclusion. To define a system as cartelized, collusion and exclusion must be dominant patterns of behavior and both trends must be observable.

Cartelization bifurcates a party system, and members from the different tiers have asymmetrical access to offices and policy influence. This disproportionality nourishes anti-system parties, which "lump together all of the established parties as a 'bloc' to be opposed," and encourages them to "translate a particular opposition to what [they] see as the cartelization of parties into a more generalized assault on the party system as a whole" (Katz and Mair 2002, 134). Those once engaged in "classical opposition" shift to "principled opposition," where they attempt to delegitimize the "whole system of governance" (Mair 2007, 5). The core's discrimination of the periphery implies biased law-making procedures. This negative throughput nullifies the input-oriented legitimacy gained from free and fair elections as well as the output-oriented legitimacy derived from effective policy implementation (Schmidt 2013). Therefore, cartelization not only produces actors bent on de-legitimizing the political system, but it also taints much of the legislation passed by the EP.

I define collusion in the EP as informal interactions which led to the emergence of the grand coalition. The first component, informality, indicates that these relations took place in the parliamentary arena. In the governmental arena, collusion would correspond to de jure coalition formation. Lacking that option, EPGs routinize their coordination via informal, though repeated, interactions. The second component, fashioning a grand coalition, reflects the substitution of competition for cooperation among typically adversarial party families.

I define exclusion, the obverse of collusion, as the systematic silencing, obstructing, or under-representing of non-core, political groups. The cartel utilizes its majority to re-write rules which disadvantage the smaller groups (Kreppel 2002); therefore, while collusion is informal, exclusion has both legal and ad hoc dimensions. In the case of silencing, consider first that the EPP and S&D act as an "agenda cartel" (Hix et al. 2007, 111-115), and they use this advantage to keep bills concerning European integration from being tabled (Hix 1999), because this issue exaggerates the differences between their pro- and anti-European factions (Crum 2007). Therefore, many of the periphery groups, whose policy preferences are best defined by either

hard or soft Euroscepticism (Taggart 1998), rarely experience the opportunity to legislate on the issue of integration because the core silences debate on this topic. This sort of exclusion is deleterious because it diminishes periphery members' ability to represent their constituencies' preferences vis-à-vis European integration. Obstruction occurs most noticeably when the core groups keep certain delegations from joining their ranks, when they change the rules to make it harder for delegations to form a political group, and when they challenge a group's very existence.

The literature finds numerous instances of under-representation in the EP. Referring to the Technical Group of the European Far Right (DR), Fieschi states that the group was "never afforded access to the normal channels for cooperation between parliamentary groups nor were they given any committee chairs" (2000, 523). This was true despite the fact that DR had only four fewer members than the Rainbow Group (RBW) in EP2 and began EP3 with more MEPs than both the United Left (CG) and the RBW (Bardi 2002, 308). The two largest groups are overrepresented in terms of report allocation, while the radical right groups rarely receive rapporteurships and are often barred from holding committee leadership positions; moreover, "the non-allocation of reports and committee vice-chairmanships to radical right MEPs indicates that there is a cordon sanitaire enclosing the radical right at the European level" (Almeida 2010, 249). These findings exemplify how the core uses exclusion to produce a parliamentary periphery.

The presence of exclusion in the EP is notable for two reasons. First, because the EP does not form a government and lacks a winner-take-all mechanism for allocating leadership positions, it depends on the norm of proportionality to distribute offices (Ringe 2010). Exclusion from leadership positions in the EP cannot be legitimized by formal rules similar to those found in national parliaments. Consequently, under-representation originating in the parliamentary arena and implemented through informal channels represents a clear violation of this norm. Second, scholars investigating the disproportional allocation of offices in the EP recognize the de facto nature of this exclusion and justify this inequality by referencing the cordon sanitaire. While these authors focus primarily on Eurosceptics and the radical right, the current analysis expands the investigation to cover all non-core groups, and my results show that exclusion impacts the entire periphery, not just ideological extremists. Therefore, exclusion in the EP does not share the

normative justifications used in national parliaments to place anti-system parties out of bounds and may be viewed as illegitimate.

One of the strongest critiques of the party cartel hypothesis comes from Kitschelt (2000), who claims that collusion among parliamentary parties is not sustainable because it reflects a prisoner's dilemma. Likewise, he argues mainstream parties have a limited ability to exclude challengers from running in elections or entering the legislative chamber. While these criticisms are applicable to national contexts, they do not travel to the EP.

There are two ways to overcome competing individual's self-interested behavior, i.e. defection, in the prisoner's dilemma. First, the participants may share internal values which make defection unlikely. Second, the players can engage in iterated negotiations such that short-term interests are subsumed under the shadow of future negotiations, thus encouraging cooperation (Axelrod 2006). In the EP, we find evidence to support both sociological and instrumental mechanisms for overcoming defection. First, the EPP and S&D each share a common value—support for European integration (Rose and Borz 2013). Despite ideological disputes over certain issues (Bressanelli 2014), this common denominator is the foundation on which the grand coalition rests. Second, a voting coalition consisting of both the Christian and Social Democrats represents the most efficient route for gaining an absolute majority; therefore, these groups participate in constant negotiations within the committee system and in informal trilogues (Reh et al. 2013). These groups' coordinated behavior ensures that the EP operates as a functional parliament, capable of passing legislation. Therefore, the EPP and S&D share common values regarding support for the EU, common interests in making the EP an efficacious parliamentary chamber, and multiple opportunities to participate in iterated negotiations. All of these characteristics help overcome the prisoner's dilemma by encouraging cooperation which in turn consolidates the cartel. Therefore, collusion is more viable in the EP than in national parliaments.

Kitschelt (2000) also argues that party cartels cannot prohibit challengers from running and winning seats. This is true. However, once those members join the EP, periphery members face challenges that cartel members do not. At the highest level, in the EP's Conference of Presidents, all groups are represented by a chairperson; however, even here "given the pre-eminence of the EPP-ED and the PSE, the duopoly of power…finds institutional expression in [its] meetings"

(Judge and Earnshaw 2008, 164). In this case, the periphery members are indeed represented, but they can always be silenced. While Kitschelt (2000) is correct that a party cartel cannot influence the electoral sphere, in the EP, the core administers most dimensions of the parliamentary arena.

The Model

I base my analytical narrative on an empirical model originally used by economists to explain agglomeration, or the concentration of production facilities in geographic areas. Agglomeration theory explains three key points: First, why manufacturing concentrates in certain regions; second, why agricultural sectors surrounding these manufacturing regions remain less developed; and third, how this disparity produces a stable equilibrium for both clusters. According to this model, "with low transportation costs, a higher manufacturing share, or stronger economies of scale, circular causation sets in, and manufacturing will concentrate in which ever region gets a head start" (Krugman 1991, 497). Below, I translate this definition to the EP context.

The agglomeration cycle starts when a first mover begins manufacturing in a specific region. Low transportation costs are important because they make it possible for workers living in rural areas to move to the industrializing region. With more workers entering the market, the price of labor goes down, which spurs more companies to begin manufacturing in the region. Competition among firms and workers improves overall productivity, thus increasing the share of the economy originating from manufacturing, and decreasing the costs of inputs due to economies of scale. These compounding effects lead to higher wages, which attract more workers from the rural to the urban cluster. The cycle then repeats, and over time the urban sector gains strength while the rural areas face continuing losses to their workforce. This repetition is what Krugman refers to as circular causation, and it is the mechanism that locks in the agglomeration process. By his own definition, Krugman's theory of agglomeration describes a "core-periphery" relationship, whereby the manufacturing cluster represents the core, the agricultural sector stands in for the periphery, and their interactions produce an equilibrium (Krugman 2011, 4). I employ Krugman's model to explain the asymmetric, though stable, relationship between the EP's core and periphery groups.

In the political science literature, circular causation is referred to as increasing returns, and authors apply this concept, in conjunction with path dependence, to explain the uneven

development of common units, such as states, regions, or neighborhoods in a city. Pierson's discussion of agglomeration is enlightening. He writes: "initial centers of economic activity may act like a magnet and influence the locational decisions and investments of other economic actors. The concentration of these factors may in turn make the particular location attractive to other firms that produce similar goods…. Increasing returns arguments help explain the prevalence of pockets of specialized economic activity" (Pierson 2000, 255). Therefore, the application of Krugman's theory aligns closely with qualitative approaches found in political science research.

Two dimensions structure the EP's policy space (Benoit and Laver 2012). Classic left-right ideological issues fall along the primary axis, while issues of supra-nationalism versus national sovereignty compose the secondary dimension (McElroy and Benoit 2009). Groups take positions in this space that are non-overlapping and which are consistent across parliamentary terms (McElroy and Benoit 2012). To understand how agglomeration informs the bifurcation of the EP party system, we can assume that locations within this policy space represent natural resources, or voters whose preferences align with the groups'. Each group, therefore, represents a "cluster" with access to a certain type of voter. The theory of agglomeration allows us to understand how some of these clusters become the core, others become the periphery, and how this dynamic finds an equilibrium.

The application of Krugman's model to the EP party group system is straightforward. First, low transportation costs between geographic clusters correlates with the low cost of switching party groups in the EP (Hix and Noury 2018). Compared to national parliaments, the EP witnesses an exceptional number of party switchers per session (O'Brien and Shomer 2015). Without this element of carriage between clusters, increasing returns would be impossible. Table 1.1 provides counts of switchers, sorted by their start and end clusters. Note that during the first six EP sessions, about 12 percent of all members changed group labels. Of those, over 85 percent of switchers originated in the highly volatile periphery, and 26 percent of switchers left a periphery group to join the core. Not only do we see high rates of switching, indicating that the costs to re-affiliating are relatively low, but the data show a centripetal flow of switchers moving from the periphery to the core, as the model suggests.

Start Session	Cartel	Cartel	Periphery	Periphery	
End Session	**Cartel**	**Periphery**	**Cartel**	**Periphery**	**Total**
Non-Switcher	2,318 (0.66) (0.985)	0 (0.0) (0.0)	0 (0.0) (0.0)	1,186 (0.34) (0.81)	3,504 (1.0) (0.88)
Switcher	37 (0.08) (0.015)	30 (0.06) (1.0)	123 (0.26) (1.0)	283 (0.60) (0.19)	473 (1.0) (0.12)
Total	2,355 (0.59) (1.0)	30 (0.01) (1.0)	123 (0.03) (1.0)	1,469 (0.37) (1.0)	3,977 (1.0) (1.0)

Table 1.1 Transportation Between Cartel and Periphery Clusters (1979-2009)

The second condition, "high manufacturing share," relates to the cartel's legislative output. In this sense, the core cluster, which for the first eight EP sessions could reach the absolute majority threshold without support from the other groups, has a clear advantage when it comes to enacting its preferred policies. If other policy-seeking, periphery members recognize this, then due to low transportation costs, they will switch to the high-productivity, core cluster.

Finally, the "economies of scale" concept correlates with seat share, and the discrepancy in size between the cartel and periphery is visualized in Figure 1.1. Based on the norms of proportionality which ostensibly constrain the distribution of offices, all things being equal, membership in a larger group is more attractive than membership in a smaller one (McElroy and Benoit 2009). Therefore, the dominant seat share of the core cluster should have a positive impact on attracting office-seeking members.

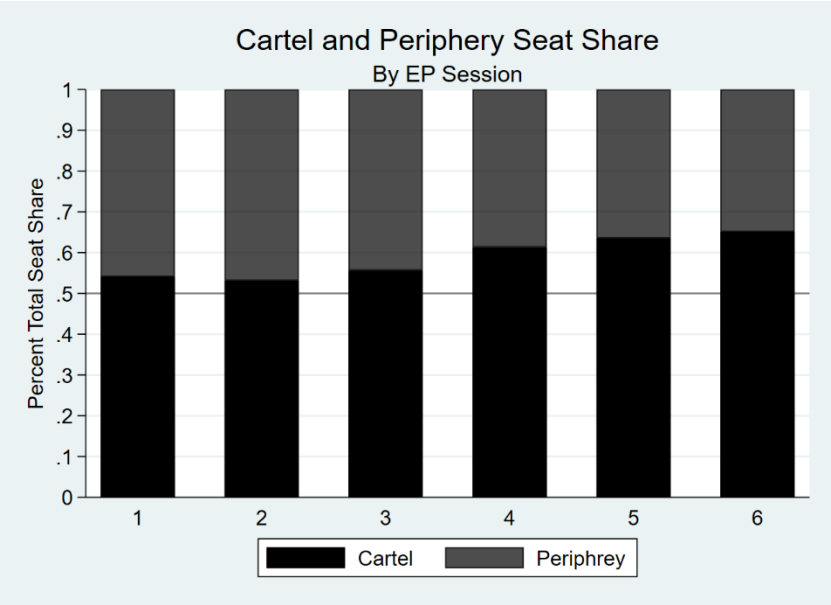

Figure 1.1 Comparison of Seat Share for Cartel and Periphery Clusters, by Parliamentary Session

These processes lead to increasing returns for the core and the debilitation of the periphery; yet, according to agglomeration theory, this relationship generates a stable, though unbalanced, equilibrium. How is that possible? From a rational perspective, if the core controls policy and offices, then all ambitious members should join. This is not the case, however. Krugman contends that "the location decisions of producers themselves determined the location of large markets. Under the right circumstances, this could produce a circular causation in which concentrating production fed on itself. *But that was not a necessary result, because the 'centripetal' pull of market size was opposed by the 'centrifugal' force of dispersed natural resources*" (Krugman 2011, 4-5, my italics). This quote speaks to the electoral advantage that periphery members may achieve based on their ideological extremity, outsider status, or Euroscepticism (De Vries and Edwards 2009). In this sense, party-level opposition to European integration and motivated Eurosceptic voters represent natural resources which make it possible for periphery members to continue existing, although precariously, in their own spatial clusters. Certain members will have no interest in joining the core, while other members might try to affiliate but face rejection. The documentation of both push and pull mechanisms is critical for a theory describing a two-tiered party group system because this dynamic stabilizes a system populated by clusters of unbalanced strength.

Historical Narrative

The First Critical Juncture: Defining the Units

Emergence

The historical narrative begins in the Common Assembly of the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC). As early as June 1952, during the inaugural sitting of the Assembly, the members, while crafting the original Rules of Procedure, came to a decision which represents the first inflection point in the historical development of the EP. According to Fitzmaurice, "the early debates on the rules of procedure, as well as the form in which these were finally adopted, give ample evidence of the conscious effort being made to facilitate—nay, encourage—the formation of formal party groups of a trans-national character within the assembly" (1975, 20). It took just two years for the political groups to gain a "dominant position within the organizational structure of the assembly;" further, each of the groups had a "corporate identity…distinctive policies and styles which differentiated one from another" (Fitzmaurice 1975, 24-25).

At this time, the Socialist group viewed itself as a "supranational opposition" and sought "a more social, interventionist policy" than the Liberals and Christian Democrats, who referred to these challengers as a dirigiste, "precursor opposition" at odds with their own "liberal" ideology (Fitzmaurice 1975, 1998-9). The Gaullist group (UDE) presented an anti-system, sovereigntist critique and argued for regaining national control over decision-making powers as well as the cessation or reversal of the integration process. Interestingly, despite this proto-Euroscepticism, the French Gaullists (UDR) did not cross the same red lines as "the extreme right wing groups such as the French UDCA and the Sozialistische Reichspartei (SRP) from Germany," parties which were, even at this early stage, placed out of bounds (Fitzmaurice 1975, 19).

From 1952 until the passing of the Single European Act (SEA) in 1986, the process of politicization led to left-right polarization, floating vote coalitions, and the predominance of *ad hoc* policy arrangements among the groups (Pradhan and Pridham 1981, 50). Kreppel cites similar trends and argues that the groups tended towards "ideological extremes and dogmatism" (Kreppel 2002, 36). During this period, party groups were undergoing differentiation while the patterns of competition remained grounded in ideological conflict.

Counterfactual

Viewing these historical instances through the prism of path dependence makes it possible to identify a starting point for several different processes which would later mature into full institutions. Most significantly, if the members of the Common Assembly had chosen to sit as national delegations rather than trans-national party groups affiliated with established party families, then the historical development of the EP would be completely different. An alternative resolution at this critical moment could have caused the EP to end up resembling the Consultative Committee of the Council of Europe, an ineffective "talking shop" (Rittberger 2005, 74-78). Furthermore, at this early stage, the groups were staking out their own individual trajectories. This is relevant because endogenous group characteristics influence patterns of interaction and in turn determine the shape of the party group system.

Sources of Opposition

Ideological competition between the Socialists, on one hand, and the Christian Democrats and Liberals, on the other, defines this time period. The former tabled an official motion of censure against the High Authority in 1956 and was generally critical of its decisions (Fitzmaurice 1975, 198). In contrast, the latter two groups supported the High Authority, and in the case of the EPP "one can say that the cement which holds the group together is support for integration" (Fitzmaurice 1975, 76). A faction in the EPP led by the German CDU viewed the Socialists primarily as political competitors. Kurt Biedenkopf, for example, intended to make the EPP "a broad, conservative, non-confessional, anti-socialist alliance which can confront the socialists in direct elections" (Fitzmaurice 1978, 113).

Anti-system groups, such as the Communists and the UDE, represented a different type of opposition which produced a centrifugal force within the emerging party group system. Lacking the de jure structure of a government-opposition framework, this polarization represented a serious impediment to coordination. Finally, even at this early stage, we detect three types of delegations—1) the two core groups plus the Liberals, 2) those outside the core but seated in the Assembly, and 3) those deemed beyond the pale and totally excluded from the Assembly. At a time before popular elections, it was much easier to reject the third type of delegation, and this form of exclusion will play an important role later in the discussion. By identifying sources and types of opposition, it is possible to better apprehend groups' strategic motivations.

Reproduction

The choice to sit as trans-national groups was one of the first, and most important, decisions made by the Common Assembly. The EP has preserved this institution as the fundamental political component of its parliamentary system in two ways. First, it regularly updates the Rules of Procedure and reforms the minimum threshold requirements for creating a group (Kreppel 2002). Second, it uses the Rules to make group membership much more attractive than sitting as an un-affiliated member. Groups receive access to budgetary funds and support staff, as well as representation in the Conference of Presidents; additionally, they control plenary speaking time, committee membership and the distribution of rapporteurships (Corbett et al. 2003, 58). Consequently, it greatly benefits MEPs to affiliate with a party group. Beyond the confines of the EP, transnational parties support the workings of the EP party groups, thus offering external, institutional support (Hanley 2008). All of these factors help reproduce the trans-national EPGs as the pre-eminent political units in the EP.

The Second Critical Juncture: Staking a Claim

Emergence

The decision taken at the so-called "meeting of the giants," which occurred at the start of the EP's second term (1984-89), signifies the second critical juncture. According to Rudi Arndt of the German Social Democrats (SPD), at this meeting, the SOC and the EPP "agreed that there was no point in a mutual flexing of muscles; the only sensible strategy was to achieve the appropriate majorities" (Westlake 1994, 186). In order to pass budgets, the two largest groups substituted competition for cooperation. I interpret this critical juncture as the emergence of a new institution, collusion, which directly impacts every subsequent organizational development in the EP.

The effects of this decision are immediately observable. In EP1 the SOC group voted with the EPP and the Liberals around 60 percent of the time, and in EP2 the frequency jumps to 70 percent. By EP3 and EP4, the Socialists are voting with the EPP and Liberals at least 3 out of 4 votes (Hix et al. 2009, 153). Bowler and McElroy find extraordinary voting cohesion between the three largest groups and determine that "the divisions and partisan battles amongst the main three political groups have been settled long before bills get to the floor" (2015, 1361). This pattern of voting behavior is directly attributable to the meeting of the giants.

This meeting occurred prior to the Single European Act (SEA) of 1986, yet the literature identifies this treaty reform as the primary catalyst for spurring cooperation among the major groups and the formation of the grand coalition. According to this account, the implementation of new rules, such as weighted voting in the Conference of Presidents, "coincide[d] with exogenous increases in the legislative powers and political authority of the EP," leading to "a shift…that began to privilege the largest parties to the detriment of everyone else" which in turn helped to the grand coalition to become "hegemonic within the organizational structures of the EP" (Kreppel 2002, 215-16). While we have no reason to dispute the significant role treaty reform played, the meeting of the giants preceded the SEA by two years, and because arguments using path dependency take sequencing seriously (Thelen 1999), it is also important to consider how the agreement to substitute cooperation for competition made it possible for the EPP and SOC to take full advantage of their new powers. Had these groups continued to view each other as adversaries, as they had during the period prior to the meeting of the giants, it is not clear that passing the SEA would have had the same results on the EP's party system.

From the perspective of Krugman's agglomeration theory, collusion represents a staking out of territory and the "decision to create the market" in a specific region. The grand coalition won the "first mover's" benefit by laying claim to the moderate, pro-Europe region within the EP's policy space. An unintended consequence of this choice was that the core cluster could draw switchers from both ideological sides of the spectrum. For example, in the Third Session (1989-1994), fifteen Italian MEPs from the Italian Communist Party (PCI) left the Group for the European United Left (GUE) in May of 1993 to join the Socialists[4]; likewise, the entire European Democratic Group (ED), led by the UK Conservatives, merged with the EPP in 1992. If we view these changes through an ideological lens, it is difficult to discern similarities between Italian Communists and UK Tories; yet, when we use the logic of agglomeration, which is predicated on low costs to switching, the core's overwhelming seat share, and the grand coalition's ability to shape the agenda and enact policy, these shifts from the periphery to the core make perfect sense. Agglomeration draws members and delegations towards the core, thus consolidating and

[4] They would not stay members for long, as they later combined with the French Communists to establish a reformed GUE-NGL group to begin the 4th EP session.

expanding the moderate, pro-European cluster while simultaneously draining the periphery of its most ambitious members. In the cases cited above, two periphery groups dissolved and those members were then absorbed directly into the cartel.

Counterfactual

Had the meeting of the giants produced a different outcome, the EP's party group system would look completely different. In such a counterfactual world, either "major" group would have been forced to fashion pacts with more ideologically congruent groups. For example, the SOC could have tried to muster a United Front coalition including the Rainbow Group, the Communists, and some of the left-leaning members in the Liberal Group. Likewise, the EPP could have forged a Conservative-Nationalist Bloc with their natural allies, the Liberals, as well the Gaullists and UK Conservatives. Had one of these alternative alliances gained traction, then the other would have been forced to do the same, and the history of the EP's party groups system may have followed a more majoritarian trajectory. The choice to form a moderate, pro-European cartel effectively split the potential opposition into two separate ideological camps, one on the left and one on the right, weakening the periphery in the process.

Opposition

This second inflection point turns on an explicit choice made by the Socialists to forfeit their dirigiste critique of the Community's integration process, to forego their standing as the chamber's constructive opposition, and instead, to formulate a new partnership with the pro-integration Christian Democrats. From this point forward, the party group system would be dominated by two groups working together and seeking consensus for the betterment of the EP and the European Community.

The periods divided by this second critical juncture revolve around two different interpretations of the term consensus. In the first period, the Socialists often criticized the High Authority, the EPP and the Liberals, so when these actors aimed at "presenting a united position to the council" (Fitzmaurice 1975, 197), this implied negotiating with an antagonistic opposition. In the period following the meeting of the giants, hostilities were put aside, and the assumption of cooperation acted as an informal standing order. In the first period, because the Socialist vote could not be taken for granted, consensus was the product of active compromise, or the formation of what Lijphart (2012) refers to as an inclusive or oversized coalition. In the second period, consensus

resulted from explicit collusion, and oversized majorities were replaced by a minimum winning coalition. Scholars continue to refer to the EP as consensus-oriented (Bowler and McElroy 2015; Burns 2013; Settembri and Neuhold 2009); however, this tendency only conceals an uneven power dynamic and legitimizes the collusive core's dominate position within the party group system.

To confirm this shift in meaning, simply refer to Pierre Pflimlin's account of the giants' meeting. He recalls that the small groups reacted to the formation of the informal grand coalition by referring to Arndt (SOC) and Klepsch (EPP) as "co-dictators" (Westlake 1994, 187). Likewise, Arndt himself admitted "that this is not entirely above board. It has meant steamrolling the smaller factions in the Group, and of course, the smaller Groups who often got very annoyed" (Westlake 1994,187). Would groups view consensus-seeking negotiations as dictatorial? If they were cooperating in an oversized voting coalition, would these periphery groups feel steamrolled? In fact, consensus-seeking continued, but in this second period its meaning changed; starting in the second term, consensus equated to the EPP and SOC formulating a common position and then waiting to see which groups joined the bandwagon.

As a secondary benefit of the Socialists' turn towards collusion, the EP could now focus on the Council as its main source of opposition. The Council had always had an "ambiguous relationship" with the EP (Judge and Earnshaw 2008, 61). According to the Treaties of Rome, the Council "was not obliged to take notice of any opinions" presented by the EP; furthermore, it was slow to determine the date of the first popular European election, which finally occurred two decades after Rome (Westlake 1994, 35). The weakness of the supranational EP was therefore reflected in the lack of respect accorded it by the intergovernmental Council. Following the meeting of the giants, the EP could ensure an easier path towards an absolute majority. When the Liberals voted with the bloc, which they did frequently, the EP could indeed present a common position to the Council. Further, once the cooperation procedure was introduced by the SEA, the EP gained conditional agenda-setting powers (Tsebelis 1995), and the Council could no longer ignore its influence over legislative proceedings. Therefore, the formation of the collusive cartel made the EP a much stronger chamber in terms of inter-institutional competition.

Reproduction

The evidence of collusion is overwhelming. Regarding the Parliament's leadership and administration, Westlake (1994) argues that the three main groups, the EPP, SOC/PES and the Liberals (ALDE), form an "oligopoly." This idea extends most obviously to the informal agreement between the EPP and PES to rotate the Presidency between themselves, "effectively excluding all other groups" from this office (Kreppel 2002, 188). Hix et al. (2003) find that the core groups collude primarily on issues pertaining to European integration and *whenever an absolute majority is needed to pass legislation*, a tendency which persists into the post-Enlargement era (Bressanelli 2014). Further, the literature determines that "the three main party families have a strong incentive not to compete on Integration-Independence issues. But, as long as the main party families form a pro-Integration cartel, there will be an incentive for anti-European forces to mobilise" (Hix 1999, 93).

Collusion extends to voting behavior within the EP as well. Almost no difference exists between the EPP, PES, and ALDE when they vote on issues dealing with European integration; in fact, using an indicator variable to identify these groups as a single bloc produces the same results as analyzing them individually (Thomassen, Noury and Voeten 2004, 158). Further, the modal figure for "close votes" in the first seven Parliaments is unanimity among members from the three largest groups (Bowler and McElroy 2015).

In order to determine whether or not the EPP and S&D behave collusively, I calculate the agreement index (AI) (Hix et al. 2007) for EP sessions 1-6. The Agreement Index ranges from 0, when a party is evenly divided between Yeas, Nays, and Abstentions, to 1, when every member of the party votes the same way. Rather than calculating each group's AI individually, I combine the EPP & S&D into a cartel cluster, and place the other groups into a second periphery cluster. Figure 1.2 illustrates the increase in cartel cluster voting unity. The graph shows that between EP1-EP3, the members of cartel and the periphery were acting as individual groups, with average AI scores around 0.4. However, by the 4th EP session the trend line indicates that the EPP and S&D groups began coordinating their behavior, with the AI increasing to over 70 percent by EP6. The periphery, as expected remains divided across all sessions. The graph provides evidence to show the process of cartelization is historical in nature and developed over several sessions. That the meeting of the giants predated the coming to force of the SEA and Maastricht Treaties is

historical fact; that the increase in voting unity lagged several sessions behind both the meeting and the treaties reflects the complexity of the institution and speaks to how both the micro-trends, taking place within the EP, and the macro-trends, occurring outside the Hemicycle, eventually converged to produce a cartel that in EP6 had an Agreement Index of over 0.72.

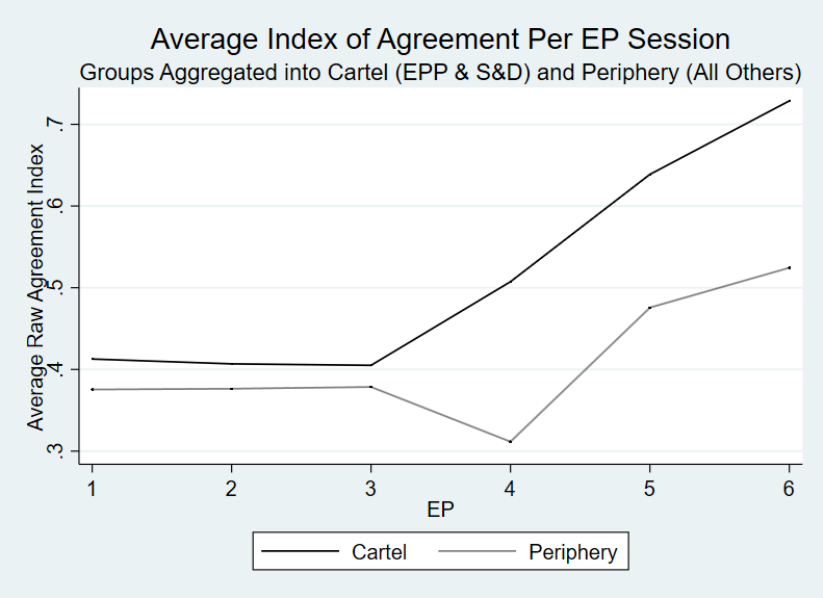

Figure 1.2 Agreement Index for Cartel and Periphery Clusters

Changes to the Rules of Procedure certainly benefitted the grand coalition (Kreppel 2002). However, these regulations are not collusion's source, they are its sustenance. As Pierson notes, "when certain actors are in a position to impose rules on others, the employment of power may be self-reinforcing. Actors…use political authority to generate changes in rules…designed to enhance power. Relatively small disparities in political resources among contending groups may widen dramatically over time as positive feedback sets it" (Pierson 2000, 259). Indeed, changing the rules of the EP is a formal response to an informal agreement that was necessary precisely because no de jure mechanism existed to create a governing coalition. Rule changes create a "lasting legacy," thus making the informal grand coalition "reproduce-able" across multiple sessions (Thelen 1999, 390).

The theoretical literature on informal institutions offers greater insights into how the collusive core reproduces itself. Noted already, is the presence of repeated play among core members, which according to Axelrod's seminal work (2006), helps to reduce the likelihood of defection. In examining stability and change in informal institutions, Knight argues that "social institutions are self-reinforcing if they constitute an equilibrium outcome for the individual actors. As long as an individual actor cannot do better by pursuing a different strategy—given the strategies of other actors—he or she will continue to act in accordance with the institution" (1992, 177). As long as MEPs cannot find a substitute constellation of groups capable of consistently reaching the absolute majority threshold, the grand coalition will remain stable.

A large coalition gains an advantage by providing ambitious MEPs with the offices and policies they seek. However, size can also disadvantage an informal coalition because, as groups become larger, monitoring becomes more difficult, the risk of defection increases, and the likelihood of disciplining defectors declines (Knight 1992, 180). The EP's "intergroups," informal networks of MEPs interested in policies outside the purview of the standing committee system, represent a space where cartel members may interact and keep tabs on one another. Representatives from the two largest groups are highly over-represented in intergroups, and results from network analyses show that for the Sixth and Seventh EPs, 71 out of 76 (93.4 percent) of the "high frequency" intergroup joiners are members of the EPP or S&D. Additionally, none of the "most connected" or "most central" intergroup members come from the periphery, reflecting an extreme level of core dominance (Ringe and Victor 2013, 131-2). In other words, cartel members are not only the most frequent participants, but they are the most influential members, in those networks. Intergroup participation provides a secondary context for core members to engage with one another, and this is important because repeated interactions and increased information sharing make tit-for-tat strategies more effective which in turn helps to offset the potential problems of increased group size.

The reproduction of the informal institution of collusion, therefore, comes from a combination of low transportation costs, advantageous seat share, and control over policy outputs. These characteristics make it possible for the cartel to rewrite laws specifically intended to "marginalize" the periphery groups. By tilting the playing field to its advantage, the cartel introduces unequal payoffs for its members and makes defection less likely. Finally, even as the

grand coalition grows in size, and thus faces the increased risk of non-compliance, core members use informal networks, such as intergroups, to maintain open channels of communication and information sharing, thus decreasing the cost of monitoring and increasing the likelihood of successful coordination.

The Third Critical Juncture: Setting the Boundaries

Emergence

If the first decision defined the nature of legitimate units, and the second inflection point prepared the chamber for the emergence of a collusive cartel, then the third critical juncture represents the use of exclusion to clearly demarcate insiders from outsiders. Recall that the three types of exclusion include silencing, obstructing and under-representing. In its most extreme version, obstruction is equivalent to dissolving an entire group, and the third event illustrates such an example.

On October 2, 2001 the Court of First Instance formally dissolved the Technical Group of Independent Members (TDI) because its members lacked "political affinity" and were therefore in breach of Rule 29(1). This decision upheld the EP Committee on Constitutional Affair's dissolution of the group on September 14, 1999 and marked the first time in the EP's history that a group was coercively disbanded. The dissolution of the TDI set a precedent for the collapse of the Identity, Tradition and Sovereignty (ITS) Group, which existed for eleven months in 2007. Despite the fact that TDI is described as a "technical group" (Settembri 2004), and the ITS is categorized as a radical right parties (RRP) group (Startin 2010), they drew from the exact same pool of delegations, including France's Front National (FN), Italy's Liga Nord and Lista Bonino, and Belgium's Vlaams Blok (VB). Therefore, the ITS descended directly from the TDI, and their histories are closely intertwined.

Startin uses the term "cordon sanitaire" to describe the tactics used by the core against the ITS (2010, 432). He partially attributes the collapse of the group to the "sheer institutional force of the EP," personified in this case by Socialist MEP Martin Schulz and a contingent of EPP members. Initially, the cartel attempted to block the ITS from even forming, and then it made efforts to keep ITS members from gaining representation on the Conference of Presidents (Startin 2010, 440-1). When he accused the sovereigntists of lacking a "shared political affinity," Schulz discredited the

ITS by relying on the same language found in the Court's ruling against the TDI (Mahony 2007). According to Startin's formulation, the grand coalition is equivalent to the "force of the EP," and it deliberately used the cordon sanitaire to exclude members from parliamentary participation—an obvious case of obstruction.

Shortly after ITS dissolved, the cartel initiated and passed legislation raising the minimum number of members necessary to form a group from 20 to 25, a move that was intended to restrict the future formation of similar mixed and far right-wing groups. The core used its seat share and influence to change the Rules of Procedure in order to disadvantage smaller groups and individual members. As Settembri notes in his discussion of the TDI, "Rules revisions are also about managing internal complexity and this results in 'inegalitarian' choices that empower certain actors to the detriment of others" (Settembri 2004, 154). This, of course, echoes Pierson's explanation for how rule reform generates both increasing returns and asymmetrical units. As noted in the first section, even as a consultative Assembly, the EP took a dim view of certain extremist parties and refused to let them participate. The third inflection point, therefore, transfers this same logic to the elected chamber.

Counterfactual

Parties and members observed the actions taken by the cartel and adjusted their behavior accordingly; indeed, "in the search for legitimacy (as the key to electoral success) the more 'reconstructed' RRPs [radical right parties] were wary about formal association with those parties perceived to be more extreme than themselves" (Startin and Brack 2016, 36). This tendency is analyzed by McDonnell and Werner (2017), who determine that parties described as extremist by national media use their affiliation with "legitimate" groups in the EP as a way to gain respectability back home. Therefore, the dissolution of the technical and far right groups has impacted the strategies that parties use when determining which group best suits their long-term interest. Indeed, these acts of exclusion may have inadvertently had a "mainstreaming" effect on radical right parties. Whether the long-term impact of this is positive, i.e. the RRPs soften their rhetoric and policies, or negative, i.e. the mainstream parties subsume RRP positions in order to maintain their seat share, remains to be seen. However, had these groups been left to their own devices, given that they were formed out of "tactical necessity rather than any meaningful political collaboration" (Startin and Brack 2015), it is highly probable that they would have met

the same end as many other small, weakly institutionalized groups in the EP—they would have simply collapsed on their own without the cartel's intervention.

Opposition

The third inflection point shifts the focus of opposition from outside the EP to within its own chambers. Given the EP's increased stature, the cartel transitioned from concerning itself with the parliament's position vis-à-vis the Council, and began focusing on internal challengers. Recall that the Agreement Index increased substantially in the 5th EP session (1999-2004), the same time that the cartel was using exclusion to determine which types of groups were beyond the pale. By the time ITS was formed, the cartel was acting as a unified bloc and it used its influence against the technical group. The processes of collusion and exclusion are both necessary for the cartelization of the EP party group system, and we see both converging in this case.

Reproduction

Because exclusion has multiple dimensions, the obstruction described above may be reproduced using other means, such as under-representation. In this section I test whether being a member of a periphery group has negative consequences for becoming a committee leader, a member of a "key" committee, or a rapporteur. I base my analysis on Benedetto's (2007) model for testing consensus and proportionality in the assignment of committee "mega-seats," defined here as committee chairs and vice-chairs.

The dependent variables for these models are aggregated office counts for each group-session. For example, in EP6 the Christian Democrats had 20 committee leaders and the Socialists had 18, while the Leftists (GUE-NGL) and the Union for Europe of the Nations (UEN) each had two. Key committees, as defined by McElroy (2008, 220), include the Environmental Committee, Economic and Monetary Affairs, and the Industrial and Research Committees, a categorization confirmed by Yordanova (2013, 39). The rapporteur outcome is not a measure of the number of reports; rather, it aggregates single rapporteurs per group, so it measures the number of MEPs who held at least one report during the term. I center each dependent variable on its mean.

Table 1.2 Mixed Effects Regression Models. The effect of periphery membership on receiving three leadership positions: Committee Leaders, Key Committee Members, Rapporteurships.

	Total Committee Leaders/EPG		Total Key Committee Members/EPG		Total Rapporteurs/ EPG	
	Model 1	**Model 2**	**Model 3**	**Model 4**	**Model 5**	**Model 6**
VARIABLES	**Log Odds**					
Periphery Member		-18.60*** (1.620)		9.544*** (1.588)		-3.596 (5.618)
EP1	-5.688*** (0.234)	-8.969*** (0.134)	-9.404*** (0.259)	-11.72*** (0.169)	-16.71*** (0.699)	-23.19*** (0.305)
EP2	-2.342*** (0.215)	-3.365*** (0.128)	-5.658*** (0.239)	-8.828*** (0.161)	1.897** (0.644)	6.284*** (0.292)
EP4	-18.97*** (0.212)	-26.25*** (0.119)	0.482* (0.236)	0.005 (0.150)	38.79*** (0.636)	51.48*** (0.272)
EP5	-7.140*** (0.224)	-10.18*** (0.125)	13.27*** (0.249)	16.82*** (0.157)	25.66*** (0.672)	31.99*** (0.285)
EP6	-11.43*** (0.211)	-15.77*** (0.117)	15.19*** (0.234)	19.11*** (0.147)	54.13*** (0.631)	70.89*** (0.266)
Periphery*EP1		7.999*** (0.227)		7.913*** (0.284)		21.54*** (0.517)
Periphery*EP2		2.742*** (0.204)		9.042*** (0.257)		-6.504*** (0.466)
Periphery*EP4		23.19*** (0.208)		0.046 (0.261)		-42.11*** (0.475)
Periphery*EP5		9.407*** (0.218)		-13.22*** (0.274)		-21.60*** (0.499)
Periphery*EP6		13.46*** (0.202)		-13.84*** (0.254)		-53.73*** (0.462)
EPG Seat Share	33.07*** (1.597)	42.67*** (0.771)	209.4*** (1.771)	185.6*** (0.969)	509.7*** (4.787)	461.7*** (1.757)
Constant	2.755* (1.224)	14.71*** (1.538)	3.481** (1.347)	-7.255*** (1.498)	-29.59*** (3.936)	-20.92*** (5.365)
Observations	3,977	3,977	3,977	3,977	3,977	3,977
Number of groups	25	25	25	25	25	25
Log-Likelihood	-10735.49	-7639.62	-11147.66	-8545.87	-15100.26	-10924.16
EPG Variance	34.653 (9.99)	4.708 (1.350)	41.920 (12.071)	4.452 (1.312)	362.038 (104.588)	57.443 (16.404)
Residual Variance	12.555 (0.282)	2.654 (0.060)	15.449 (0.348)	4.200 (0.094)	112.642 (2.534)	13.770 (0.310)
Rho	0.734	0.640	0.731	0.515	0.763	0.807
AIC	21488.99	15308.24	22313.33	17121.73	30218.53	21878.33
BIC	21545.58	15403.57	22369.92	17216.06	30275.12	21972.65

Notes. Committee Leaders hold either chair or vice-chair positions. Key Committees follow McElroy's (2006, 220) coding scheme and include the Environmental Committee, Economic and Monetary Affairs, or the Industrial and Research Committees. "Total rapporteurs" does not count

the total number of reports. It aggregates the number of group members who managed at least one report during the session.
Standard errors in parentheses *** p<0.001, ** p<0.01, * p<0.05

The primary explanatory variable is an indicator for whether the MEP began the session in a periphery group. The expectation for each model is that the coefficients on these dummies should be significant and negative, suggesting that MEPs from periphery groups receive fewer leadership positions. I include fixed effects for EP sessions where EP3 is the baseline. In order to determine the change in periphery membership's effect on attaining offices over time, I also use interaction terms between the periphery dummy and each session. I include EPG seat share to control for proportional distribution of offices, and I expect larger groups to receive more leadership positions. To estimate the effect of these covariates on winning committee leadership posts, seats on key committees, or reports, I use a linear mixed-effects model where each MEP is nested in their starting EPG (Rabe-Heskett and Skrondal 2012).

Table 1.2 presents six models, two for each of the three outcomes. Models 2, 4 and 6 include the periphery group-EP session interaction terms. In Model 2, for committee leadership posts, all components of the interaction term are highly significant. As expected, the coefficient for the periphery indicator is negative, indicating that MEPs from these groups hold significantly fewer committee leadership positions, even after controlling for the size of the party groups. Figure 1.3 illustrates this relationship. We see that in every session, except for EP4, cartel groups have held more committee leadership posts than periphery groups, although the discrepancy shrinks over time.

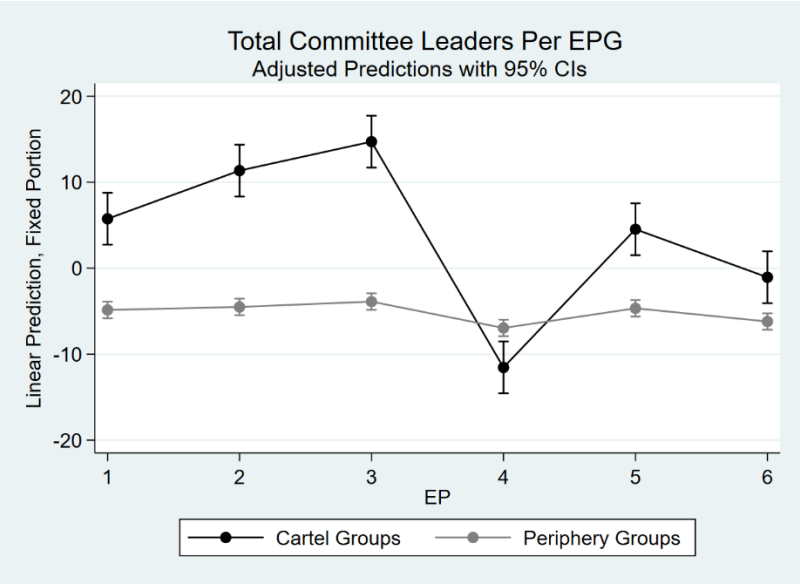

Figure 1.3 Predicted Probabilities for Model 2. Committee Leaders Per Group Per Session

Model 4 tests the effect of periphery membership on gaining seats on key committees, and in this case, the coefficient on the periphery indicator is positive, indicating that members from these groups are more likely to sit on one of these committees. This result is certainly due to the fact that the Greens are both a periphery group and highly active on the Environmental Committee.

Model 6 analyzes the effect of periphery membership on rapporteurs per EPG, and although the periphery indicator is not significant, it does take a negative sign, as expected. However, because all five of the interaction terms are highly significant, we can reject the null hypothesis which states that there is no relationship between periphery EPGs and winning rapporteurships. Figure 1.4 provides an interesting story regarding the development of the cartel's control over report allocation. For the first three sessions (1979-1994), the periphery groups either gained more rapporteurs than the cartel, or there was no difference. However, after the introduction of the co-decision procedure in 1992, we see a pronounced increase in cartel members becoming rapporteurs. This trend aligns nicely with previous discussion of cartel collusion, which also began coalescing during this same time period. As hypothesized, the results show that, since 1994, the periphery groups have received significantly fewer reports than the cartel groups. Given that the Liberals and the Greens are coded as periphery members, this effect cannot be explained solely by self-exclusion (Benedetto 2007; Almeida 2010).

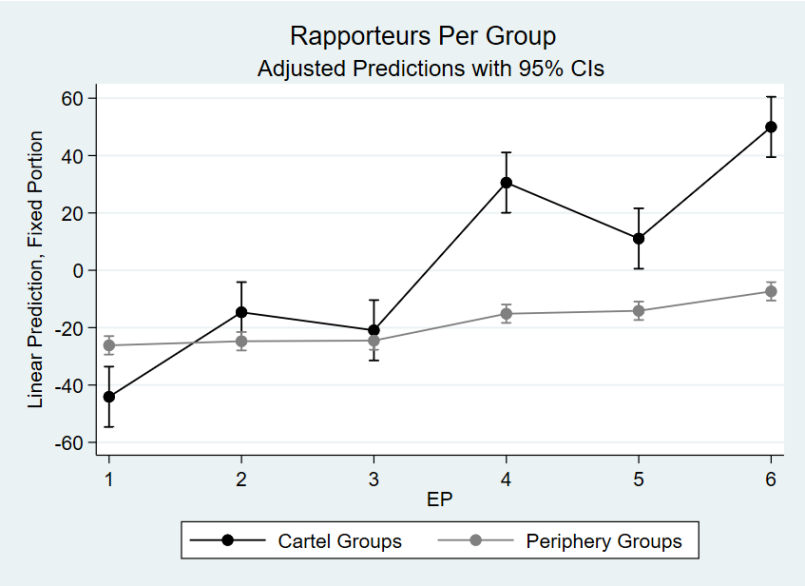

Figure 1.4 Predicted Probabilities for Model 6. Rapporteurs Per Group Per Session

These models provide strong evidence that periphery groups are under-represented in the distribution of committee leadership positions and the allocation of reports. The findings run parallel to Almeida (2010), who observes similar effects using a smaller sample. Identifying these trends across multiple sessions allows us to better understand the relationship between exclusion and the norm or proportionality. Where the Rules of Procedure codify periphery members' right to hold offices, such as in the Conference of Presidents or EP Bureau, we should expect to find silencing. In cases such as committee leadership and report allocation, where the norm is more flexible, we expect to find under-representation as the cartel's dominant strategy. Finally, in extreme cases, and as a last resort, we expect the cartel to employ obstruction, as in the case of the TDI's dissolution.

Conclusions

This paper begins by presenting a puzzle: How has the EP become such an effective external actor vis-à-vis the other European institutions, while also failing to mature into a representative body capable of providing the EU with sufficient input-oriented legitimacy? In addressing this question, this study makes two major contributions. First, it presents a two-dimensional, theoretical conceptualization of cartelization which includes the processes of collusion and exclusion. Second, it uses the analytical narrative approach to apply this theory to the European Parliament. The agglomeration model provides a template for understanding how asymmetry can represent an equilibrium in systems with low transportation costs and economies of scale.

Identifying historical inflection points makes it possible to trace the development of two political institutions—collusion and exclusion— and to illustrate what key decisions led to the consolidation of the grand coalition. The literature on exclusion, which thus far has focused only on Eurosceptic and radical right groups, is expanded to include the entire periphery cluster. The results show that, at least in terms of committee leadership posts and report allocation, the periphery has been at a steep disadvantage for many years.

The cartelization of the party group system is to blame for the EP's ineffectiveness as a representative body. A two-tier party system does not meet the criteria for procedural democracy. If parliamentarians do not stand as equals, then this curtails their ability to speak for their constituencies. In turn, if voters feel that their voices are not being heard in Strasbourg, this undercuts the legitimacy gained through popular elections. Therefore, one reason that the EP is not satisfying its legitimating role can be traced to rational decisions made by strategic actors working within the EP itself.

The cartel's exclusionary tactics may be acceptable in political systems controlled by a de jure, governing coalition, but in the EP, where collusion takes place informally, the silencing, under-representing, and obstructing of periphery members is inappropriate. As noted by Bartolini (1999), minimal levels of collusion often help systems remain stable, and this reasoning led the EPP and the S&D to form a grand coalition. Shared interests in presenting a unified position to the Council and Commission as well as common support for European integration permitted these two groups to substitute competition for collusion. These decisions had unintended consequences, however. The result is a bifurcated party group system which reduces the Hemicycle's capacity to serve the interests of all Europeans, and as Katz and Mair (1995) predicted, such cartelization provides ammunition to periphery members who use their exclusion as a justification for de-legitimizing the EP and the EU.

Finally, based on the asymmetry identified in this analysis, it is no longer tenable to argue that the EP primarily orients itself towards achieving consensus. The institution of exclusion cannot coexist with Lijphart's conceptualization of oversized majorities and inclusiveness. Consensus among grand coalition members is collusion, the cartel adheres to the logic of a minimum winning coalition, and when we observe the formation of oversized voting coalitions, this should

be considered an example of bandwagoning. Given these findings, it is likely that political competition has always existed within the EU, yet a dominant frame, namely consensus-seeking, has obscured the true relationship between unequal EP participants. The dominance and collusion of the cartel served a very important purpose. Had it not coalesced, then the EP would not hold the position within the EU's broader political system that it does today. However, the decisions that led to the formation of the cartel, and the exclusion which serves to maintain and stabilize it, have negative consequences, not only for the party group system but for the assembly's capacity to act as a representative assembly.

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Paper Two

Who Works and Why? Uneven Institutionalization in the European Parliament's Party Group System

Abstract

Scholars often assign the European Parliament's political groups either the major or minor label; however, this categorization, based primarily on seat share, does not capture the similarities between the two largest groups and several of the smaller ones. Drawing on the institutionalization literature, this paper introduces four original conditions—consistency, concentration, fragility, and volatility—to construct a typology of groups using fuzzy set Ideal Type Analysis (fsITA). The typology indicates that the Liberals, the Greens, and the Leftists share more in common with the Christian and Social Democrats than with weakly institutionalized groups. I display this typology's utility in two ways. First, I trace the developmental trajectories of selected groups in order to illustrate how the process of (de)institutionalization occurred during the first seven EP terms. Second, I analyze rapporteurship allocation (1979-2014) to demonstrate the disadvantage faced by members of weakly institutionalized groups hoping to influence policy. The implications of this research are far-reaching as the findings open new avenues for examining parliamentary behavior in the EP's unevenly institutionalized party group system.

Keywords: European Parliament, parliamentary groups, uneven institutionalization, Fuzzy Set Ideal Type Analysis

Introduction

Empirical and descriptive analyses of the European Parliament (EP) rely on seat share as the pivotal characteristic for distinguishing between types of European Parliamentary Groups (EPGs). Due to their size, scholars refer to the European People's Party (EPP/EPP-ED) and the Social Democrats (SOC/PES/S&D) as major groups, while designating small to mid-sized EPGs as minor groups (Kreppel, 2002). Major groups receive the lion's share of academic attention (Hix et al. 2007), but the field has also examined medium-sized groups, such as the Liberals (LD/LDR/ELDR/ALDE) and the Greens (V/V-EFA) (Bressanelli, 2014; Jensen & Spoon, 2010). Analysis of small EPGs, specifically those identified with the radical right (Bale et al. 2010; Fieschi, 2000; McDonnell & Werner, 2019), Euroscepticism (Brack, 2015; Whitaker & Lynch,

2014), or technical groups (Settembri, 2004; Startin, 2010), is present but limited. Notwithstanding its ubiquity, the major-minor dichotomy has trouble accounting for a group like the Liberals, which has held seats in the EP since its founding, and despite its size, often plays the role of kingmaker (Rasmussen, 2012). To address such borderline cases, this paper develops a typology of EPGs using institutionalization as the key qualifier.

In order to refine our understanding of what types of political groups populate the Hemicycle, I analyze the European Parliament (EP), 1979-2014, and construct a typology for comparing the differences between party groups vis-à-vis their levels of institutionalization. Using fuzzy set Ideal Type Analysis (fsITA) and four original conditions—consistency, concentration, fragility, and member volatility—this paper identifies the sources of full and weak institutionalization among EPGs. Accounting for both exogenous, electoral shocks and endogenous, group characteristics, I describe how levels of institutionalization change over time (Janda, 1980). The results of the typology make it possible to trace the developmental trajectories of groups across the first 35 years of the European Parliament. Additionally, I demonstrate the empirical utility of the typology by analyzing how affiliation with weakly institutionalized party groups impacts a member's ability to gain rapporteurships.

My findings show that EPGs fall into five distinct categories: potentially institutionalized, actively institutionalized, merged, electorally shocked, and one-party. Small and mid-sized EPGs, such as the Liberals (EP1-7), the Greens (EP4-7), and the Leftists (EP4-7), achieve active institutionalization, indicating that these so-called minor groups share more characteristics with the EPP and S&D than they do with radical right or Eurosceptic EPGs. Tracing group trajectories clarifies how institutionalization proceeds at different speeds and in different directions; indeed, de-institutionalization is an observable occurrence. Finally, the results confirm that members of weakly institutionalized EPGs receive significantly fewer reports than members of fully institutionalized groups, providing an intra-parliamentary dimension of group consolidation unaccounted for by exogenous shocks or endogenous group characteristics.

The literature review begins by discussing institutionalization and how authors have applied this concept to the EP party groups. The next section explains how fsITA is employed, after which, I present the conditions used to build the typology and describe how they are calibrated. In the

Analysis and Results section, I present the typology, the developmental trajectories, and the empirical analysis of report allocation. The Discussion and Conclusion section summarizes the findings and notes the implications for future research.

Institutionalization(s)

Institutionalization, defined by Huntington (1965) as "the process by which organizations and procedures acquire value and stability" (p. 12), can be a problematic concept because it is difficult to operationalize (Judge, 2003), it is non-monotonic, in that de-institutionalization is a distinct possibility (Harmel et al. 2016), and it often implicates multiple levels of analysis (Casal Bértoa, 2018). The literature proliferates with dimensions along which parties, party systems, and parliaments become more or less institutionalized; [5] yet, by using Huntington's generalizable criteria, which include adaptability, complexity, autonomy, and coherence, it should be possible to identify specific factors which lead to EPG institutionalization.

Scholars address multiple dimensions of the EP's complexity, or the multiplication and differentiation of its organizational sub-units, and its coherence, or the unity among organizational members. These include: the structure of its policy space (Hix et al. 2009; McElroy & Benoit, 2007, 2012), its party system (Kreppel, 2002; Bardi, 2002), the political groups (Hix & Lord, 1997), their voting cohesion (Hix et al., 2007), and the relationship between national parties and EPGs (Hix, 2002). The literature provides a deep understanding of the EP's committee system (Mamadou and Raunio 2003; Whitaker, 2005; Yordanova, 2013), rapporteurships (Benedetto, 2005; Hurka and Kaeding, 2012; Kaeding, 2005), coordinator assignments (Daniel and Thierse, 2017), and parliamentary career paths (Daniel, 2015). Evidence shows that the political groups have undergone internal reforms to manage increased workloads following enlargement (Bressanelli, 2014; Raunio, 1997). Güngör (2009) analyzes the committee system, staffing increases, and reforms to the Rules of Procedure to further substantiate the ways the EP has acquired value and stability over time. In aggregate, this research establishes the EP as an internally institutionalized parliamentary chamber (Ragsdale and Theis, 1997).

[5] For a detailed literature review on the various dimensions of party institutionalization, see Harmel, Svåsand and Mjelde (2018; 2016), and for detailed studies of specific cases, see Harmel and Svåsand (2019). For a discussion of the literature on party group institutionalization in the EP, see Bressanelli (2014).

Regarding the institutionalization of EPGs, McElroy and Benoit (2007) examine the number and types of political groups in the EP, which they locate within a two-dimensional policy space, and they determine that EPGs position themselves along the entirety of the traditional socio-economic spectrum while also maintaining consistent, ideological positions across sessions (McElroy and Benoit 2012). The literature also differentiates between "established" groups (EPP and S&D), with mature internal organizations and robust "mechanisms of coordination" (Raunio 2000, pp. 233-238), and "temporary alliances" which suffer excessively from electoral shocks and internal "defections" (Raunio, 2000, p. 242). This description corresponds to the distinction between major and minor group types used by Kreppel (2002) as a substitute for "governing" and "opposition" parties. The theoretical ability to "govern" follows directly from the two largest group's seat share; when the EPP and S&D agree on a common position, their combined majority insures the successful passage of legislation. The systems of categorization proposed by Raunio (2000) and Kreppel (2002) imply a strong correlation between group size and levels of institutionalization, a distinction first articulated by Hix and Lord, who find "a precise overlap between the size of groups, their institutionalisation and spread of countries represented. The largest are also the most permanent and transnational" (1997, p. 79).

Observers generally agree that the EP's party group system is weakly institutionalized. They identify a variety of reasons for this deficiency, such as national parties' control over European election ballots, the multi-level nature of party group competition, and the issue-to-issue formation of voting coalitions (Evans and Vink, 2009). Likewise, high turnover rates among members of the European Parliament (MEPs) account for one of many "factors that are stacked against the EP institutionalizing and developing strong party groups" (Bowler and McElroy, 2015, p. 1362). Drawing an important connection between EPG instability and the weakly institutionalized party group system, Bardi (2002) contends that "one-party groups" with a single, dominant delegation that controls more than half of group's seats, are both weakly institutionalized and largely responsible for the party system's inability to consolidate. Therefore, he concludes that the EP is divided into a "two-speed party system" consisting of an "institutionalized core and a mutable and unstable periphery" (Bardi, 2002, p. 64).

The processes of party institutionalization (PI) and party system institutionalization (PSI) are independent and need not converge (Casal Bértoa, 2018). Established parties facilitate PSI, but this is not a necessary condition for long-term consolidation. The opposite is also true: The presence of weakly institutionalized groups does not automatically prevent a system from stabilizing. Randall and Svåsand (2002) coin the term uneven party institutionalization to describe the asymmetric development of different parties in the same system. Uneven institutionalization fosters an uncompetitive and unresponsive system which leads to "significant social sectors [being] excluded not only from power but from meaningful party representation" (Randall and Svåsand, 2002, p. 9). Research into this phenomenon determines that variation in levels of party institutionalization has a significant effect on party discipline, and may be implicated in other parliamentary behaviors, as well (Thames, 2007).

In their seminal work on parliamentary institutionalization, Copeland and Patterson (1994), arguing from a functionalist point of view, claim that institutionalized parliaments "work"—that is, they are effective at fulfilling the specific tasks assigned to them. Just like parliaments, institutionalized EPGs are those that exhibit the capacity to carry out their primary functions, whether that is training leaders, representing constituents, or formulating policy by managing committee reports. Indeed, some groups' behavior reflect this pragmatic approach. When preparing for enlargement into Central and Eastern Europe, and an influx of new members, the EPP, PES, and ALDE revised their organizational structures in order to increase their functional capabilities. Through the processes of vertical and horizontal differentiation, these EPGs improved their complexity and autonomy, thus becoming more institutionalized and ensuring their ability to legislate effectively into the future (Bressanelli, 2014).

The typology presented in the next section details the characteristics associated with fully and weakly institutionalized groups. Such a division implies that the EP party group system is unevenly, not weakly, institutionalized. After presenting the typology, this argument will be articulated in more detail by tracing the developmental paths of some EPGs and analyzing how reports are allocated disproportionately between the two types of groups.

Fuzzy Set Ideal Type Analysis and Explanatory Conditions

Because they allow us to organize complex relationships and reduce them into parsimonious categories which can then be used in empirical analyses, typologies play an important role in social science research. Typology building is useful for "identify[ing] multiple ideal types, each of which represents a unique combination of the organizational attributes" (Doty and Glick, 1994, p. 232); additionally, Schneider and Wagemann contend that a qualitative comparative analysis (QCA) approach is suitable for generating empirical typologies (2010, p. 4). Here, I build on the work of Büchel et al. (2016) and Kvist (2007) and use fuzzy set ideal type analysis as a method for distinguishing between types of party groups in the EP.

Unlike statistical methods which rely on correlational relationships, fsITA uses set theory to determine what configurations of conditions are consistent with an underlying type (Berg-Schlosser et al., 2009; Ragin, 2009). This approach addresses causal complexity directly by building on the assumption that social processes are subject to equifinality, conjunctural causation, and asymmetric causality (Braumoeller, 2003). In the case of EPGs specifically, this means that more than one configuration of factors may be associated with institutionalization, some conditions will only be important given the presence of other factors, and the same condition may be consistent with both fully and weakly institutionalized groups.

The first step of any QCA analysis is to transform variables into sets through the process of calibration (Ragin, 2009). Using the direct method of calibration, I identify three anchor points to represent the thresholds for groups being "fully in" a set, when values are above the upper anchor, or "fully out" of a set, when values are below the lower anchor. The third anchor is known as the cross-over point, and it represents the value of greatest ambiguity regarding a case's relationship to the set. All cases are assigned a fuzzy score ranging from 0 to 1 for each condition, and each set resembles a logarithmic curve. One method of identifying appropriate anchors is to look for "gaps," or natural breaks, in the histogram of each variable; therefore, I present scatterplots and anchor points for each factor below.

Fuzzy set Qualitative Comparative Analysis (fsQCA) identifies necessary and sufficient causal conditions by analyzing a calibrated outcome. Alternatively, in fsITA the outcome for all cases is set to (1), because each solution path represents a constellation of conditions observed among the

cases. Logical remainders are coded (0) because these combinations are not present and therefore do not contribute to the typology. The complex, parsimonious, and intermediate outcomes produce the same series of solutions which are then reduced using the Boolean minimization process. The truth table presented in Table 2.2 lists the logical combinations observed in the data, as well as which EPGs share these attributes.

Data, Operationalization, and Calibration

According to Heidar and Koole, EPGs "are of a different order" than national parliamentary groups, so they propose treating them as "*sui generis* organizations" (2000, p. 8). For this reason, all conditions described and calibrated below are considered relative to the EP as a particular system. The unit of analysis is the EPG-session, and each variable reflects the group's status at the end of each term. This allows me to track a group's progress towards, or retreat from, institutionalization across parliamentary sessions. All variables are aggregations of individual MEPs derived from the Automated Database of the EP (Høyland et al., 2009). I benefitted greatly from the Thomann et. al (2018) R manual for calibrating fuzzy sets; specifically, I used the "QCA" (Dusa, 2018) and the "SetMethods" (Oana, et al., 2018) packages.

The fsITA typology employs five conditions identified by the literature as theoretically associated with institutionalization: *tenure, consistency, concentration, member volatility, and fragility*. These factors fulfil several criteria. First, *consistency* speaks to the presence of exogenous, electoral shocks which can unsettle a group's continuity. Second, four variables measure the internal characteristics of groups in different ways. For example, the *tenure* and the *concentration* variables operationalize adaptability and complexity and should be associated with full institutionalization. Likewise, *fragility* and *volatility* identify specific sources of disruption which inhibit groups from becoming consolidated. These conditions are 'first order' constructs and when combined in diverse configurations, they produce fully institutionalized or weakly institutionalized 'ideal types' (Doty and Glick, 1994).

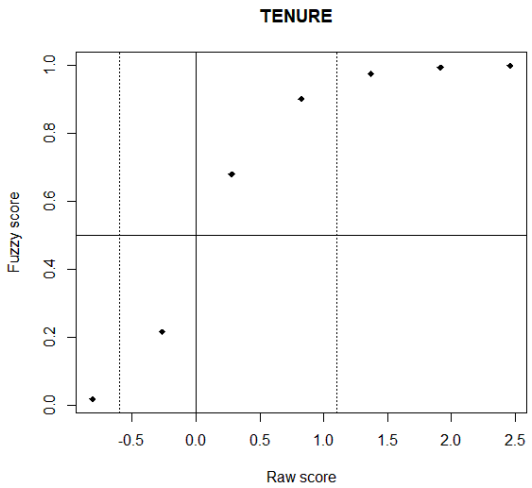
Tenure

Organizations gain experience as they get older, and the literature finds a strong relationship between age and stability (Huntington, 1965, p. 395). The tenure condition operationalizes this concept and relies on the group's name remaining recognizable across multiple parliaments, as this political label helps groups become reified in society (Randall and Svåsand, 2002). Changing

names, therefore, resets the group's tenure to zero. Scholars identify cases where a party's name change represents the consolidation of an identity and contend that re-branding does not necessarily signal weak institutionalization (Harmel, et al., 2016). However, in the EP, new group names result from session-specific negotiations between delegations, not the purification of an identity, as most recently witnessed when the Emmanuel Macron-led, French coalition of delegations joined ALDE in 2019 and immediately used its political leverage to re-name the group Renew Europe (RE).

To create the tenure condition, I standardize each groups' current number of terms around the overall EP mean. This makes it possible to determine if groups with HIGH TENURE are more likely to become fully institutionalized. Standardization does not change the underlying nature of the variable, and when these values are calibrated, the results reflect the group's tenure relative to its peers within the EP. I set the lower anchor point at -0.6, indicating that only EPGs with one session experience, or less, are fully out of the set of HIGH TENURE groups. The upper anchor, set at 1.1, implies that the gains to institutionalization follow the logic of decreasing returns—once a group has four terms' experience, each extra term has a diminishing impact on group institutionalization. The cross-over point is set to 0; therefore, groups with two terms of experience are more out than in, and groups with three and four terms are more in than out the set of HIGH TENURE EPGs.

Figure 2.1 Scatterplot and Anchor Points for Tenure



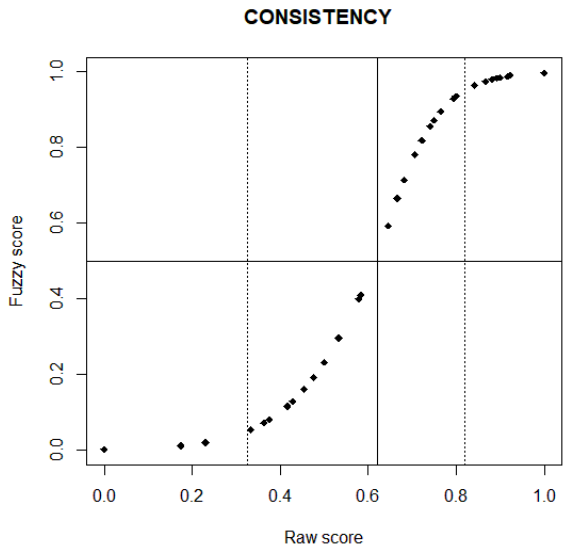
Note: Dotted lines indicate upper and lower anchors. Heavy line indicates cross-over point.

Consistency

The second condition, *consistency*, measures how many of the group's delegations return after an election. The literature argues that minor groups suffer disproportionately from electoral shocks (Raunio, 2000), suggesting that some EPGs find it difficult to maintain consistent membership across sessions. To become fully institutionalized, groups need experienced delegations. Without such consistency, organizational learning and the transfer of knowledge across sessions becomes impossible (Panebianco, 1988; LaPalombara, 2003). Therefore, low consistency groups are expected to remain weakly institutionalized because they lack experienced delegations.

To create the consistency condition, I build an expression which uses the number of delegations present in both the current EP session (*t*) and the previous session (*t-1*) as the numerator. The total number of delegations in the current session (*t*) is the denominator. Therefore, consistency equals 1 if every delegation from period *t-1* was present at time *t*. If no delegation from the previous session is present in the current session, then consistency equals zero. Because it relates group membership back to a previous version of itself, this calculation is not affected by enlargement induced "delegation inflation."

Figure 2.2 Scatterplot and Anchor Points for Consistency

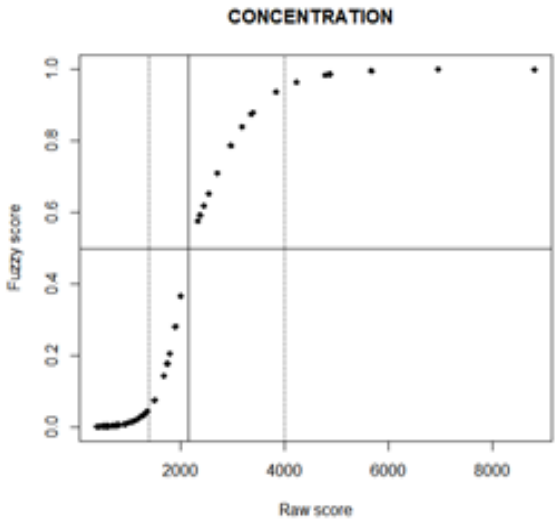


Note: Dotted lines indicate upper and lower anchors. Heavy line indicates cross-over point.

Concentration

The third condition, *concentration*, tests Bardi's (2002) claim that "one-party groups" are weakly institutionalized. The configurational analysis makes it possible to determine if HIGH CONCENTRATION is the primary condition associated with weak institutionalization or if the presence or absence of other conditions is also a contributing factor. I use the Herfindahl–Hirschman Index (HHI) of market concentration to operationalize this variable. According to the US Department of Justice, a market that has an HHI of 1,500 to 2,500 is moderately concentrated; anything over 2,500 is highly concentrated. To calculate the HHI, I sum the squares of each national delegation's percentage of seats per political group. Groups in the set of HIGH CONCENTRATION will be dominated by one or two delegations.

Figure 2.3 Scatterplot and Anchor Points for Concentration



Note: Dotted lines indicate upper and lower anchors. Heavy line indicates cross-over point.

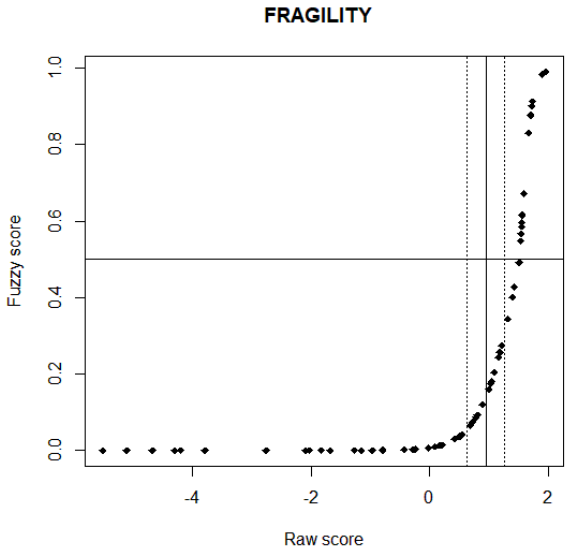
Fragility

The fourth condition, *fragility*, measures a group's proximity to the member count and country count thresholds for maintaining political group status encoded in the EP Rules of Procedure. HIGH FRAGILITY indicates that a group is very close to the threshold criteria for dissolution. This operationalizes Huntington's (1965) concept of complexity; groups that have many members and multiple delegations from various member states should be more institutionalized (Hix and Lord, 1997). The more diverse the group, the less it suffers from fragility. Groups that barely

reach the membership thresholds face no incentive to either "multiply" or "differentiate" their internal organs (Huntington, 1965, p. 399). Therefore, HIGH FRAGILITY is expected to be associated with weak institutionalization.

Fragility is constructed by first subtracting the number of total MEPs at the beginning of each session from the member threshold.[6] The same is done for the number of member states. These two numbers are standardized, thus making them comparable, and then they are summed. EPGs with negative values are closer to the combined dissolution threshold. Because the fuzzy set must be positive to measure set membership, I take the inverse of each groups' standardized total, thus flipping the sign and making the most fragile groups those with the highest values.

Figure 2.4 Scatterplot and Anchor Points for Fragility



Note: Dotted lines indicate upper and lower anchors. Heavy line indicates cross-over point.

Member Volatility

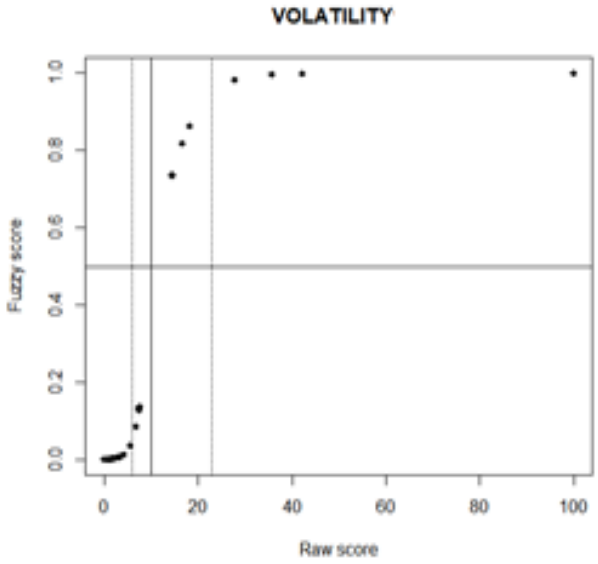
The final factor for determining institutionalization among political groups is *member volatility*, a variable that accounts for within-session, party group switches (Hix and Noury, 2018). Unlike traditional volatility which compares the change in a party's vote share across elections

[6] The threshold rules for determining group formation have changed many times over the life of the EP. See the Online Appendix for the different rules used for each session.

(Pedersen, 1979), this condition measures the decrease in groups' seat share from the beginning to the end of each EP session (Mershon and Shvetsova, 2013). The literature finds a strong empirical relationship between weak PI and party switching (McMenamin and Gwiazda, 2011), and Raunio (2000) also identifies this trend in the EP; therefore, HIGHLY VOLATILE groups should be weakly institutionalized.

Volatility describes the change in membership from the official start of the group-session to the end of the EP term. Volatility equals 1 if the entire group dissolved or switched and equals zero if the exact number of members who started the session, ended the session. Because every subtraction from one group is an addition to another, member volatility values are offsetting. Therefore, to avoid counting each switch twice, I set all positive values to zero, and then take the absolute value of each group's negative change in membership.

Figure 2.5 Scatterplot and Anchor Points for Member Volatility



Note: Dotted lines indicate upper and lower anchors. Heavy line indicates cross-over point.

Table 2.1 summarizes how these factors are expected to relate to types of institutionalization as well as the anchor points for each calibrated condition.

Sets	Expected Relationship	Full Non-Membership Anchor	Cross-over Point	Full Membership Anchor
HIGH TENURE	Full Institutionalization	-0.6	0	1.1
HIGH CONSISTENCY	Full Institutionalization	0.325	0.62	0.82
HIGH CONCENTRATION	Weak Institutionalization	1400	2150	4000
HIGH FRAGILITY	Weak Institutionalization	0.6	0.95	1.65
HIGH VOLATILITY	Weak Institutionalization	3.25	7	22

Table 2.1 Calibration Anchor Points and Expectations for all Explanatory Conditions

Typology

The truth table in Table 2.2 lists the five group types presented in the Solution Paths found in Table 2.3, which include potentially institutionalized actively institutionalized, mergers, electorally shocked, and one-party groups.[7] The potential and active types, both related to full institutionalization, should be viewed as stages of maturation. They share a lack of fragility and the absence of concentration. Potential institutionalizers (Rows 1-3, Table 2.2) begin with a diverse membership, and if they remain consistent, that is, if a high percentage of their delegations return in the following term, this combination of conditions produces active institutionalization (Rows 4-5, Table 2.2). Three of the four groups that reached full institutionalization went through this two-step progression, moving from potentially to actively institutionalized. It is also notable that groups with long tenure (Row 6) can overcome electoral shocks, the negation of consistency, to remain actively institutionalized. This aligns closely with how we would expect institutionalization to function—as the EPG becomes its own entity, separate from its particular units, generalized group experience minimizes the loss of specific delegations.

[7] All conditions and their negation were analyzed for necessity, and none had a consistency score greater than the ninety percent threshold. Results can be found in the Appendix.

Type	ROW	TENURE	FRAGILITY	VOLATILITY	CONSISTENCY	CONCENTRATION	N	Cases Per Solution Path
Potential Institutionalizers	1	0	0	0	0	0	4	SOC1, LD1, EPP1, V4
	2	0	0	1	0	0	2	UEN5, In-Dem6
	3	1	0	1	0	0	1	ELDR4
Actively Institutionalized	4	1	0	0	1	0	15	PES3, LDR3, EPP3, PES4, EPP4, PES5, ELDR5, EPP-ED5, V/EFA5, PES6, ALDE6, EPP-ED6, GUE/NGL6, V/EFA6, S&D7
	5	0	0	0	1	0	5	SOC2, LDR2, EPP2, GUE/NGL4, GUE/NGL5
	6	1	0	0	0	0	4	ALDE7, EPP7, GUE/NGL7, V/EFA7
One-Party Groups	7	0	1	0	0	1	8	DEP1, ED1, COM1, DR2, RDE3, CG3, EDD5, EFD7
	8	0	1	0	1	1	1	RDE2, ED2
	9	0	0	0	1	1	2	COM2
	10	0	0	0	0	1	2	V3, ECR7
Electorally Shocked	11	0	1	1	0	0	5	TCDI2, GUE3, EDN4, EDD5, TDI5, ITS6
	12	0	1	0	0	0	5	CDI1, RBW2, RBW3, ARE4, UEN6
	13	0	1	1	0	1	4	DR3, I-EDN4, UPE4, FE4
Merged	14	1	1	1	1	1	1	RDE4
	15	1	1	1	0	1	1	ED3

Table 2.2 Truth Table Results

Note: Political Group Abbreviation Key, Session Number Follows Group Abbreviation: Social Democrats (SOC/PES/S&D); European People's Party, Christian Democrats (EPP/EPP-ED); Liberal Democrats (LD/LDR/ELDR/ALDE and ARE); Greens (V/V/EFA); Left-Communists(COM/CG/GUE/GUE/NGL); Gaullist Groups (DEP/RDE); Regionalist (RBW); Conservatives (ED/FE); Various Eurosceptic (EDN/I-EDN/EDD/InDem/EFD/UPE/UEN/ECR); Technical Groups (CDI/TCDI/DR/TDI/ITS)

The typology identifies three paths for producing weakly institutionalized groups. The one-party group constellation validates Bardi's (2002) intuition. Here, high levels of concentration, low volatility and inexperience are common to this type. According to my expectations, high volatility

should be associated with weak institutionalization; yet, in this weakly institutionalized type, we observe low volatility. This counter-intuitive result derives from the presence of a single, dominant national delegation which ensures party unity among the group members. It is unlikely that any member or faction from one of these highly concentrated party groups could defect mid-session without being demoted on the next election ballot by their national party. Therefore, the presence of high concentration makes volatility unlikely in these cases.

Type 1: Potentially Institutionalized	**Type 2: Actively Institutionalized**	**Type 3: One-Party**	**Type 4: Electorally Shocked**	**Type 5: Mergers**
~concentration * ~fragility * ~consistency	**~concentration * ~fragility * ~volatility**	**CONCENTRATION * ~volatility * ~tenure**	**FRAGILITY * ~consistency * ~tenure**	**TENURE * CONCENTRATION * VOLATILITY * FRAGILITY**
SOC1	SOC2-3	COM1-2	CDI1	RDE4
EPP1	PES4-6	ED1-2	RBW2-3	ED3
LD1	S&D7	DEP1	TCDI2	
ELDR4	EPP2-4	RDE2-3	GUE3	
V4	EPP-ED5-6	DR2	CG3	
UEN5	EPP7	V3	DR3	
InDem6	LDR2-3	ECR7	FE4	
	ELDR5	EFD7	ARE4	
	ALDE6-7		I-EDN4	
	GUE/NGL4-7		UPE4	
	V/EFA5-7		EDN4	
			EDD5	
			TDI5	
			ITS6	
			UEN6	

Table 2.3 Typology Solution Paths, Cases, and Consistency Scores
Note: The presence of a factor is represented by Capital Letters. A Tilda represents the negation of a factor.

The second type of weak institutionalization, characterized by a lack of consistency, inexperience, and high fragility, relates to electoral shocks. While HIGH CONCENTRATION is the condition most associated with one-party groups, low consistency is the key factor for electorally shocked groups. These groups exhibit low levels of membership continuity across sessions. All but one of the Technical Groups (CDI1, TCDI2, DR3, RBW2, RBW3, TDI5, ITS6)

sort into this type. Given that these alliances organize primarily for pragmatic reasons (Settembri, 2009; Startin, 2010), they should not be expected to institutionalize. Therefore, the fact that the typology places these groups in the same weakly institutionalized path provides it with face validity. So far, the fsITA distinguishes between two separate processes—the concentration path and the electoral shock path. The typology determines that exogenous factors are most detrimental to the technical groups, and that this process is separate from group weakness originating from over-concentration.

The final group type shares a host of characteristics including HIGH CONCENTRATION, HIGH VOLATILITY, HIGH FRAGILITY, and HIGH TENURE. The European Democrats from EP3 and the Gaullists from EP4 (RDE) are the only two members in this type. Both of these eventually *merged* with another group. As leaders of the ED Group, the UK Conservatives' consistency, tenure, and ability to direct the voting behavior of its MEPs, likely made it an attractive partner for the EPP. The RDE joined forces with Forza Europa (FE) to form the UPE. Comparing this merger type to the one-party groups discussed earlier supports the previous analysis regarding volatility. If highly concentrated groups exhibit volatility, it will be extreme, because the entire group will switch as a single unit.

In these three solution paths, the analysis produces clear examples of equifinality, conjunctural causation, and asymmetric causality. First, multiple paths produce full and weak institutionalization. Second, HIGH VOLATILITY is related to weak institutionalization, but only given the presence of a host of other factors. Finally, both full and weak institutionalization solution paths include low consistency and low volatility. Table 2.4 summarizes the typology's solution paths.

	TENURE	CONSISTENCY	CONCENTRATION	VOLATILITY	FRAGILITY
Potential Institutionalizers			○	○	○
Actively Institutionalized		○	○		○
One-Party Groups	○		●	○	
Electorally Shocked	○	○			●
Mergers	●		●	●	●

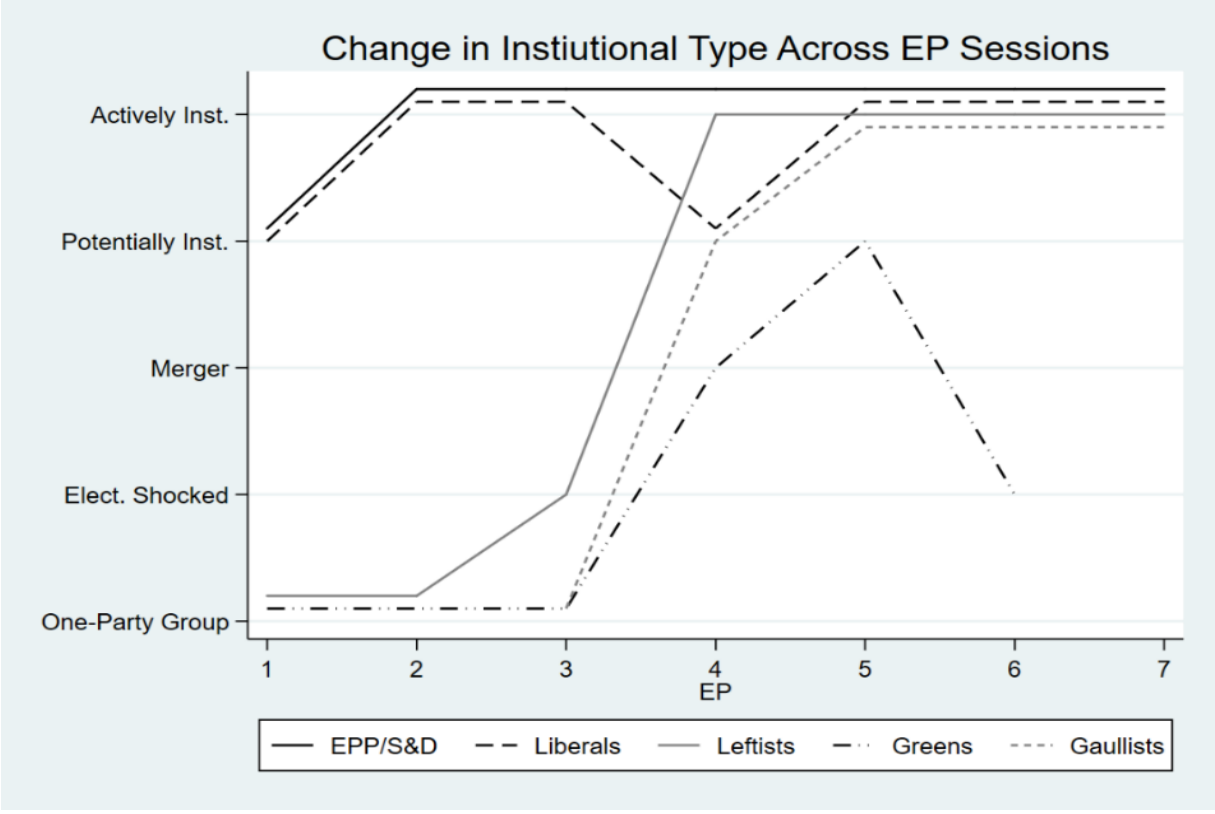
Table 2.4 Fuzzy Set Typology Solutions

Note: An open circle represents the absence of the factor. A closed circle represents the presence of a factor

Group Trajectories And (De)Institutionalization

In this section, I trace the development of several groups across sessions in order to illustrate the observable (de)institutionalization trajectories found in the EP. I select the Social Democrats, the Christian Democrats, the Liberals, the Leftists (COM1-2, GUE3, GUE-NGL4-7), as well as the Greens and the Gaullists (DEP1, RDE2-3, UPE4, and the UEN5).

Figure 2.6 Institutional Trajectories of Selected EP Political Groups



The EPP and S&D, illustrated with a single line, follow the same institutional trajectory and reflect the archetypal, developmental path that we expect to find in a major group. During the first EP session, both groups were potential institutionalizers after which they progressed to become actively institutionalized. The Liberals follow a similar path; however, in EP4, the group had twenty total delegations with only eleven returning from EP3. Due to this moderate level of inconsistency, ELDR4 slid back to the potentially institutionalized type. Note that a lack of consistency, if offset by solid tenure and low fragility, is not enough to destabilize the group entirely, i.e. to send it into the electorally shocked type. From EP5 to EP7, ALDE regained its position as actively institutionalized.

The Leftist groups represent a case of emergent institutionalization. Like the SOC, EPP, and Liberals, the Leftists began their EP tenure in 1952. Unlike these three groups, however, due to their high concentration, the typology labels them a one-party group for the first and second EP sessions. In EP3, a schism caused the French and Italian factions to form their own groups, at which point the typology sorts both into the electorally shocked category. The GUE3 group dissolved before the end of EP3 but was reconvened in EP4, under the moniker GUE-NGL, after the reconciled Italian and French delegations joined forces with the Nordic Greens. At this point, the fsITA sorts them into the actively institutionalized type, which they maintain through the seventh EP session. The Communist groups, therefore, embody an important case of a weakly institutionalized group transforming into a fully institutionalized group. By reducing fragility and expanding membership, the GUE-NGL4 skipped the potentially institutionalized type and went directly to active institutionalization.

The Gaullist groups began their tenure in the popularly-elected EP as a one-party group in the First through Third EP sessions. In EP4, RDE merged with FE to form the UPE. By EP5, the UEN, which grew out of the UPE, reaches potentially institutionalized status, indicating that the group had diversified its membership by gaining new delegations from various member states, thus making positive steps towards becoming actively institutionalized. The UEN was unable to maintain this diversity, however, and after the election of 2004, they exhibit an archetypal example of an exogenous shock—only three delegations returned from the previous session. This case exemplifies both de-institutionalization and group collapse.

The Greens illustrate how a smaller group can become actively institutionalized and why categorizing EPGs based solely on seat share overlooks important differences within the set of small groups. The origin of the contemporary Green Group (V/EFA) begins with the Rainbow Group in EP2. Despite the colorful name, this was essentially a technical group composed of regionalists and Green parties, and like other technical groups, it was short-lived due to an electoral shock. In EP3, the first Green Group split from the Rainbow Group and emerged as weakly institutionalized, moderately concentrated around the German Green Party, which held eleven out of its 29 seats. In EP4, the Green Group reached potential institutionalization status by significantly reducing its fragility and decreasing its level of concentration, down from 2385 in EP3 to 1804 in EP4. In the Fifth EP session the Greens achieved active institutionalization status and maintained that level through the Seventh session. This is a story of concentration giving way to diversification, eventually leading to full institutionalization; however, unlike the Leftists, the Greens progressed through the potentially institutionalized type before reaching active institutionalization.

In summary, the analysis of trajectories illustrates examples of both institutional consistency, progress, and regress. Importantly, it makes clear that institutionalization and seat share are not perfectly correlated phenomena. The Greens and the Leftists provide examples of small groups developing into fully institutionalized EPGs.

Disproportional Report Allocation

One way to observe how well EPGs and their members contribute to the parliament's legislative workload is to analyze rapporteurship assignments. Rapporteurs are "legislative entrepreneurs" (Thierse, 2019), who guide bills through the EP's law-making process. Based on their seat share, EPGs receive points that they use to bid on reports they wish to control (Ringe, 2010). This process was designed to distribute rapporteurs proportionally across all groups; however, some research shows that the major groups are slightly over-represented (Benedetto, 2005; Mamadou and Raunio, 2003), while other authors conclude that the "world of commission reports is one of disproportionality" where "the PES and EPP have clearly dominated the distribution of rapporteurs over the years" (Kaeding, 2005, p. 99).

When analyzing report allocation, the literature observes multiple forms of bias. For example, MEPs from ruling parties with representation in the Council receive more co-decision reports (Høyland, 2006), members from Eurosceptic (Kaeding, 2005) and radical right groups (Almeida 2010) are less likely to receive reports, and members from newly acceded states are also significantly disadvantaged (Hurka and Kaeding, 2012). This disproportionality is important because, as Daniel explains, "the office of committee rapporteur is not only linked to prestige…but [it is] also the main way that an individual MEP can shape EU policy. Thus, for serious MEPs…the accrual of reports is an important way of contributing to both the power and content of the EP's work" (2015, p. 104). If institutionalized groups are those that make the parliament "work," then they should control the most reports. Likewise, MEPs from weakly institutionalized groups are predicted to receive fewer reports.

In this this section, I replicate Daniel's (2015) analysis of report allocation for the first 35 years of the EP. I substitute the authors' original, party family indicators with two dummy variables. The first "major group" dummy takes a value of 1 for all members affiliated with either the Christian or Social Democratic groups. The second indicator operationalizes full institutionalization. All members from groups categorized as potentially or actively institutionalized take the value of 1 on this variable. Because all major groups are a subset of fully institutionalized groups, I estimate the impact of these variables separately.

The outcome variable, the number of reports per member per session, is over-inflated; therefore, Daniel (2015) uses a negative binomial regression model. I assume that this model is properly specified and that the variables included are appropriate for studying the research question. The goal here is not to improve this analysis per se, but rather to determine whether or not replacing separate party family indicators with a full institutionalization dummy benefits our understanding of institutionalization's effect on parliamentary behavior (Thames, 2007). Further, this exercise tests the empirical utility of the typology.

Table 2.5 presents the coefficients for the variables of interest. The first model is a direct replication of Daniel's Table 5.5, Model 3; the second replaces the individual party family

indicators with the major group dummy; and the third includes the full institutionalization indicator. Model 1 shows that all individual party family dummies are positive; further, with the

Table 2.5 Results Table for Analysis of Report Allocation

VARIABLES	(1) IRR	(2) IRR	(3) IRR
DV. Reports Count			
Christian Democrat	1.130*** (0.192)		
Social Democrat	1.063*** (0.191)		
Liberal	1.007*** (0.199)		
Greens	0.887*** (0.198)		
Communists	0.864*** (0.210)		
Eurosceptics	0.122 (0.274)		
National Conservatives	0.988*** 1.130		
Major Group		0.258*** (0.0523	
Fully Institutionalized Group			0.371*** (0.079)
Constant	-0.272 (0.565)	0.564 (0.536)	0.798 (0.535)
ln(alpha)	-0.138** (0.044)	-0.106* (0.044)	-0.108* (0.044)
Fixed Effects MS	YES	YES	YES
Fixed Effects EPG	YES	YES	YES
Fixed Effects EP Term	YES	YES	YES
Observations	4,639	4,639	4,639
Log-Likelihood	-9574.3	-9626.8	-9625.7
AIC	19256.7	19349.6	19347.5
BIC	19604.6	19658.9	19656.7
R^2	0.0575	0.0523	0.0524

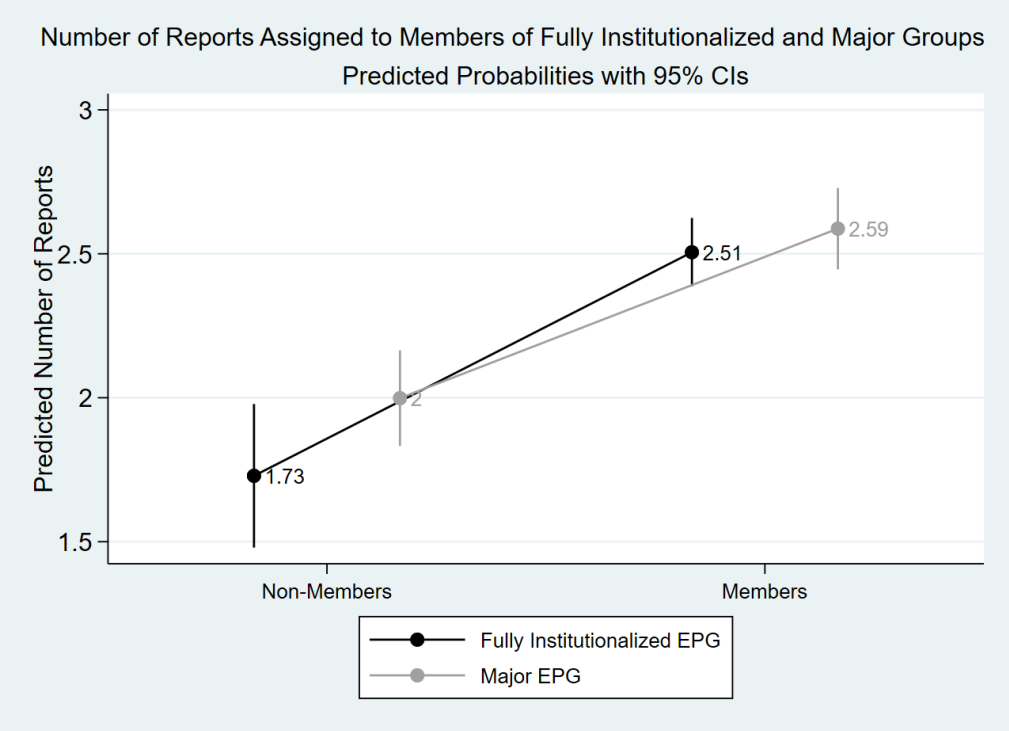
Note: Negative binomial regression with errors clustered on member ID. Robust standard errors in parentheses. I am reporting on the IRRs for the notable variables. The full table can be found in the Appendix. *** p<0.001, ** p<0.010, *p<0.05

exception of the Eurosceptics, all coefficients are highly significant. A series of Wald tests comparing the equality between pairs of party families show that all EPGs receive significantly more reports than the Eurosceptics, while the Christian Democrats and the Socialists gain more reports than the Greens and the Communists. According to Almeida, the observable under-representation of Eurosceptics is likely caused by members of these groups self-excluding (2010, p. 248). However, when analyzed separately, the model suggests that the other groups receive a significant number of reports.

Model 2 substitutes the major group dummy for the party family indicators, and the results corroborate previous findings—the two major groups control significantly more reports than the minor EPGs. Based on these estimates, MEPs from major groups are expected to win an average of 2.59 reports per term, compared to only 2 for minor group MEPs. Model 3 introduces the weak institutionalization dummy. The coefficient on this variable is positive and significant, demonstrating that, holding all other variables constant, MEPs from weakly institutionalized groups receive 0.78 fewer reports than members of fully institutionalized groups, and this difference is statistically significant ($p<0.000$).

Graph 7 presents the combined marginal effects of the two dummies from Models 2 and 3. There is no significant difference between members of fully institutionalized groups and members of major groups access to reports. However, because MEPs from the actively institutionalized Liberals, Greens, and Communist groups are coded as minor, the estimates for these groups are inflated by almost 14 percent when compared to the results of the weak institutionalization dummy. Consequently, observers who rely on the standard major-minor typology will not recognize the true level of inequality present in the distribution of reports. Model 3 loses very little in terms of fit, and it performs better than Model 1, where all party family coefficients are positive but substantive differences are limited; furthermore, Model 3 maintains the advantages of Model 2 in terms of modelling major group effects, while also more accurately estimating the disproportionality of weakly institutionalized groups. Therefore, the evidence shows that the fully institutionalized dummy variable contributes something very useful to the model—a clearer assessment of unbalanced access to the mechanisms of policy control in the EP.

Figure 2.7 Predicted Probabilities Graph for Report Allocation



Note: Predicted Probabilities for Models 2 and 3. Major Groups include all members of the Christian and Social Democrats; non-members include MEPs from all other groups. Members of Fully Institutionalized EPG include MEPs from any group that was either Potentially or Actively Institutionalized; non-members include all MEPs from weakly institutionalized group types.

The implications of these three models should not be understated. When viewed through the lens of uneven institutionalization, the disproportionality in report allocation appears more extreme than once believed, thus confirming the expectations of systemic inequality enunciated by Randall and Svåsand (2002). The standard explanation for this under-representation is self-exclusion. While this might explain the behavior of some anti-establishment, radical-right members, the application of this same logic to all weakly institutionalized groups, including early iterations of the Greens and Communists, the UK Conservatives' ED groups, and many of the Gaullist formations, is less convincing. Model 1 shows that, when estimated individually, all groups except Eurosceptics receive a significant number of reports. It is highly unlikely, therefore, that self-exclusion can explain the level of imbalance observed in Model 3.

To summarize, I use the typology constructed using fsITA to generate a full institutionalization dummy variable. The variable performs as expected, and it shows that membership in a weakly institutionalized group prohibits members from receiving reports, even after controlling for important personal factors such as seniority, education and age. This result points to a third dimension of weak institutionalization that has not yet been discussed. On top of exogenous, electoral shocks, and endogenous, group characteristics such as fragility, volatility, and concentration, these models direct our attention to an intra-parliamentary dynamic that reproduces the weak institutionalization of EPGs. If fully institutionalized groups are those that work, then it makes sense for these groups to control reports. However, excluding some groups from access to rapporteurship equates to never giving these members a chance to "contribut[e] to the…content of the EP's work" (Daniel, 2015, p. 104). Members of weakly institutionalized groups cannot work if they have limited access to the legislative levers of power in the EP. Not only do they face electoral shocks, and internal volatility, but these groups never share in the legislative responsibilities associated with being a rapporteur, a pressure which, according to Bressanelli (2014), is very important for spurring groups to re-organize and streamline their internal organization.

Discussion and Conclusion

For the EP's first forty years, the Christian and Social Democrats combined to control an absolute majority of the parliament's seats, and due to this overwhelming seat share, scholars often refer to them as major groups, while labelling the rest minors (Kreppel, 2002). Although this distinction has become universal in the literature, Raunio (2000) and Bardi (2002) introduced the concept of institutionalization to categorize EPGs. This paper builds on their intuition and presents an innovative method for classifying the political groups of the EP; namely, I employ fsITA to construct a typology of EPGs which clarifies the differences between fully and weakly institutionalized groups.

Using five conditions, including tenure, consistency, concentration, fragility, and volatility, the fsITA typology produces five ideal types: potentially institutionalized, actively institutionalized, one-party, electorally shocked, and merged. The first two represent stages of development through which most groups pass before becoming fully institutionalized. The last three reflect

specific archetypes already found in the literature. This analysis, therefore, provides empirical evidence to support previous claims about weakly institutionalized parties being susceptible to electoral shocks and overly reliant on a single, dominant national delegation.

The results of the typology are applied in two different ways. First, I trace the development of several party families over the first seven EP sessions. In this section, the analysis illustrates how the two largest groups moved directly from potentially to actively institutionalized and then remained at that level for the rest of their tenure. Furthermore, it exemplifies how two small groups, the Greens and the Leftists, transitioned from weak to active institutionalization, following two distinct paths. The major-minor coding system emphasizes seat share and therefore overlooks the fact that these two smaller groups have more in common with the Christian and Social Democrats than they do with technical groups, Eurosceptics, or national conservatives. The analysis of trajectories also includes an example of de-institutionalization and group collapse. These cases exemplify the multi-faceted and dynamic nature of institutionalization while also illustrating the ways group size does not correlate perfectly with party group consolidation.

In the empirical analysis, I use the results of the typology to construct an indicator for full institutionalization and test the empirical utility of this concept as it applies to report allocation. I include the dummy variable to Daniel's (2015) negative binomial regression analysis, 1979-2014, and the results show that weakly institutionalized group members receive significantly fewer rapporteurships, than MEPs from fully institutionalized groups. This effect is stronger than previously observed in analyses of major groups, which means that the literature has thus far under-estimated the disproportionality prevalent in committee report allocation.

The results indicate that the field may benefit greatly from introducing the fully institutionalized EPG indicator in future analyses of parliamentary behavior in the EP. As it stands, the literature either chooses to include party family fixed effects, or based on theoretical grounds, it selects specific group dummies to analyze. However, the coding of EPGs into party families is not always consistent. For example, should Jean-Marie Le Pen's Group of the European Right (DR2-3) be coded as a technical group (as its EP3 name implies), a conservative group, a Eurosceptic group, or a radical-right group? Is the European Radical Alliance (ARE) from EP4 more like the Liberals or the Green-Regionalists? Is the distinguishing characteristic of the European

Conservatives and Reformists (ECR) group, its conservativism or its Euroscepticism? Authors have justifiable reasons for coding these groups differently, but these individual decisions may result in inconsistent analytical estimations of party group effects across various studies.

The current analysis goes beyond party family indicators, and provides evidence that weak institutionalization represents a common denominator for all these borderline cases. The benefits of the full institutionalization indicator are numerous. First, it simplifies the coding of groups into types. Second, members from all groups, not just the major ones, and not just the oldest ones, are included in the analysis. Third, the indicator entails within-group variation across terms. Fourth, we have theoretical grounds to believe that this indicator may have significant effects on parliamentary behavior; thus, excluding it may introduce omitted variable bias into studies. Finally, from a practical standpoint, using a single dummy instead of multiple fixed effects, mitigates the degrees of freedom problem.

The implications of this research are far-reaching as the findings open new avenues for examining parliamentary behavior in the EP's unevenly institutionalized party group system. For example, scholars can now compare the EP against the findings in the literature on emerging democracies, which conclude that unevenly institutionalized party systems negatively impact the parliament's ability to represent its constituencies (Randall and Svåsand, 2002). Likewise, members in weakly institutionalized groups, those faced with possible group collapse following an election, work within a completely different incentive structure than members of stable, fully institutionalized groups. One would expect, therefore, that such uncertainty impacts parliamentary activities, especially since the analysis here shows that these MEPs do not share in the parliamentary burden of crafting and enacting legislation.

Lacking access to rapporteurships, does the average member of a weakly institutionalized party group spend more time with her constituency? Is she more connected to her national party? Does she abstain more, make longer speeches, or submit more questions? The literature on Eurosceptics and radical right parties addresses some of these questions, but it is important to note that these anti-system groups are only a sub-set of all weakly institutionalized EPGs, and, as the second portion of the analysis illustrates, de-institutionalization can potentially affect any group. Therefore, by establishing a historical referent for the behavior of MEPs from weakly

institutionalized groups, scholars would be developing a baseline against which to compare the behavior of members in newly established, or back-sliding, groups in future EP sessions.

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Appendix A

Table A1. Descriptive Statistics for Group-Level Variables

Variable	Obs.	Mean	Std. Dev.	Min	Max
Tenure	60	0.000	1.000	-0.808	2.459
Consistency	60	0.463	0.367	0.000	1.000
Concentration	60	1924.097	1664.016	405.625	8803.711
Fragility	60	0.000	1.921	-5.513	1.963
Volatility	60	16.807	33.937	0.000	100.000

Figure A1. Histogram of Tenure

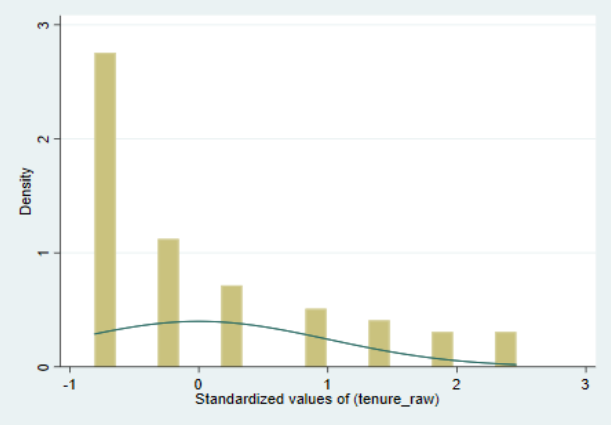


Figure A2. Histogram of Consistency

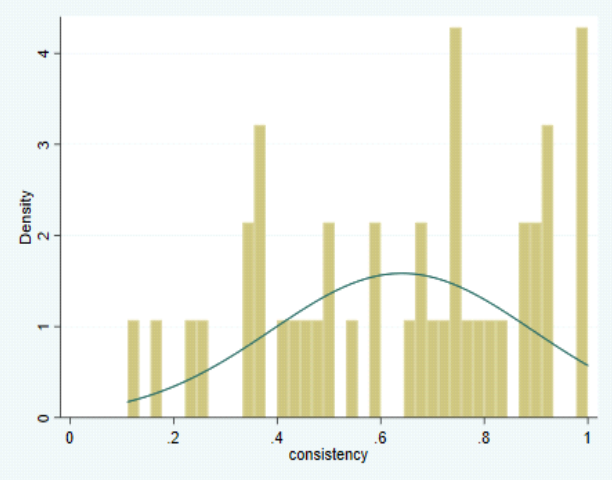


Figure A3. Histogram for Concentration

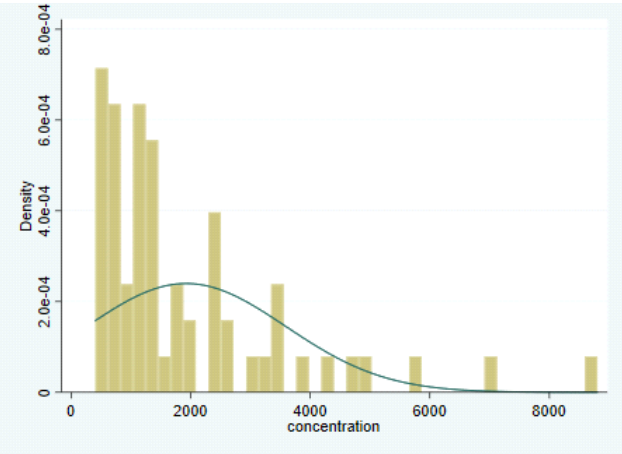


Figure A4. Histogram for Fragility

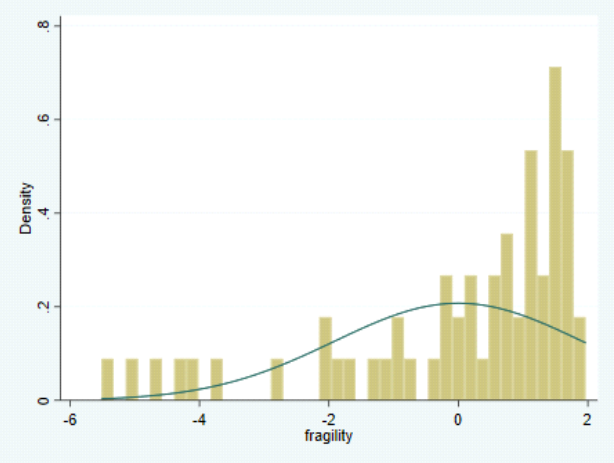


Figure A5. Histogram for Volatility

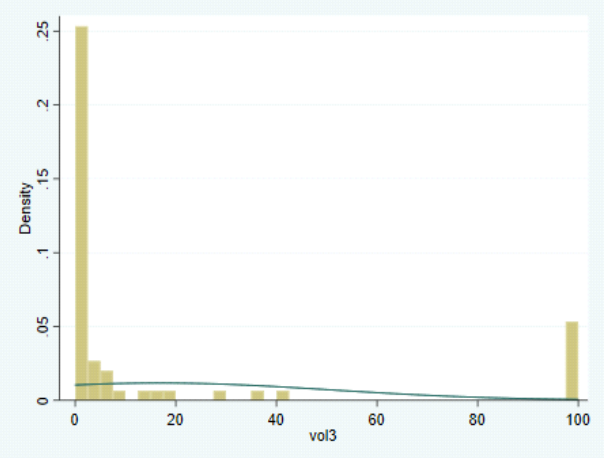


Table A2. Member and MS Thresholds for Calculating Fragility

EP Session	Minimum Members	Minimum MSs	Source
1979	10	3	Fitzmaurice (1975)
	14	1	
1984	10	3	
	14	1	
1989	12	3	Jacobs & Corbett (1990)
	18	2	
	23	1	
1994	14	4	Corbett, Jacobs, and Shackleton (2003)
	18	3	
	23	2	
	29	1	
1999	16	3	Corbett, Jacobs, and Shackleton (2003)
2004	19	5	Nugent (2006)
2008	25	7	Startin (2010)

Table A3. P-Values for Pairwise Tests of Equality for Party Family Coefficients in Model 1.

	Christian Democrats	Social Democrats	Liberals	Greens	Communists	Eurosceptics
Social Democrats	0.203					
Liberals	0.122	0.467				
Greens	0.003**	0.027*	0.207			
Communists	0.013*	0.059	0.228	0.848		
Eurosceptics	0.000***	0.000***	0.000***	0.000***	0.001**	
National Conservatives	0.189	0.489	0.877	0.420	0.374	0.000***

Significant p-values indicate that the null hypothesis which states that two estimations are equal can be rejected.
*** p<0.001, ** p<0.01, * p<0.05

Table A4. Analysis of Consistency

Condition	Consistency	Coverage
TENURE	0.367	1.00
FRAGILITY	0.403	1.00
VOLATILTY	0.226	1.00
CONSISTENCY	0.368	1.00
CONCENTRATION	0.288	1.00
~tenure	0.633	1.00
~fragility	0.597	1.00
~volatility	0.774	1.00
~consistency	0.632	1.00
~concentration	0.712	1.00

Note: The outcome condition equals 1. Consistency scores must be at least 0.90 for a condition to be deemed Necessary.

Table A5. Full Results from Negative Binomial Regression. Dependent Variable Is Report count per MEP per Session. Based on Daniel (2015), Table 5.5, Model 3

	(1)	(3)	(5)
VARIABLES	H1 Log Odds	H1 Log Odds	H1 Log Odds
education	0.0801	0.0845	0.0692
	(0.0549)	(0.0557)	(0.0559)
terms_complete	0.313**	0.351**	0.331**
	(0.111)	(0.113)	(0.112)
wave	-0.165	-0.165	-0.176
	(0.0892)	(0.0908)	(0.0909)
edu_seniority	-0.0634*	-0.0725*	-0.0718*
	(0.0289)	(0.0290)	(0.0292)
edu_wave	0.0340*	0.0347**	0.0378**
	(0.0132)	(0.0134)	(0.0135)
seniority_wave	0.00109	-0.00159	0.00329
	(0.0159)	(0.0161)	(0.0161)
EP_leader	0.217**	0.228***	0.215**
	(0.0686)	(0.0687)	(0.0692)
leadership	0.644***	0.664***	0.654***
	(0.0497)	(0.0508)	(0.0505)
EP_reelect	0.224***	0.217***	0.222***
	(0.0435)	(0.0443)	(0.0446)
dropout	-0.884***	-0.872***	-0.863***
	(0.0860)	(0.0875)	(0.0878)
natl_govt	-0.0635	-0.0181	-0.00264
	(0.0422)	(0.0417)	(0.0411)
age	-0.00511*	-0.00477	-0.00480
	(0.00245)	(0.00246)	(0.00248)
female	0.147**	0.165**	0.159**
	(0.0500)	(0.0504)	(0.0508)
new_ms	-0.696***	-0.693***	-0.718***
	(0.0870)	(0.0872)	(0.0872)
christian_democrat	1.130***		
	(0.192)		
socialist	1.063***		
	(0.191)		
liberal	1.007***		
	(0.199)		
green	0.887***		
	(0.198)		
communist	0.864***		
	(0.210)		
euroskeptic	0.122		
	(0.274)		
conservative	0.988***		
	(0.215)		

austria	0.405*	0.228	0.269
	(0.166)	(0.163)	(0.158)
belgium	0.188	0.127	0.0782
	(0.157)	(0.155)	(0.153)
bulgaria	-0.563*	-0.649**	-0.633**
	(0.252)	(0.243)	(0.242)
cyprus	-0.170	-0.199	-0.244
	(0.433)	(0.439)	(0.405)
czech	-0.136	-0.169	-0.120
	(0.215)	(0.219)	(0.220)
denmark	0.104	0.0439	-0.0206
	(0.177)	(0.177)	(0.173)
estonia	-0.953**	-0.954**	-1.018**
	(0.340)	(0.339)	(0.336)
finland	0.677**	0.653**	0.594*
	(0.237)	(0.235)	(0.239)
france	0.0224	-0.0572	-0.0391
	(0.137)	(0.137)	(0.132)
germany	0.403**	0.347**	0.348**
	(0.129)	(0.126)	(0.123)
greece	0.156	0.0802	0.106
	(0.151)	(0.148)	(0.145)
hungary	0.633*	0.540	0.623*
	(0.278)	(0.280)	(0.279)
italy	0.211	0.0913	0.129
	(0.141)	(0.137)	(0.134)
latvia	-0.316	-0.311	-0.276
	(0.292)	(0.290)	(0.303)
lithuania	-0.580	-0.593	-0.607
	(0.327)	(0.339)	(0.329)
luxembourg	0.201	0.163	0.130
	(0.252)	(0.251)	(0.255)
malta	0.197	0.139	0.212
	(0.334)	(0.348)	(0.343)
netherlands	0.833***	0.763***	0.715***
	(0.144)	(0.142)	(0.139)
poland	0.138	0.0965	0.187
	(0.198)	(0.196)	(0.193)
portugal	0.423**	0.391*	0.379*
	(0.155)	(0.153)	(0.153)
romania	0.0242	-0.0431	0.00587
	(0.288)	(0.289)	(0.293)
slovakia	-0.116	-0.212	-0.132
	(0.352)	(0.353)	(0.351)
slovenia	0.495	0.465	0.502
	(0.302)	(0.299)	(0.298)
spain	0.329*	0.276*	0.292*

	(0.140)	(0.138)	(0.134)
sweden	0.641***	0.605***	0.541***
	(0.170)	(0.163)	(0.162)
uk	0.275*	0.209	0.215
	(0.133)	(0.131)	(0.128)
wave1	-0.197	-0.172	-0.113
	(0.391)	(0.396)	(0.398)
wave2	-0.135	-0.117	-0.0540
	(0.309)	(0.313)	(0.315)
wave3	0.115	0.123	0.189
	(0.240)	(0.243)	(0.245)
wave4	0.0177	0.0109	0.0556
	(0.170)	(0.171)	(0.172)
wave5	0.0106	0.000939	0.00730
	(0.105)	(0.105)	(0.105)
major		0.258***	
		(0.0523)	
weak_inst			-0.371***
			(0.0791)
Constant	-0.272	0.564	0.798
	(0.565)	(0.536)	(0.535)
lnalpha	-0.138**	-0.106*	-0.108*
	(0.0440)	(0.0441)	(0.0444)
Observations	4,639	4,639	4,639
ll	-9574	-9627	-9626
chi2	980.3	938.5	921.6
r2_p	0.0575	0.0523	0.0524

Paper Three

Members, Parties or Groups: Analysing Individual and Collective Party Group Switches in the European Parliament

Abstract

The literature on party group switching in the European Parliament contends that members re-affiliate primarily for strategic reasons. In this paper, I examine how the collapse of weakly institutionalized groups explains a large number of collective switches, specifically among large delegations. To account for policy-seeking behavior, I calculate policy distances using DW-Nominate scores for the first seven sessions of the EP (1979-2009). The pooled logistic regression models show that when delegations become ideologically distant from their group, they are more likely to re-affiliate; however, individual members who find themselves at odds with their group over issues of European integration have increased odds of switching. This paper will have important implications for future research investigating the relationship between weak institutionalization and parliamentary behavior.

Introduction

On November 26, 2007, Sajjad Karim, a member of the European Parliament (MEP) from the United Kingdom (UK), announced that he would be leaving both the Liberal Democrats and the Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe (ALDE) to sit under the Conservative whip as a newly affiliated member of the European People's Party and European Democrats' (EPP-ED) Tory delegation. Citing David Cameron's speech on immigration reform as the reason for his transition (Conservative Home Blog: Tory Diary, 2007a), observers immediately began speculating about whether the Tories would reward Karim with favorable ballot positioning in the upcoming election (Conservative Home Blog: Tory Diary, 2007b). Just ten days earlier, and less than a year after it was formed, the Identity, Tradition, Sovereignty (ITS) Technical group dissolved. Due to disparaging remarks made by Alessandra Mussolini, the Greater Romania Party (PRM) exited ITS, thus triggering a collapse which forced the remaining members to re-affiliate as well. Both of these cases represent instances of party group switching in the EP, but how similar are they really?

Party switching is an established field of research (Heller and Mershon, 2009), incorporating both analyses of individual parliaments (Desposato, 2006; Heller and Mershon, 2008; Yoshinaka, 2015), as well as comparative, cross-national studies (Mershon and Shvetsova, 2013; O'Brien and Shomer, 2013; Volpi, 2019). The literature confirms that politicians in national parliaments change party labels to increase their odds of (re)election (Aldrich and Bianco, 1992), to gain key leadership positions (Yoshinaka, 2015), or to influence policy (Laver and Benoit, 2003). Karim's interests in immigration policy and gaining favorable ballot positioning reflect this logic. However, a separate literature on emerging democracies finds a very strong empirical relationship between weakly institutionalized parties and party switching (McMenamin and Gwiazda, 2011; Shabad and Slomczynski, 2004; Zielinski et al., 2005). The collapse of the ITS party group, which had not yet reached its first anniversary, falls under this category.

To account for both of these types of re-affiliation, this paper analyzes individual policy-seeking behavior, as well as the effect of weak institutionalization, on party group switching in the European Parliament (EP). In their multi-session treatment of re-affiliation in the EP, Evans and Vink conclude that "collective switches" occur more frequently among delegations in "party groups on the fringes," while individuals are more likely to exit the large, ideologically moderate groups (2012: 105). This finding encapsulates many of the assumptions underpinning the analysis of party group switching in the EP. First, distinguishing between individual MEPs, national party delegations (NPDs), and European Party groups (EPGs), presupposes that members' interests depend on their relationship to the delegation or group (Hix, 2002). Second, the literature assumes MEPs and NPDs to be rationally motivated (Müller and Strøm, 1999). Finally, much of the scholarship internalizes the division between major and minor party groups without clearly articulating how this distinction impacts parliamentary behavior (Kreppel, 2002).

In this analysis of party group switching during the first six EP sessions (1979-2009), I complicate and expand upon these three assumptions. First, I introduce the concept of weakly institutionalized party groups and explain how the most dominant NPDs are over-represented in fringe EPGs. If, by construction, weakly institutionalized groups like the ITS are more likely to suffer a collapse, e.g. merging with other groups, dissolving mid-session, or failing to reconvene after an election, then group-level instability offers an alternative explanation for collective

switches. In other words, large delegations re-affiliate when groups collapse, not because they are seeking offices or policy change.

Second, I use DW-Nominate scores to measure NPD to EPG and MEP to EPG policy distances. The delegation to group distances relate to collective switches while the member to delegation distances model individual re-affiliation. The results of the pooled logistic regression models show that being ideologically incongruent with the group impacts collective switches, but individuals who are distant from their EPGs on the European dimension have the highest odds of re-affiliating. Therefore, to properly estimate the correlates of collective and individual party group switching, the paper incorporates the collapse of weakly institutionalized groups, as well as MEP-level measures of policy incongruence, into the analysis.

The literature review first discusses institutionalization and its relationship to party switching, and then recounts what previous authors have said about the relationship between policy distance variables and party group re-affiliation in the EP. I then present my data and methods before turning to the results. The findings are summarized and I consider the implications of these in the Discussion and Conclusion section.

Institutionalization and Party Switching

As Huntington defines the concept, "institutionalization is the process by which organizations and procedures acquire value and stability" (1965: 394). Observers commonly agree that the EP's party group system is weakly institutionalized. They attribute this deficiency to a constellation of factors such as the "unique mix of electoral contests based on national party list, internal legislative organization, and political dynamics dominated by international party groups," which is "not conducive to party system stability" (Evans and Vink, 2012: 110). Likewise, high turnover rates among members of the European Parliament (MEPs) contribute to a "list of factors that are stacked against the EP institutionalizing and developing strong party groups" (Bowler and McElroy 2015: 1362). Therefore, the literature generally maintains that the party group system remains unconsolidated.

McElroy and Benoit (2007) analyze the number and types of EPGs, locating them within the EP's two- dimensional policy space. They conclude that groups are ideologically non-overlapping and spatially stable across sessions; furthermore, EPGs are dispersed across the entirety of the traditional socio-economic axis with anti-system EPGs populating the extreme end of the European integration dimension, thus producing the policy space's inverted-U shaped (McElroy and Benoit 2012). Beyond this ideological approach, Bardi (2002) examines the membership composition of the groups and identifies three types, including transnational, multi-party, and one-party. Transnational and multi-party EPGs have relatively large and diversified casts of delegations while one or two dominant NPDs control one-party groups. Bardi argues that these highly concentrated groups are unlikely to institutionalize because they mobilize only national interests; therefore, their presence hinders the consolidation of the EP's party system. Based on these differences, Bardi (2002) identifies a stable core of groups that consolidates its power during the parliamentary session, as well as a weakly institutionalized periphery, which he claims is disproportionately susceptible to electoral shocks.

Raunio (2000) draws a distinction between the EP's smaller groups, characterized as "temporary alliances" that are "particularly vulnerable to…defections" (242), and those more "established groups" that have "developed their internal organisations and consolidated their positions in the EP" (233). The group differences he identifies reflect variation in levels of institutionalization. According to Evans and Vink, whose categorization of fringe and moderate groups mirrors Bardi's (2002) core and periphery formulation, "it is a well-known fact among observers of party politics in the EP that electoral losses at the time of European elections contribute to the disappearance of parliamentary groups at the start of a new legislative mandate in the EP" (2012: 109). Hence, we should observe weakly institutionalized, temporary alliances on the periphery of the EP's party group system, suffer various forms of collapse, such as mass defections or the failure to reconvene after an electoral shock.

I identify three specific types of EPG collapse. *Mergers* occur when one hundred percent of a group' membership collectively takes on another group label during the course of a session. This happened, for example, when the Forza Europa (FE) merged with the members of the Group of the European Democratic Alliance (RDE) to form the Union for Europe (UPE) in EP4. *Dissolution* occurs during the course of a session, when a party disbands. Many technical groups

(TCDI2, TDI5, ITS6) have dissolved mid-session, but other groups, such as the Group for the European United Left (GUE) also disintegrated.[8] A *failure to reconvene* (FTR) captures the phenomenon described by Evans and Vink (2012). If the membership of a group is shocked by an EP election and cannot re-form itself in the following session, then all members must switch into a new group. When we observe an EPG merge, dissolve, or fail to reconvene, this indicates the conclusion of a series of events which led to the collapse of a weakly institutionalized group.

The goal of this paper is not to describe group collapse or to explain the causes of weak institutionalization among EPGs; rather, I identify the connection between weakly institutionalized groups and the occurrence of EPG collapse, which I then used as a causal explanation for party group switching. This nexus of events is implied in the literature, but to this point it has never been tested. Including weak institutionalization in the analysis shifts the focus from the member, or the delegation, to the group, and this re-calibration represents a clear contribution to the study of party group switching.

Having identified weak institutionalization and party group collapse as a potential explanation for switching, I now explain how this phenomenon relates to collective switches. Hix and Noury find that 75 percent of all switches take place by "groups," or at least two members of the same national delegation (2018: 14).[9] Likewise, McElroy and Benoit identify not only the high frequency of switching in the EP, but the prevalence of entire delegations changing labels (2009: 152). To describe this phenomenon, they list a table containing 29 notable examples of national party switching. Of the 23 enumerated cases of delegations exiting weakly institutionalized group, we see an instance of group merger (UK Conservatives leaving the ED to join the EPP), of group dissolution (the Italian Party of the Left (PDS) leaving the GUE to join the SOC), and many examples of groups failing to reconvene. For example, the authors list the Spanish United Left (IU), French Communist Party (PCF), and the Danish Socialist People's Party (SF) as switching out of the Communist and Allies Group (COM) in 1989 to join either the Left Unity (CG) or the Group for the European United Left (GUE). Due to a schism between the French and

[8] This is considered a dissolution instead of a merger because after the Italian Communist Party joined the Social Democrats (SOC), the rest of the GUE delegations affiliated with the non-inscrits (NI).

[9] This operationalization does not account for single-member delegations.

Italian Communist parties, the COM group did not re-form in EP3, so all members and delegations had no choice but to re-affiliate. Consequently, the failure to reconvene by the Leftists prompted each of these collective switches.

In short, group collapse explains many of the national party switches listed in the McElroy and Benoit (2009) table. This discussion is not meant to rule out the existence of collective switches orchestrated by strategically-oriented delegations; however, it does reveal that a significant proportion of this type of re-affiliation originates with group collapse and not political calculation. Table 3.1 provides a list of all of the groups that either merged, dissolved, or failed to reconvene in the first six EP sessions.

	Within-Session Collapse		**Between Session Collapse**
EP	**Merger**	**Dissolve**	**Fail to Reconvene**
2		Group for Technical Coordination and Defence of Independent Groupings and Members (TCDI)	Group for the Technical Coordination and Defense of Independent Groups and Members (CDI)
			Group of European Progressive Democrats (DEP)
3	European Democrats (ED)	Group for the European United Left (GUE)	Communist and Allies Group (COM)
4	Forza Europa (FE)	Europe of Nations Group-Coordination Group (EDN)	Left Unity (CG)
	Group of the European Democratic Alliance (RDE)		Technical Group of the European Right (DR)
			Rainbow Group (RBW)
5		Technical Group of Independent Members- Mixed Group (TDI)	Group of the European Radical Alliance (ARE)
			Group of Independents for a Europe of Nations (I-EDN)
			Union for Europe (UPE)
6		Identity, Tradition, and Sovereignty Group (ITS)	Europe of Democracies and Diversities (EDD)

Table 3.1 All cases of group collapse, 1979-2009

To understand the relationship between weak institutionalization and national delegation size, consider Hix and Noury' determination that MEPs from the largest EPGs have lower odds of re-affiliating, but members from the most powerful delegations are more likely to switch during the course of a session (2018: 567). Indeed, as an NPD's seat share approaches 100 percent of the group, the odds of switching increase dramatically. By conducting a study which privileges

political parties, observers may assume that this tendency occurs because large national delegations leverage their size to gain more prestigious offices or leadership positions in a different group. However, viewing switches through the lens of weak institutionalization makes it clear that the most dominant NPDs are disproportionately represented in weakly institutionalized groups. When these minor, peripheral or fringe groups collapse, then dominant delegations find it necessary to switch groups.

Figure 3.1 The Relationship Between EPG Seat Share and NPD Seat Share, Coded for Group Collapse

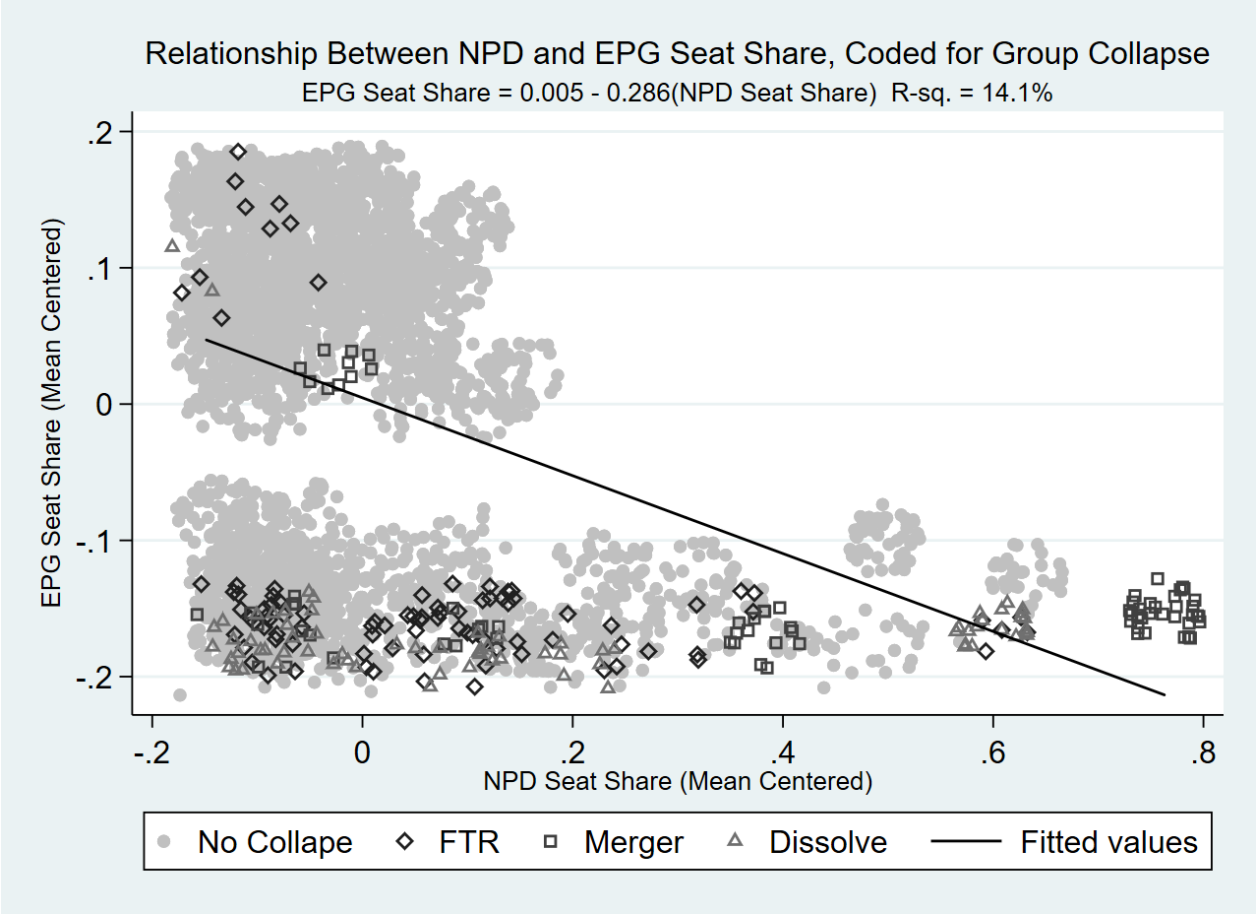


Figure 3.1 provides a scatterplot to illustrate the relationship between delegation and group seat share. Both variables are centered on their mean, so negative values stand for smaller than average NPDs or EPGs, and positive values indicated larger than average seat share. The relationship is negative. While small NPDs join both small and large EPGs, the most dominant NPDs are only found in small, weakly institutionalized groups. In fact, we find no delegation

with more than twenty percent of a group's seat share in a large EPG. On the regression line, we see the relatively large Gaullist delegation which merged with the FE in EP4, as well as the Italian Communists who joined the Socialists in EP3, thus initiating the dissolution of GUE3. Finally, note that the vast majority of group collapse occurs in small groups. This scatterplot, therefore, confirms Bardi's (2002) intuition—an important correlation exists between large delegations and weakly institutionalized party groups.

This discussion of weak institutionalization highlights an opportunity to contribute to the literature. Although it is natural to focus on rational behavior, within the context of the EP, and especially for the discussion of party group switching, concentrating solely on policy-, office-, and vote-seeking overlooks the fact that not all members, especially those affiliated with small groups perpetually facing the possibility of collapse, share the same capacity to act strategically. While it is certainly the case that some national parties make the rational choice to re-affiliate, in order to fully understand the causes of EPG switching, it is necessary to account for both ambition as well as weak institutionalization.

Policy Distance with DW-Nominate Scores

To this point, the paper has explained how weak institutionalization can be implicated in the high incidence of collective switches in the EP; however, it is still necessary to understand the relationship between policy-seeking and re-affiliation. When applying Müller and Strøm's (1999) theory of political behavior to the study of switching in the EP, authors recognize that ambitious MEPs are most likely motivated by office- or policy-seeking (Hix and Noury 2018, 570; McElroy, 2008; McElroy and Benoit, 2009). Nominate estimates represent an important because they operationalize policy-seeking behavior. To this end, I use DW-Nominate scores and measure NPD to EPG and MEP to EPG policy distances.

Nominate is an algorithmic scaling technique which analyzes roll call votes and produces two-dimensional ideal points for each legislator. Poole and Rosenthal (1997) introduced these scores and utilize them to address topics such as issue dimensionality, party system polarization, and party realignment in the US Congress. Relative to the discussion of party group switching, several authors use Nominate scores to study re-affiliation in the American context (Nokken,

2009; Nokken and Poole, 2004). For example, Yoshinaka analyzes whether switchers gain committee assignments as a reward for re-affiliating, and determines that high congruence, or low policy distance, is associated with winning committee leadership positions after switching parties (2015, 165-6).

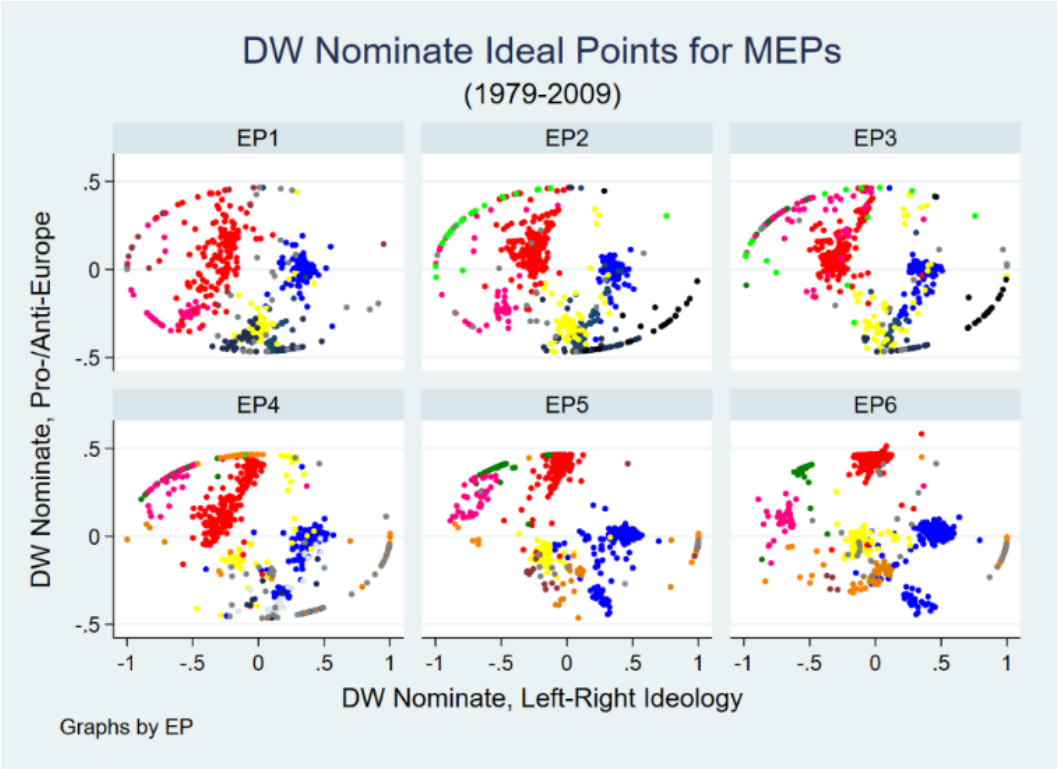
In the case of the EP, Hix, Noury and Roland (2007) introduce Nominate scores to analyze the dimensionality of the EP's policy space. The literature on EP committee assignments regularly relies on Nominate scores to test the effect of ideological congruence on gaining offices (Hausemer, 2006; McElroy, 2006; Rasmussen, 2008; Yordanova, 2013). In their analysis of rapporteur assignments, Yoshinaka, McElroy and Bowler (2010) employ several distance variables, including MEP to NPD and MEP to EPG measures. Further, they estimate single-session models because the "Hix, Noury, and Roland's ideal-point estimates are not dynamic, which means they are estimated separately in each Parliament and not comparable across terms" (Yoshinaka et al., 2010: 471). The DW-Nominate scores presented here are dynamic; therefore, this analysis covers all switches in the first six EP sessions using panel data.

The literature analyzing the effect of policy distance on party group switching in the EP produces mixed results. On one hand, studies employing conditional logit models to explain a switcher's group choice find a significant, negative relationship between policy distance and EPG selection: once they have decided to change labels, MEPs select the group closest to their preferred policy position (Hix and Noury, 2018; McElroy and Benoit, 2009). On the other hand, the two analyses using dichotomous outcome variables to evaluate the causes of switching determine that ideological policy distance is unrelated to switching (Hix and Noury, 2018; McElroy, 2008). The policy distance variables in these models are either statistically insignificant or they take negative coefficients, indicating that as incongruence increases, the odds of switching decrease. By creating policy distance variables from DW-Nominate estimates, this paper offers a method for measuring MEP to EPG and NPD to EPG distances, thus making it possible to examine both individual and collective switches independently.

The DW-Nominate scores used in this paper were produced by Keith Poole, who derives them from a dataset including all roll call votes collected by Hix et al. (2007) for the years 1979-2009. The scaling had a correct classification of 89.45 percent with an APRE of 0.5720 and a geometric

mean probability of 0.77. These standardized "measures of fit" indicate that these ideal-points are viable, indeed strong, estimations (Poole, 2005: 129-130). Figure 3.2 visualizes the scores.

Figure 3.2 DW-Nominate Scores, EP1-6, 1979-2009



Note: Social Democrats (SOC/PES) have red dots; Christian Democrats (EPP/EPP-ED) have blue dots; Liberals (LD; LDR; ELDR; ALDE) have yellow dots; Leftists (COM; CG; GUE; GUE-NGL) have pink dots; the Rainbow Group has lime dots; the Greens (V; V/EFA) have green dots; European Democrats (ED) have navy blue dots; The European Right (DR) has black dots; The UEN and UEN Coordinating Group are dark Orange; The Eurosceptics (I-EDN; EDD; InDem) are orange; Technical groups (CDI; TDI; ITS) are maroon; Non Inscrits (NI) are grey.

Some scholars find Nominate scores problematic because, especially in the first sessions, a minority of votes were recorded as roll calls (McElroy, 2006). Critics also contend that a selection effects biases roll call votes (Carrubba, Gabel and Hug, 2008), especially when specific groups use them to either signal their policy positions to third parties or to enforce discipline among their own ranks (Carrubba et al., 2006). The literature notes that, with such high levels of group cohesion (Hix at al., 2007) and delegation control over roll call votes (Hix, 2002), variation within delegations or groups may not be significant enough to measure policy distance.

Despite these critiques, the EP literature (McElroy, 2006; Rasmussen, 2008; Yordanova, 2013), as well as research focused specifically on group switching (McElroy 2008; McElroy and Benoit 2009), uses Nominate scores to measure MEP to EPG policy distances. Furthermore, the literature may be over-estimating the cohesiveness of party groups because relying on Nominate scores that do not account for the different types of votes leads to the "underreporting of the heterogeneity within the groups" (Høyland 2010: 598). Therefore, using DW-Nominate scores derived from the entire universe of roll call votes, the method used here, de-emphasizes the differences between members of the same group, which should produce conservative estimates of MEP to EPG policy incongruence. Likewise, if roll call votes used as a tool for exerting "party pressure" worked equally well on all members (Hug 2016), then we would not see the within-group disparities in policy distances presented below. Figures 3.3 and 3.4 present boxplots for the mean-centered, MEP to EPG distances on both the ideological and European dimensions and illustrate the variation within groups, across parliamentary terms, and between groups.

Figure 3.3 Boxplots of Ideological and European Distances (Mean Centered), By Group-Session. Social Democrats (SOC/PES); Liberal Democrats (ALDE); Christian Democrats (EPP)

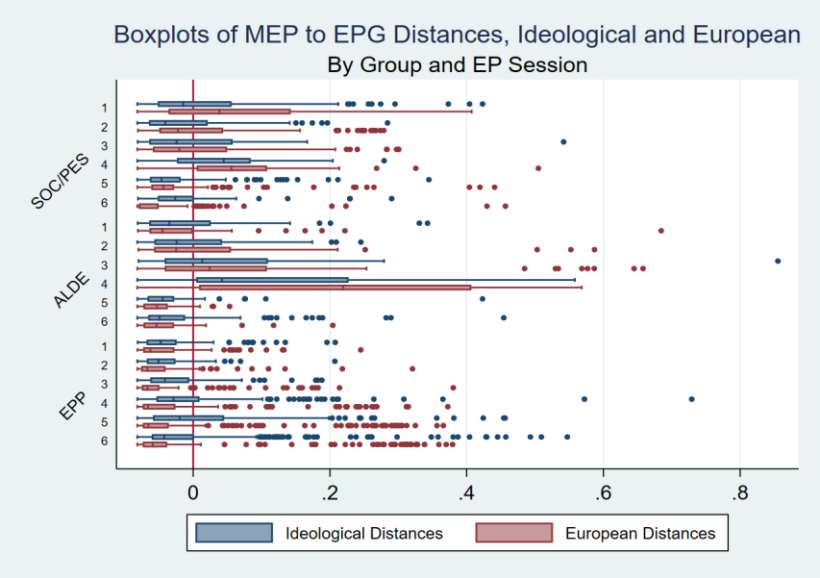
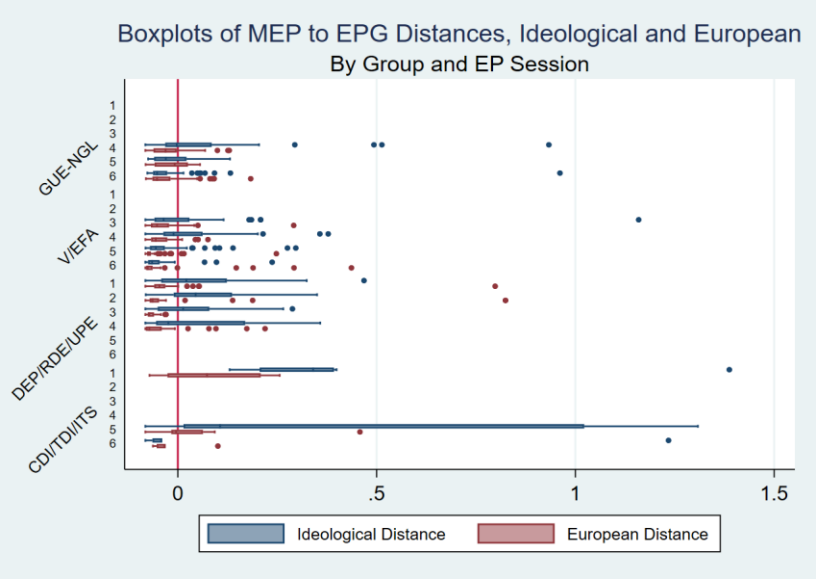


Figure 3.4 Boxplots of Ideological and European Distances, By Group-Session. Leftists (GUE-NGL); Greens (V-EFA); Gaullists (DEP/RDE/UPE); Technical Groups (CDI/TDI/ITS)



Turning to the dependent variable, I define switchers as those members who change affiliations and stay in the new group for at least two weeks. Following Evans and Vink (2012), I distinguish between within- and between-session switches. Within-session switches occur during the course of a term, and between-session switches result when an incumbent changes groups after an election. Unlike Evans and Vink (2012), I treat members who switched from the DEP to the RDE after the 1984 election, for example, as switchers. Name changes indicate internal negotiations between delegations, and unless the name of the group is recognizable, I count it as a new group.[10] This method does not reflect party family continuity, but rather the internal dynamics of party group stability, as reproduced by consistent political branding, an important facet of institutionalization (Randall and Svåsand, 2002).

[10] Unlike the cases identified by Harmel et al. (2018) name changes in the EP represent (often contentious) internal negotiations between factions and therefore do not represent a purifying or clarifying of the party brand meant to more accurately define themselves voters.

		Independent Variable	Expectation
Within-Session	Collective	Merger or Dissolve	(+)
		NPD to EPG Distance	(+)
	Individual	MEP to EPG Distance	(+)
Between-Session	Collective	Fail to Reconvene	(+)
		NPD to EPG Distance	(+)
	Individual	MEP to EPG Distance	(+)

Table 3.2 Hypotheses of Switching. Plus Sign (+) indicates the expected sign on coefficients

Combining within- and between-session switches with the weak institutionalization and policy distance variables makes it possible to theorize how we should expect these relationships to behave, and these hypotheses are listed in Table 3.2. In all cases, the expectation is that the coefficients on distance variables should be positive—as the distance variables increase, so too should the odds of switching.

Data and Methods

We now proceed to analyze the effect of weak institutionalization and policy incongruence on party group switching. The two dichotomous dependent variables used in the following models are within-session and between-session switches. For within-session switchers, I operationalize weak institutionalization with an indicator variable for mergers or dissolution, and for between-session switches, I use a dummy for parties that failed to reconvene. Members in groups that merge, dissolve, or fail to reconvene will necessarily switch, but failing to account for group collapse omits an important variable, the absence of which biases the results. By including these indicators, it is possible to more accurately estimate the effect of the policy distance variables.

I measure NPD to EPG distance to account for collective switches, and I use MEP to EPG incongruence to explain individual switches. I use the DW-Nominate estimates to calculate policy distance variables on both the left-right ideological and pro-/anti Europe dimensions. These measure the absolute distance between the member's, or delegation's, position on the relevant dimension to the group's median on that dimension. NPD positions are calculated by aggregating co-members' individual ideal points. All distance variables are centered on their mean.

Because DW-Nominate scores are comparable across sessions, for all models analyzing between-session switches, I use the distance variable from the previous session. For example, if the MEP switched from the Greens to the Social Democrats at the beginning of EP5 (time *t*), then the distance used to explain this between-session switch is calculated from her position relative to the Greens in EP4 (time *t-1*). This lagging procedure is used for NPD distances as well.

I use several control variables derived from the literature on party group switching. For example, in order to account for the power of each group or delegation, I include mean-centered, seat share proportions for both the NPD, relative to the group, and the EPG, relative to the entire parliament (McElroy, 2008). I expect that, after controlling for weakly institutionalized group collapse, members from larger NPDs and EPGs should be less likely to switch groups. I test this directly using an interaction term between the collapse variable and the NPD seat share variable for group switches. This allows me to examine the conditional effect of delegation size on switching after controlling for party collapse. I include an indicator for whether an MEP switched groups previously in their career, as well as controls for MEP experience, gender, age, and whether the MEP's delegation was a member of the national government or had a Commissioner (Hix and Noury, 2018).

My dataset aggregates information from several sources. First, I combine all of the Hix et al. (2007) member data with Høyland, Sircar and Hix (2010) data from the Automated Database of the European Parliament, from which I attain the timing of every switch as well as the aggregated party group and national delegation power variables. I use the Parlgov dataset's (Döring and Manow, 2016) "party in government" variable, as well as Daniel's (2015) variable on MEP sex. Hix and Noury (2018) graciously provide me with the NPD in government and commissioner variables.

Following Hix and Noury (2018), I use pooled logistic regression models. To account for NPDs which divide their membership between groups, I construct a unique delegation identifier for each specific combination of the NPD-EPG-EP, and then I cluster errors on this ID. The models also include fixed effects for EP sessions where EP1 is the baseline. The outcome is a dichotomous switch variable, divided between within- and between-session types; within each

type, I present models for individual switches and collective switches. This method is standard across multiple studies (Evans and Vink, 2012; Hix and Noury, 2018).

Analysis and Results

Table 3.3 presents the results for the models examining collective (Models 1-4) and individual (Models 5-7), *within-session switches*. Model 1 includes all control variables, including the NPD and EPG seat share variables. The coefficients for these size variables are highly significant, but the sign is positive for delegations and negative for groups. Power, as measured by number of members, therefore, functions differently at the two levels of aggregation, and this relationship is consistent across the first four models.

Model 2 introduces the dissolve-merge indicator, which, as expected, takes a positive sign and correlates strongly with switching. The coefficients on both seat share variables shrink but maintain previous levels of significance, and the pseudo-R^2 increases from 0.437 to 0.548. Model 3 includes the NPD to EPG policy distance variables, and as hypothesized, both coefficients are positive. After controlling for mergers and disintegration, as delegations become more ideologically incongruent with their group, they have statistically higher odds of switching groups. This is not the case for distance on the European dimension, however, which is not related to within-session, collective switches. Model 4 presents the results of the interaction term between NPD seat share and weak institutionalization. All three terms take positive coefficients and the interaction term is highly significant, indicating that NPD seat share's effect on switching is conditioned by whether or not a group collapsed.

Table 3.3 Results Table for Logistic Regression, Within-Session Switches, Collective and Individual

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
	Within-Session, Collective Switches				Within-Session, Individual Switches		
NPD Seat Share	**4.211*** (1.241)**	**3.065** (1.042)**	**3.972*** (1.131)**	2.410 (1.443)	**-12.06*** (3.584)**	**-13.22*** (3.931)**	**-13.43** (4.252)**
EPG Seat Share	**-17.72*** (4.02)**	**-14.21*** (3.738)**	**-12.43** (3.875)**	**-13.69** (4.404)**	**-8.447*** (1.157)**	**-7.419*** (1.122)**	**-6.788*** (1.163)**
Dissolve-Merge		**3.726*** (0.491)**	**3.647*** (0.516)**	**6.339*** (1.313)**		**2.172*** (0.385)**	**2.122*** (0.377)**
NPD to EPG Ideo. Distance			**1.859*** (0.463)**	**1.927*** (0.462)**			
NPD to EPG Europe Distance			2.549 (1.623)	1.942 (1.658)			
Dissolve-Merge* NPD Seat Share				**52.93*** (13.40)**			
MEP to EPG Ideo. Distance							**0.825* (0.403)**
MEP to EPG Europe Distance							**2.214*** (0.667)**
Lag Switch	0.556 (0.317)	0.556 (0.392)	0.335 (0.405)	0.589 (0.413)	0.693 (0.368)	0.435 (0.400)	0.185 (0.407)
MEP Experience	**0.281* (0.119)**	0.220 (0.144)	0.185 (0.175)	0.131 (0.177)	0.133 (0.121)	0.134 (0.127)	0.115 (0.124)
Female	**-0.501* (0.218)**	**-0.509* (0.247)**	-0.413 (0.238)	-0.456 (0.257)	**-0.945** (0.320)**	**-0.911** (0.321)**	**-0.863** (0.322)**
Age	-0.008 (0.010)	-0.005 (0.012)	-0.006 (0.012)	-0.001 (0.013)	-0.001 (0.010)	-0.002 (0.011)	-0.001 (0.011)
NPD in Gov't	0.206 (0.435)	0.255 (0.382)	0.332 (0.382)	0.555 (0.421)	0.165 (0.259)	0.279 (0.261)	0.387 (0.265)
NPD has a Commissioner	0.915 (0.601)	0.498 (0.749)	0.668 (0.817)	0.600 (0.915)	0.458 (0.309)	0.435 (0.308)	0.494 (0.319)
Constant	**-7.77*** (1.496)**	**-6.659*** (1.363)**	**-6.972*** (1.340)**	**-6.984*** (1.324)**	**-5.806*** (0.867)**	**-5.852*** (0.894)**	**-6.136*** (0.878)**
EP Fixed Effects	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
Observations	3,826	3,826	3,826	3,826	3,826	3,826	3,826
Pseudo R^2	0.437	0.548	0.576	0.616	0.184	0.222	0.238

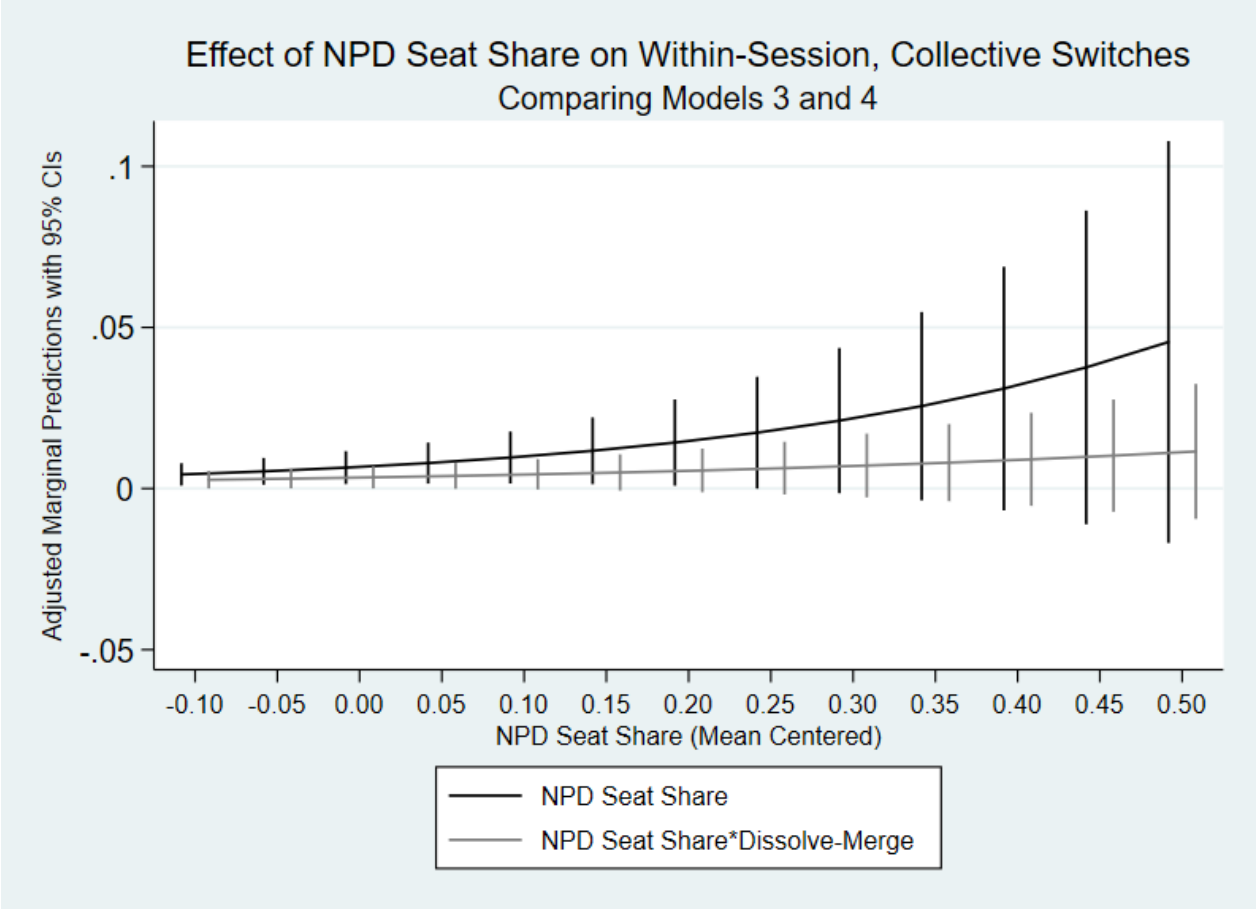
Note: EP1 is the baseline. The appendix contains a full description of the variables and descriptive statistics for all variables. The number of observations is smaller for between-switchers as the samples in models 4,5, and 6 are restricted just to those MEPs who were present in both EP(t) and EP(t-1). Standard errors clustered by national party in parentheses.
* p<0.05, ** p<0.01, ***p<0.001

Figure 3.5 illustrates how the interaction term impacts our interpretation of NPD seat share's effect on switching. I compare the predicted probabilities from Models 3 and 4 in order to illustrate the utility of including the interaction term. The estimates from Model 3 show that, as NPD seat share increases, the predicted probability of switching also increases. From this result, one would conclude that as delegations grow larger, they are more likely to re-affiliate. Model 4, however, estimates the effect of seat share on switching as a function of group collapse, and these results tell a different story. The predicted probability curve for the interaction term shifts down

and flattens out substantially. The margins are only different from zero for delegations of the smallest size, and even among these, the effect of increased size shows no significant effect on increasing the odds of switching. Therefore, after placing it in relation to group collapse, the relationship between an NPD's size and switching during a session proves statistically and substantively insignificant.

The control variables are largely insignificant, especially in Models 3 and 4. The signs on the delegation in government and commissioner variables are negative, as expected, but in many cases the error terms are as big, if not larger than, the coefficients. We also see that older members are less likely to switch, and that members with more tenure have higher odds of switching, but these results are not statistically different from zero.

Figure 3.5 Comparing the Effects of NPD Seat Share on Within-Session Switching for Delegations in Non-Collapsing Groups



Models 5 through 7 analyze individual, within-session switches. Here, both the NPD and EPG seat share variables are negative and significant, indicating that MEPs from larger delegations and groups are less likely to switch during the course of a parliamentary term. This result is consistent across all four models, yet different than what we see for collective switches, where the NPD seat share always takes a positive coefficient. Model 6 introduces the dissolve-merge dummy, and it performs as expected, taking a statistically significant, positive coefficient.

The MEP to EPG distance variables constructed using the DW-Nominate scores, found in Model 7, perform as hypothesized. As a member becomes more distant from their group on either dimension, their odds of switching increase significantly. When compared to the most central MEPs, those farther away from the group's median have higher odds of switching, and this effect is different from zero across all values of ideological distance. The increase in odds, however, is muted when compared to the European dimension, where we see a more pronounced impact. The results of Model 7 support the stated hypotheses: As members become more incongruent with their group, their odds of switching increase, particularly when MEPs hold discordant views on issues associated with European integration.

The results presented in Table 3.4 include seven models analyzing collective (Models 8-11) and individual (12-14) *between-session switches*. As in Models 1-4, the NPD seat share variable is never statistically significant, and takes a positive sign for the first three models, before flipping to negative once the interaction term is introduced. The EPG seat share variable takes a negative coefficient and is always highly significant, demonstrating that delegations from the largest groups have lower odds of switching between sessions.

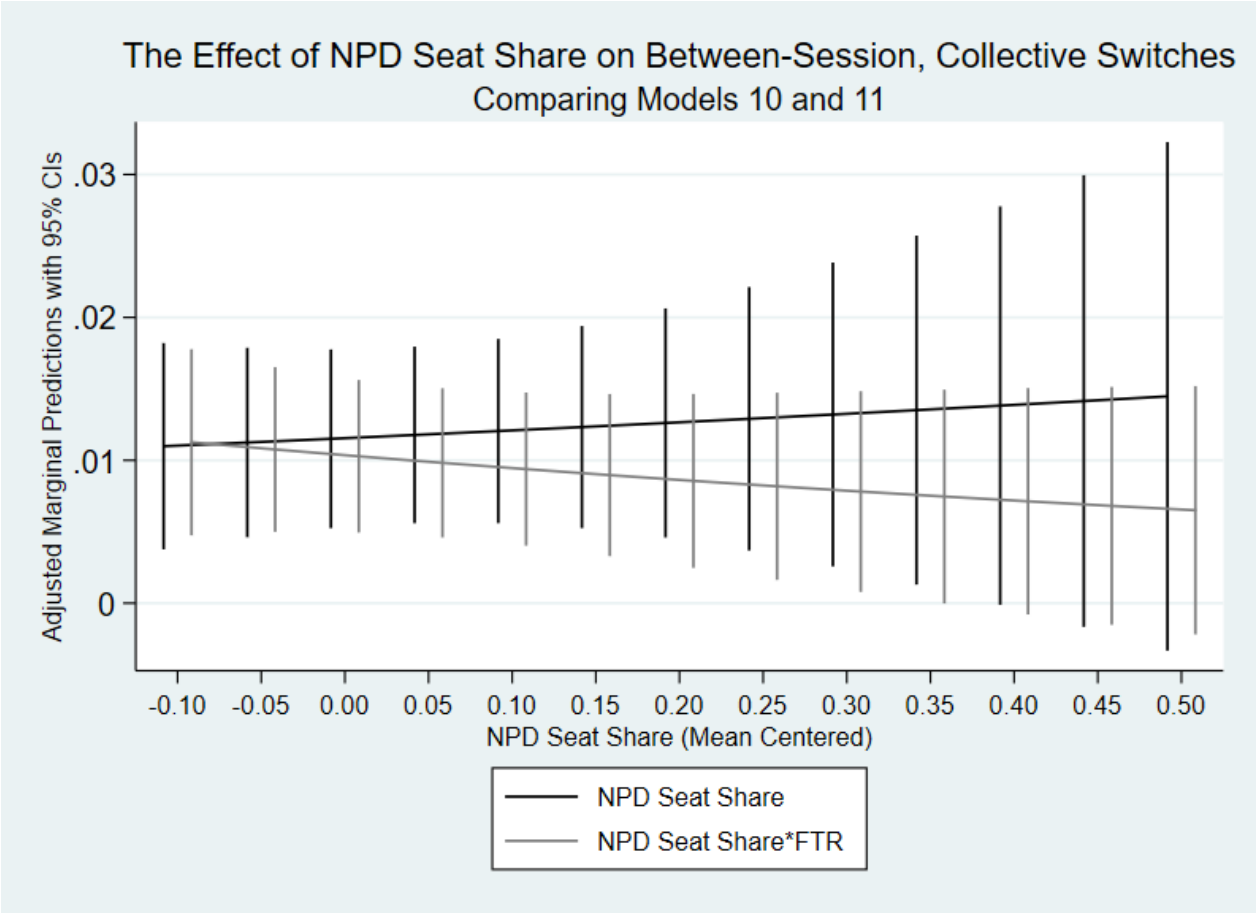
The FTR variable takes a statistically significant, positive coefficient in Models 9 through 11, indicating that group collapse following an electoral shock is a significant predictor of a collective switch. Model 11 tests the conditional effect of NPD seat share on switching given weak institutionalization. The seat share variable takes a negative sign, while both the weak institutionalization variable and interaction term have positive signs. Figure 3.6 illustrates how the interpretation changes after including the FTR variable.

Table 3.4 Results Table for Logistic Regression, Between-Session Switches, Collective and Individual

	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)	(12)	(13)	(14)
	Between-Session, Collective Switches				Between Session, Individual Switches		
NPD Seat Share	0.104	0.061	0.465	-0.923	**-5.341****	**-7.161****	**-7.103***
	(1.123)	(1.213)	(1.300)	(1.273)	**(1.854)**	**(2.753)**	**(2.870)**
EPG Seat Share	**-10.02*****	**-7.219*****	**-6.160****	**-6.283****	**-8.795*****	**-6.946*****	**-6.390*****
	(2.069)	**(2.013)**	**(1.967)**	**(2.043)**	**(1.543)**	**(1.543)**	**(1.585)**
Fail to Reconvene		**4.075*****	**4.138*****	**4.028*****		**2.681*****	**2.687*****
(FTR)		**(0.492)**	**(0.503)**	**(0.640)**		**(0.487)**	**(0.489)**
NPD to EPG			**1.488****	**1.414****			
Ideo. Distance			**(0.496)**	**(0.498)**			
NPD to EPG			0.499	0.362			
Europe Distance			(1.553)	(1.435)			
FTR*				**13.64***			
NPD Seat Share				**(5.993)**			
MEP to EPG							0.436
Ideo. Distance							(0.437)
MEP to EPG							**1.670***
Europe Distance							**(0.831)**
Lag	**0.919****	**1.144****	**1.083****	**1.216****	**0.781***	**0.823***	0.726
Switch	**(0.327)**	**(0.394)**	**(0.388)**	**(0.380)**	**(0.353)**	**(0.369)**	(0.375)
MEP	**0.765*****	**0.490*****	**0.483*****	**0.464*****	**0.568*****	**0.368****	**0.362****
Experience	**(0.133)**	**(0.142)**	**(0.145)**	**(0.139)**	(0.101)	(0.114)	(0.115)
Female	**-0.580***	**-0.697***	**-0.646***	-0.691	0.162	0.233	0.266
	(0.253)	**(0.304)**	**(0.304)**	(0.354)	(0.303)	(0.306)	(0.305)
Age	0.013	0.013	0.011	0.014	**0.029***	**0.030***	**0.029***
	(0.010)	(0.013)	(0.013)	(0.013)	**(0.013)**	**(0.014)**	**(0.014)**
NP in Gov't	-0.721	-0.686	-0.653	-0.715	-0.121	0.044	0.068
	(0.515)	(0.641)	(0.632)	(0.651)	(0.281)	(0.339)	(0.335)
NP has a	0.139	0.652	0.709	0.888	-0.540	-0.414	-0.393
Commissioner	(0.740)	(0.765)	(0.780)	(0.774)	(0.385)	(0.418)	(0.420)
	-5.869***	**-5.359*****	**-4.395*****	**-4.66*****	**-7.342*****	**-7.264*****	**-6.172*****
Constant	**(0.719)**	**(0.829)**	**(1.190)**	**(1.175)**	**(0.834)**	**(0.876)**	**(0.974)**
EP Fixed Effects	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
Observations	3,393	3,393	3,393	3,393	3,393	3,393	3,393
Pseudo R^2	0.247	0.424	0.436	0.461	0.199	0.276	0.283

Note: EP1 is the baseline. The appendix contains a full description of the variables and descriptive statistics for all variables. The number of observations is smaller for between-switchers as the samples in models 4,5, and 6 are restricted just to those MEPs who were present in both EP(t) and EP(t-1). Standard errors clustered by national party in parentheses.
* p<0.05, ** p<0.01, ***p<0.001

Figure 3.6 Comparing the Effects of NPD Seat Share on Between-Session Switching for Delegations in Non-Collapsing Groups



Model 10 shows that the relationship between NPD seat share and switching is significantly different from zero for values less than 0.40, but the curve is relatively flat with large confidence intervals. Alternatively, the predicted probability curve for Model 11 is negatively sloped, indicating that, after controlling for the failure to reconvene, larger delegations have lower odds of re-affiliating between sessions. The confidence intervals exhibit pronounced overlap, so the substantive difference is limited; however, these statistical results accord with the previously hypothesized theoretical relationship between size and switching. In short, based on the results from Models 4 and 11, it seems that large delegations do not switch more frequently than smaller delegations, once we account for group collapse.

The policy distance variables follow the patterns observed in Models 3 and 4—as delegations become ideologically incongruent with their party groups, their odds of re-affiliating increase

significantly. The effect of European policy incongruence on between-session, collective switches, however, is statistically insignificant. Unlike within-session switches, the lagged switch and MEP tenure control variables are both highly significant and positively related to between-session switches. Further, the evidence shows that incumbent women are less likely than men to change groups after an election.

For between-session, individual switches, the FTR variable is positive and statistically significant. Both seat share variables are negative and highly significant, as expected. The results of Model 14 show that the distance between a member and her group on the European dimension is statistically significant and increases the odds of switching. For MEPs, the most important dimension for determining incongruence with the group is Europe, but for NPDs, the primary point of contention is ideology. Interestingly, older members with more tenure are more likely to switch, on average, but the substantive effect is relatively minor. Across these last seven models, none of the national delegation controls are meaningfully related to party group re-affiliation, which is consistent with prior analyses (Hix and Noury, 2018).

Discussion and Conclusion

Several assumptions prevalent in the literature complicate the study of party group switching in the EP. First, the multi-level nature of the EP makes disentangling motivations a difficult task. Second, the research often presumes that policy-, office-, and vote-seeking behavior stimulates parliamentary decision-making, and this leads the literature to undervalue the system-level causes of individual actions. Finally, the scholarship distinguishes between major and minor, as well as core and periphery groups, but it has not expanded on how these differences impact parliamentary behavior. Especially in the study of party group switching, this conventional wisdom can cause observers to overlook certain phenomena, such as party group collapse.

In this paper, I make two major contributions to this emerging field of study. First, I consider how weak institutionalization among EPGs impacts party group switching by identifying three different forms of group collapse. Second, I construct individual and delegation policy distance variables from DW-Nominate estimates for the first 30 years of the EP. Because they address member-, delegation-, and group-level causes of switching, these additions assist the field in

better understanding what factors increase or decrease the odds of collective and individual re-affiliation.

The findings presented here align with much of what is found in the existing literature, but they also push the analysis of parliamentary behavior in the EP forward in several ways. By introducing the concept of weak institutionalization, this study includes a highly relevant variable that has been omitted from all previous analyses of party group switching. The results show that group collapse needs to be accounted for when explaining why collective switches occur; indeed, it seems that the primary reason large delegations change groups is because they are over-represented in weakly institutionalized political groups. This is most obviously the case for within-session switches where some of the largest delegations merged or dissolved during the EP term. In the case of groups failing to reconvene following an election, however, the results show that, after accounting for group collapse, group size has no relationship to between-session, delegation switches. Collective switches, therefore, are strongly associated with the collapse of weakly institutionalized groups.

Policy-seeking behavior plays an important role in the story, as well. This analysis utilizes individual-level measures of policy distance in a multi-session analysis of party group switching for the first time, and the results are promising. The models reveal a clear distinction between delegation- and member-level behavior. In general, the results show that, after controlling for weak institutionalization, ideological incongruence drives collective switches made by delegations while conflict over European integration is most likely to divide individual members from their group.

Scholars interested in studying party group switching in the EP will find various research agendas open to them. For example, we do not yet know what happens to members after they switch. Do they receive offices as rewards for re-affiliating, as Yoshinaka (2015) finds in the US Congress? Or do they change their voting behavior as Nokken and Poole (2004) observe also in the American case? Finally, it remains to be seen what other parliamentary behaviors are conditioned by the weak institutionalization of party groups. If members from these groups switch more, perhaps they also abstain more, make more speeches, or spend more time at home with their

constituencies? Using the analysis presented here as a foundation, future scholarship should find many new research questions worth pursuing.

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Appendix B

Table B1. Summary Statistics

Variable	Obs	Mean	Std. Dev.	Min	Max
Between Session, Group Switch	3,977	0.034	0.182	0.000	1.000
Within-Session, Group Switch	3,977	0.065	0.247	0.000	1.000
Between-Session, Individual Switch	3,977	0.019	0.138	0.000	1.000
Within-Session, Individual Switch	3,977	0.028	0.165	0.000	1.000
All Between-Session Switches	3,977	0.054	0.225	0.000	1.000
All Within-Session Switches	3,977	0.094	0.291	0.000	1.000
MEP to EPG Ideo. Distance with BWS distances lagged (mean centered)	3,977	-0.452	0.183	-0.566	1.310
MEP to EPG Euro. Distance with BWS distances lagged (mean centered)	3,977	-0.483	0.117	-0.566	0.340
NPD to EPG Ideo. Distance with BWS distances lagged (mean centered)	3,977	-0.480	0.164	-0.566	1.310
NPD to EPG Euro. Distance with BWS distances lagged (mean centered)	3,977	-0.506	0.096	-0.566	0.314
MEP to EPG Ideo. Distance (mean centered)	3,977	0.032	0.189	-0.082	1.794
MEP to EPG Euro. Distance (mean centered)	3,977	0.000	0.116	-0.082	0.824
NPD to EPG Ideo. Distance (mean centered)	3,977	0.028	0.172	-0.059	1.817
NPD to EPG Euro. Distance (mean centered)	3,977	0.000	0.094	-0.059	0.847
Merger Indicator	3,977	0.025	0.157	0.000	1.000
Dissolve Indicator	3,977	0.024	0.153	0.000	1.000
Fail to Reconvene Indicator	3,977	0.025	0.157	0.000	1.000
Percent EPG in EP (mean centered)	3,977	0.000	0.125	-0.211	0.164
Percent NPD in EPG (mean centered)	3,850	0.000	0.163	-0.148	0.763
Lagged Switch	3,977	0.050	0.218	0.000	1.000
MEP Tenure	3,977	1.554	0.863	1.000	6.000
Female	3,977	0.244	0.429	0.000	1.000
Age	3,972	50.670	9.886	21.489	85.112
NPD in Gov't	3,977	0.680	0.467	0.000	1.000
NPD has a Commissioner	3,961	0.418	0.488	0.000	1.000

Paper Four

Ambitious Moderates and Unreliable Outliers: Evaluating the Effect of Policy Incongruence on Party Group Switching

Abstract

The literature on party group switching in the European Parliament determines that outliers have the highest odds of re-affiliating; however, changing party group labels implies that such a transition benefits both the parliamentarian as well as the receiving group. In order to better clarify the relationship between policy distance and party group switching, this paper identifies three types of switches, including cascades resulting from group collapse, multi-switchers who re-affiliate more than once per term, and ambitious switchers, members who are not involved in a cascade and only changed group labels once in a session. Using member-to-group policy distance variables constructed from DW-Nominate scores (1979-2009) and multi-level, random intercept, logistic regression models, this paper tests several outlier hypotheses in order to determine whether groups view the most extreme members as reliable partners. After excluding cascades and multi-switchers from the dependent variable, the results show that outliers, relative to the entire parliamentary policy space or to their group, have reduced odds of successfully re-affiliating; however, delegates who are only moderately distant from their group on a single dimension, have the highest odds of switching. These results highlight the effect of system level instability on shaping individual parliamentary behavior and therefore have wide-ranging theoretical and empirical implications for future research.

Introduction

To understand why parliamentarians re-affiliate from one party to another, it is necessary to consider both the switcher's personal motivations as well as the interests of the receiving party. According to Laver and Benoit (2003), successfully changing party labels entails a two-step process: the potential switcher must find an *attractive* target party and then that party must prove *willing* to accept the new member. In certain cases, potential switchers will be rejected by parties unwilling to accept them, or unattractive parties will fail to recruit members between elections. A successful switch, therefore, implies that delegate and party find the new relationship mutually agreeable.

In the European Parliament (EP), research identifies significant differences in EPG's ability to vote cohesively (Klüver and Spoon 2015), variation in their levels of internal organization (Bressanelli 2014), and asymmetry in their abilities to influence policy (Bressanelli et al. 2016), characteristics which may make these groups either more or less attractive to potential switchers. Further, the literature identifies several personal incentives related to switching European Parliamentary Group's (EPG) (Evans and Vink 2012; McElroy and Benoit 2009; McElroy 2008), and determines that members of the European Parliament (MEPs) "who are ideological outliers tend to switch to groups whose policy positions are more congruent with their views" (Hix and Noury 2018, 571). These two literatures combine to present an interesting puzzle: Why would a targeted group be *willing* to accept an MEP who is observably out of sync with her home EPG? In other words, are *policy outliers* really viewed as reliable partners by the target groups they find *attractive*?

This paper clarifies the relationship between policy outlying and party group switching in the EP by utilizing a variety of policy distance variables constructed from DW-Nominate scores for the first six session of the EP (1979-2009). To analyze outliers, however, it is necessary to select the appropriate cases. The literature identifies several types of switches, including individual, collective, between-session, and within-session (Evans and Vink 2012; Hix and Noury 2018). In this study, I consider three more. *Cascade* switches occur after a party group collapses, and *multi-switchers* are MEPs who change labels more than once during a term; indeed, the analysis will show that these two types are highly correlated—once a group collapses, expelled members often transition into and out of several groups before finding a stable home. *Ambitious* switchers are MEPs who switch only once in a term and whose re-affiliation has nothing to do with a group's collapse. These are archetypal, rationally-motivated MEPs who change groups to enhance their political careers.

To understand the relationship between policy outlying and party group switching, we first restrict cascades and multi-switchers from the dependent variable before analyzing the individual correlates of ambitious switchers. This case selection enables us to theoretically discount rational, policy-seeking as a causal explanation for members caught in a group collapsed; furthermore, irrespective of their core or outlier status, every member of a disintegrating group re-affiliates, so including them only serves to obscure the true effect of policy distance on switching.

Consequently, ruling out cascades and multi-switchers makes it possible to properly estimate the impact of policy outlying on ambitious switching.

We operationalize outlying in three ways. First, an intensity variable measures an MEP's outlier status relative to the entire EP policy space; second, MEP to EPG distances on both the ideological and European dimensions, as well as their quadratic transformations, assess whether or not the most extreme EPG-outliers are more likely to re-affiliate; finally, an interaction term between both MEP-to-EPG distances tests whether the most extreme group members, that is, members who are outliers on both dimensions, have increased or decreased odds of switching. These three variables make it is possible to determine whether, and which type of, outliers succeed in switching EPGs.

The results show that, on average, political groups view the most extreme MEPs, either in the parliamentary chamber or relative to their EPGs, as unreliable partners. In short, extreme iconoclasts are less likely to switch groups than moderate outliers. This does not disprove previous findings, which report a positive relationship between policy distance and switching (Hix and Noury 2018); rather, these results provide a more nuanced interpretation that aligns closely with the logic outlined by Laver and Benoit (2003): To be viewed as a reliable group member, "ambitious" switchers must cooperate with their home group and toe the party line on at least one dimension. Conversely, attractive groups rarely reward incongruent outliers and generally prove unwilling to add the most extreme MEPs to their ranks.

I first discuss the two theoretical approaches used to examine party switching. In the next two sections, I discuss group collapse and policy incongruence as potential causes of party group re-affiliation. After presenting my variables and methodology in the fourth section, section five describes cascades and section six presents the random-intercept logistic regression model for ambitious switchers. The findings will then be reviewed in the Discussion and Conclusion section.

Two Schools

In reviewing the party switching literature, Mershon (2014) identifies two dominant approaches. The first, grounded in rational choice institutionalism, assumes that ambitious politicians switch parties in pursuit of votes, offices, or policy. The second focuses on historical institutionalism and examines how party, and party system, consolidation impacts the frequency of switches. The rational choice institutionalist studies use individual-level variables, such as a parliamentarian's seniority, career achievements, or membership in a ruling coalition, to discern which characteristics intensify or dampen the odds of switching (Yoshinaka 2016, McElroy 2008, Desposato 2006). When authors introduce the system-level into these models, they often focus on electoral and governmental institutions as well as candidate selection rules (O'Brien and Shomer 2013, Mershon and Shvetsova 2013a). One enlightening example from this school employs cost-benefit analysis and argues that politicians calculate the distance between their party's and the electorate's ideal points when determining whether or not to switch. Appearing unreliable to the electorate increases the price of switching, and thus, fear of losing re-election limits the advantages of re-affiliation (Mershon and Shvetsova 2013b, 877).

Regarding the historical institutionalist approach, Mershon (2014) notes that high rates of switching are often associated with weakly institutionalized parties, party systems, or legislatures. In emerging democracies, we find a robust relationship between weak institutionalization and member volatility (Mainwaring and Scully 1995; Thames 2007; McMenamin and Gwiazda 2011). Further, party systems with immature political parties and low voter identification produce high rates of re-affiliation (Zielinski et al. 2005; Shabad and Slomczynski 2004; and Kreuzer and Pettai 2003); however, because these systems are still open and unpredictable (Mair 1997: 192), it is difficult for potential switchers to calculate the possible gains to be won, or lost, from re-affiliation. In these cases, system-level institutionalization conditions individual rational behavior. Applying Mershon and Shvetsova's (2013b) cost-benefit model to weakly institutionalized party systems, where neither parties' nor voters' positions have consolidated, would likely prove ineffective. Researchers, therefore, should take care not to ignore the possible influence of the system-level when analyzing individual party switches.

Different types of switches accord with these two schools of thought. On one hand, cascades and multi-switchers follow after the collapse of highly volatile, weakly institutionalized groups. On

the other hand, ambitious switchers are those driven by policy-seeking behavior. Therefore, to determine whether or not policy outliers are more likely to re-affiliate, it is essential to control for weak institutionalization at the system level before focusing on individual, ambitious switchers.

Group Collapse and Cascade Switches

Unlike in the national context where low voter identification and unstable partisan positions animate switching, in the EP, group collapse functions as the causal mechanism linking weak institutionalization to cascades of party group switchers. Here, I use cascade in a non-traditional manner. Heller and Mershon (2009) approach switching from the rational choice institutionalist perspective and describe a cascade switch as an on-going process whereby, "the individual decisions of party leaders and party switchers can affect parties' legislative weights, attractiveness to voters, and policy preferences. To the extent that they do so, they have system-level consequences that can in turn trigger further, potentially system-altering decisions by other individual legislative actors" (290). In this hypothetical scenario, a cascade occurs after a single elite member decides to re-affiliate, and then other members follow suit.

In the EP a cascade occurs after a party group collapses, either because it merges with another group, it dissolves mid-session, or it cannot reform following an election. Members and delegations caught in a collapse have little control over their decision to re-affiliate, and because the dissolution impacts all delegates, these events produce observable cascades of switches. Whereas previous studies define "collective switches" as two or more members from the same national party delegation (NPD) changing group labels, cascades originate at the EPG level, and therefore also include single-member delegations, previously coded as individual switchers, caught in a group collapse.

The collapse of weakly institutionalized groups initiates cascades. Once a group collapses, even its most central members are forced to switch groups; therefore, including cascade switches in a study of individual switching only blurs the estimated effect of policy outlying. Consequently, to determine the influence of outlying on re-affiliation, we must analyze ambitious switchers, who adhere to the well-established logic of policy-seeking, separately from cascade switches. Table 4.1 lists the occurrences of group collapse in the first six EP terms.

EP	Full Name	EPG	Collapse	Total MEPs
2	Group for the Technical Coordination and Defense of Independent Groups and Members	CDI	FTR	7
2	Group of European Progressive Democrats	DEP	FTR	10
2	Group for Technical Coordination and Defence of Independent Groupings and Members	TCDI	Dissolve	10
3	Communist and Allies Group	COM	FTR	17
3	Group for the European United Left	GUE	Dissolve	30
3	European Democrats	ED	Merger	45
4	Left Unity	CG	FTR	16
4	Technical Group of the European Right	DR	FTR	9
4	Rainbow Group	RBW	FTR	7
4	Europe of Nations Group-Coordination Group	EDN	Dissolve	19
4	Forza Europa	FE	Merger	28
4	Group of the European Democratic Alliance	RDE	Merger	28
5	Group of the European Radical Alliance	ARE	FTR	9
5	Group of Independents for a Europe of Nations	I-EDN	FTR	9
5	Union for Europe	UPE	FTR	9
5	Technical Group of Independent Members- Mixed Group	TDI	Dissolve	20
6	Europe of Democracies and Diversities	EDD	FTR	8
6	Identity, Tradition, and Sovereignty Group	ITS	Dissolve	18

Table 4.1 Group Collapse and Cascade Switches
Notes: FTR stands for "Fail to Reconvene" and describes what happens when a group can no longer form itself following an election.

Policy and Outliers

The EP's policy space consists of "a left-right dimensions composed of economic and sociopolitical issues…and an orthogonal dimension of EU integration versus national sovereignty" (McElroy and Benoit 2009, 160), and EPGs hold relatively stable policy positions from session to session (McElroy and Benoit 2007; 2012). Within this policy space, we assume that groups, delegations, or members who are closer to one another have more similar policy interests (Downs 1957). Scholars measure these distances to operationalize policy (in)congruence.

For example, Faas (2003) examines distances constructed using party-level data and determines that "national party delegations that have policy positions deviating from those of others in the same party group are more likely to defect from [vote against] party group lines" (2003, 859). Klüver and Spoon (2015) refine this analysis and conclude that policy distance's effect on voting against the group is conditioned by issue salience. Analyses also show that the "most central policy-leaders" are those most likely to be re-elected in the EP (Wilson et al. 2016). Therefore,

the literature confirms that when members' policy preferences align with the group, they are often rewarded, yet policy incongruence often leads to various forms of dissent.

Studies which use continuous policy distance variables to explain group switching in the EP reach conflicting conclusions. In a study of the Third European Parliament, ideological incongruence between MEP and EPG is not related to re-affiliation (McElroy 2008). Hix and Noury (2018) examine policy distance variables constructed using party-level data in pooled logistic regression models and conclude that ideological outliers, and MEPs at odds with their group over European issues, are most likely to switch groups. The current analysis re-tests this outlier hypothesis with individual-level policy distance variables.

To measure policy distance in this analysis, I use DW-Nominate scores estimated from all roll-call votes of MEPs from the first six EP sessions.[11] Each member is assigned a position within the two-dimensional policy space, and the proximity of members to their groups indicates congruent policy preferences. Conversely, when members are outliers in their own EPG, this reflects a propensity to vote against the group.

Although scholars have criticized ideal point estimates derived from roll-call votes (Hug 2010; Høyland 2010; Carrubba, et al. 2006), the field continues to rely on these estimations (Yordanova 2013; Yoshinaka et al. 2010; McElroy 2008; Rasmussen 2008; Hix et al. 2007). Given that the European electoral system inhibits vote-seeking and that the two largest groups dominate offices (McElroy and Benoit 2009), it is not surprising that policy concerns emerge as highly relevant to most MEPs. Policy distance estimates, therefore, represent the best way to examine these interests, and DW-Nominate scores offer an established method for measuring policy incongruence and outlier status among individual MEPs.

Unlike the Nominate scores used in most single-session EP studies, DW-Nominate ideal points are comparable across EP terms. For example, DW-Nominate estimations make it possible to assign policy distances from time *t-1* to explain a switch at time *t*, when *t* occurs at the start of a new session, as in the case of between-session switches. Lagging variables in this way has been

[11] DW-Nominate scores were produced for me by Keith Poole.

unavailable in previous analyses. I follow this procedure for all between-session switches, or those occurrences where an incumbent changes group labels at the beginning of a new session. This paper tests several hypotheses meant to examine various dimensions of policy incongruence and their effect on ambitious switching.

> *Hypothesis 1: Members who are outliers within the EP's policy space should exhibit a decrease in their odds of switching.*

Being an outlier relative to the entire chamber might indicate that the MEP has limited options when it comes to choosing an alternative group. For example, a member of the Leftist (GUE-NGL) group with DW-Nominate scores farther to the left and more anti-Europe than every other delegate in the parliament will find it very difficult to find an alternative group with whom to affiliate. To test an MEP's outlier position within the two-dimensional policy space, I construct an "intensity" variable, "determined by the extent to which the [MEP] is on one or the other side of the neutral point" (Rabinowitz and Macdonald 1989, 96-100). This variable is equivalent to the simple Euclidean distance between the MEP and the origin of the policy space.

> *Hypothesis 2: Members who are outliers within their EPG should have increased odds of switching.*

Hypothesis 2 directly tests the conclusion drawn by Hix and Noury (2018). Policy incongruence is measured with variables that take the absolute value of the distance between the MEP and the median position of the EPG on both dimensions. Further, I include the quadratic transformation of these distances to determine whether or not the relationship between policy incongruence and switching is linear. If the coefficient on the distance variable is positive while the quadratic term is negative, then the evidence will show that the most extreme outliers are less likely to switch. I standardize all policy distance variables, thus making the interpretation of coefficients, interaction terms, and predicted probabilities easier to interpret.

> *Hypotheses 3: The effect of a member's ideological policy incongruence with the EPG on switching is conditioned by incongruence on the European dimension.*

Hypothesis 3 tests A) whether or not incongruence on one dimension can independently produce a switch, and B) whether extremity on both dimensions increases or decreases the odds of switching. The interaction term represents a second method for testing the effect of a MEP's

outlier status on switching. If ideological outliers have reduced odds of re-affiliation as they become more distant from the group on the European dimension, then this implies that potential target groups view the most incongruent members as unreliable partners.

Methodology and Variables

This paper first examines the relationship between cascades and multi-switchers before transitioning to analyze the cause of ambitious switches. To understand cascades more clearly, I use a descriptive approach to make clear that these collapses have little to do with rational decisions made by individual legislators. To model the covariates which amplify or dampen the odds of switching, this analysis uses unbalanced, longitudinal data and hierarchical models which control for non-independence at the NPD level. Each observation is a "member-session;" therefore, MEPs can be in the data set up to six times. I fit a two-level, random-intercept logistic regression model where MEPs *i* are nested in NPD factions *j*:

$$\pi_{ij} \equiv \Pr(y_{ij}|x_{ij}, \zeta_j)$$

$$\log(\pi_{ij}) = \beta 1 + \text{POLICYDISTANCE}_i + \text{CONTROLS}_{ij} + \zeta_j$$

$$y_{ij} \mid \pi_{ij} \sim \text{Binomial}(1, \pi_{ij})$$

POLICYDISTANCE is a vector including raw distance variables on both dimensions, as well as their quadratic transformations and an interaction term. In the CONTROLS vector, I include six control variables that are widely found in the party group switching literature, including the age, gender, and experience of the MEP as well as the EPG and NPD seat shares, and an indicator for whether or not the MEP's national party was in a ruling coalition during the EP term. This model specification allows me to address non-independence among MEPs from the same delegation. All models are fitted using the same method. First, I estimate the coefficients for each model using logistic regression. Next, I used the results as starting values for the mixed-effects logistic regression, thus bypassing the initial phase of optimization.

This analysis estimates all policy distance variables by constructing DW-Nominate scores from the Hix, Noury, and Roland (2007) MEP, roll call voting, data set.[12] The scaling had a correct classification of 89.45 percent with an APRE of 0.5720 and a geometric mean probability of 0.77.

[12] Thank you to Keith Poole for constructing the DW-Nominate scores for this project.

These standardized "measures of fit" reflect the strength of these ideal point estimations. The national delegation in government variables comes from the Parlgov dataset (Döring and Manow 2016). The seat share variables as well as MEP tenure and age are derived from the Høyland, Sircar and Hix (2010) data from the Automated Database of the European Parliament. I use Daniel (2015) for the sex variable.

Cascades and Multi-Switchers

In the first six sessions, the EP saw 473 of the 3977 members (12 percent) switch groups a total of 615 times. Of the total switchers, 280 are coded as cascades, 166 are coded as ambitious switchers, 27 are coded as non-cascade, multi-switchers.

Cascades originate at the system-level and are separate in kind from individual, ambitious switches. I define the system in broad strokes as the formal and informal rules and patterns of behaviors that constrain European elections and group formation inside the EP. This system consists of both exogenous and endogenous components which influence the creation and durability of EPGs. For example, the second order nature of EP elections ensures that smaller parties with less governing experience receive increased representation in the EP than they do in their national arenas (Reif and Schmitt 1980). Likewise, the EP has revised its Rules of Procedure several times in order to make it difficult for right-wing and technical groups to form after elections (Settembri 2004, 154). These rules are beyond the control of individual MEPs, yet they contribute to the weak institutionalization of groups (Bardi 2002), and weak institutionalization is likewise related to defections within the EP (Raunio 2000).

Table 4.2 offers a description of multi-switchers, i.e. switch frequency per MEP and per MEP-session. Five members switched groups six times during their careers, and six MEPs switched five times. Observers may look at these names, including Emma Bonino, Bruno Golnisch, and Jean-Marie Le Pen, and assume that high frequency switching is related to personal eccentricity. However, upon closer inspection, we see that almost all of these switches resulted from cascades.

Switch Count Total	Freq.	Percent	Switch Count Per Session	Freq.	Percent
0	2,096	83.84	0	3,504	88.11
1	267	10.68	1	350	8.8
2	102	4.08	2	107	2.69
3	12	0.48	3	13	0.33
4	12	0.48	4	3	0.08
5	6	0.24			
6	5	0.2			
Total MEPs	2,500	100	Total MEP-Sessions	3,977	100

Table 4.2 Switch Counts, Total and Per Session

Very clear patterns of re-affiliation emerge. For example, Jean-Marie Le Pen, Bruno Golnisch and Jean-Claude Martinez followed the same series of switches after the European Right (DE) failed to reconvene in the Fourth EP session: first they sat with the Non-Inscrits (NI) for EP4, then in EP5 they switched to the TDI, which dissolved mid-session, at which point they rejoined the NI. In the following term, they repeated the same process with the ITS group, which also dissolved. These three men account for 15 switches, 9 of which were due to cascades and 6 of which were entering and exiting the Non-Inscrits.

Similarly, take Jens-Peter Bonde as a particular instance of a broader series of switches followed by members such as Leen van der Waal, Charles de Gaulle, and Johannes Blokland, Philippe de Villiers, Georges Berthu, Dominique Souchet, and Mario Borghezio. Bonde first affiliated with the CDI in EP1 (FTR), then the Rainbow Group (RBW) in EP2 and EP3 (FTR), after which he joined the EDN (dissolved). Almost all members of the EDN coordinating group transitioned to the NI before re-forming as the I-EDN in EP4, although it failed to reconvene in EP5. After this collapse, Bonde joined the EDD, but the results from the 2004 election made it impossible to reform under the same name, so the rump members formed the Independence/Democracy Group (InDem) group. Therefore, five of Bonde's six switches were related to cascades.

This discussion illustrates how membership in one weakly institutionalized group can lead to affiliation in another unstable group. Given these patterns, cascading takes on a second meaning. Not only does it describe how all members of a group involuntarily switch groups after a collapse, but it also implies that multi-switchers are linked together in a chain reaction of group formation and dissolution. As noted by Settembri (2004), these constant efforts to establish, or re-

establish, a group, has much more to do with acquiring access to EP budgetary funds than it does with policy-seeking behavior.

Viewing multi-switching through the lens of group disintegration provides a valuable perspective. Switchers who re-affiliate multiple times during their career are not necessarily idiosyncratic personalities or agents of disorder. Rather, they are trapped in the churn of cascading party group collapse. Indeed, examining the relationship between members who switched at least twice in a session and group collapse shows that the odds of being a multi-switcher for members of weakly institutionalized EPGs are 29 times higher that of MEPs from stable groups.[13]

Over half of all switches result from the collapse of party groups. A statistical analysis provides evidence that multi-switchers and group collapse are strongly correlated. After detailing the journeys taken by several multi-switchers, we see that these MEPs shuffle between weakly institutionalized groups, frequently transitioning in and out of the NI while waiting to reform a new group. These transitions are not motivated by policy-seeking behavior, so after identifying and describing these cascade switches, we restrict them from the dependent variable in the analysis of ambitious switching.

Ambitious Switchers

In total, 166 out of a total 473 switchers are coded as ambitious. Models 1-4 test the policy outlier hypotheses, and in these models, I fit a two-level hierarchical model with random intercepts where MEPs are nested in NPDs. As a robustness check, and as a means for examining the effect of case selection on interpreting the results, Model 5 reproduces Model 4 using a model with three levels (MEPs, NPDs, and EPGS) and a dependent variable including all switchers. Table 4.3 presents the log odds for the fixed part of the logistic regression, and the random part is found in Table 4.4.

[13] The full results table and an explanation is presented in the Appendix.

Table 4.3 The Effect of Policy Outlying on Ambitious Switching

	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5
			Log Odds		
		Ambitious Switches			All Switches
Intensity		**-0.340***			
		(0.138)			
MEP to EPG Ideology Distance (D1)			**0.959*****	**1.279*****	**1.153*****
			(0.205)	**(0.231)**	**(0.203)**
MEP to EPG European Distance (D2)			**0.818*****	**1.017*****	**1.200*****
			(0.220)	**(0.232)**	**(0.211)**
$D1^2$			**-0.115****	**-0.151*****	**-0.169*****
			(0.035)	**(0.037)**	**(0.035)**
$D2^2$			**-0.125***	**-0.130***	**-0.162****
			(0.055)	**(0.056)**	**(0.051)**
D1*D2				**-0.401*****	**-0.491*****
				(0.118)	**(0.105)**
NPD Seat Share	**-2.832***	-2.589	-2.473	-2.358	-1.789
	(1.425)	(1.426)	(1.487)	(1.576)	(1.600)
EPG Seat Share	**-7.658*****	**-8.624*****	**-6.141*****	**-5.849*****	-9.327
	(1.479)	**(1.548)**	**(1.564)**	**(1.643)**	(4.765)
NPD in Government	0.146	-0.127	0.356	0.401	0.125
	(0.363)	(0.380)	(0.384)	(0.407)	(0.404)
MEP Tenure	0.207	0.213	0.242	0.200	**1.011*****
	(0.136)	(0.137)	(0.143)	(0.148)	**(0.132)**
Age	0.005	0.005	0.006	0.007	-0.0003
	(0.012)	(0.012)	(0.012)	(0.013)	(0.011)
Female	**-0.815****	**-0.801****	**-0.647***	**-0.712***	-0.399
	(0.303)	**(0.303)**	**(0.321)**	**(0.333)**	(0.260)
Constant	**-5.272*****	**-5.112*****	**-5.584*****	**-5.765*****	**-3.311*****
	(0.489)	**(0.483)**	**(0.526)**	**(0.561)**	**(0.982)**
Observations	3,811	3,811	3,811	3,811	3,811
Number of groups	20	20	20	20	20
Number of delegations	732	732	732	732	732
Log-Likelihood	-488.75	-485.52	-454.026	-447.371	-656.8
d.f.	8	9	12	13	14
AIC	993.49	989.05	932.05	920.74	1341.61
BIC	1043.46	1045.26	1006.99	1001.94	1429.05

Notes: Two- and three-level, random-intercept logistic regression model. Standard Errors in parentheses. Dependent Variable takes the value 1 for all successful switchers. Differences between ambitious switchers and all switchers (Models 4 and 5) are highlighted in grey.
*** p<0.001, ** p<0.01, * p<0.05

Table 4.4 The Random Part.

	EPG SD	EPG ρ	NPD SD	NPD ρ
Null, All Switchers (3 Level)	2.932 (0.645)	0.445 (0.106)	2.722 (0.282)	0.830 (0.039)
Null, Ambitious Switchers (3 Level)	0.991 (0.316)	0.100 (0.061)	2.335 (0.344)	0.662 (0.059)
Null Ambitious (2 Level)			2.895 (0.332)	0.718 (0.046)
Model 1			2.353 (0.328)	0.627 (0.065)
Model 2			2.358 (0.325)	0.628 (0.064)
Model 3			2.407 (0.343)	0.638 (0.066)
Model 4			2.580 (0.355)	0.669 (0.061)
Model 5, All Switchers (3 Level)	2.717 (0.686)	0.397 (0.120)	2.812 (0.299)	0.823 (0.041)

Note: Intraclass correlation represented by ρ.

I first run three null models including only the dependent variable and nesting structures. These models justify using a hierarchical model by illustrating how much unexplained variance exists at the different levels, here NPDs and EPGs. In Table 3, the first row models all switchers within a three-level structure, and we observe quite a high level of variance at the EPG ($\rho = 0.445$) as well as the NPD level ($\rho = 0.830$). Based on this information, we could proceed with a three-level model for examining all switches. In the second row of Table 3, we find that changing the dependent variable to only include ambitious switches, excluding cascades and multi-switchers, results in a substantial reduction in unexplained variance at the EPG level ($\rho = 0.10$). This leads me to two conclusions. First, group collapse accounts for a large proportion of unexplained EPG-level variation when analyzing all switchers; and second, it is unnecessary to include the EPG-level in the models focused on ambitious switchers. Indeed, as soon as the group seat share variable is included in Models 1-4, the EPG random intercept parameter drops nearly to zero. In the interest of parsimony, therefore, Models 1-4 are run using only two levels—the MEP and the NPD.

Model 1 presents only control variables for NPD seat share, EPG seat share, MEP tenure, age and sex. Both of the seat share variables accord with previous findings—being affiliated with a large delegation or party group reduces the odds of an ambitious switch (McElroy 2008; Hix and Noury 2018). Neither age, tenure, nor participation in national government have an effect on

switching, but holding all variables constant, women legislators have lower odds of switching than men.

Model 2 includes the intensity variable which tests whether or not parliamentary outliers have reduced odds of switching groups. As hypothesized, as an MEP's Euclidean distance from the origin of the policy space increases, the odds of finding an alternative group decrease. While the NPD seat share loses significance, both the EPG seat share and Female indicator remain stable and significant. We may conclude, therefore, that after holding all other covariates constant, outlying members within the EP policy space have reduced odds of switching groups.

Model 3 introduces four variables. Two measure the MEP's distance from the group median on the left-right ideological dimension and the pro-/anti-European dimension, and two represent the quadratic transformations of these distances. As hypothesized, the distance variables are highly significant and take positive coefficients, indicating that as a member becomes more incongruent with their EPG, the odds of switching increase. Furthermore, both quadratic terms are also significant and take negative terms, suggesting that this relationship is non-linear. In other words, policy incongruence is strongly associated with switching, but only up to a point. As a member displays a marked propensity to vote against their group, and thus becomes observably out of step with their home EPG, the odds of switching begin to fall. Therefore, members who are moderately incongruent with their group have higher odds of switching than the most extreme EPG outliers. The EPG seat share and Female indicator remain significant, although adding the distance variables decrease their substantive effect.

Model 4 includes the full interaction term between the two distance variables, as well as the quadratic terms. As in Model 3, the distance variables take positive coefficients and the quadratic terms take negative coefficients; additionally, the interaction term also takes a negative sign. We find a very strong relationship between all five terms and ambitious switching, and it would be highly unlikely to observe these outcomes by simple chance.

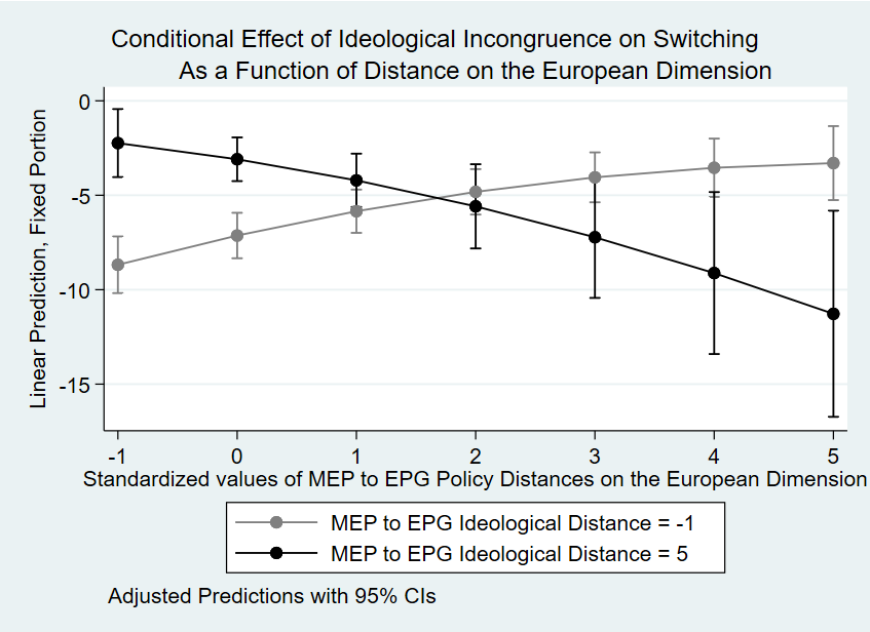

Figure 4.1 Predicted Probabilities for the Conditional Relationship Between Policy Distance on the Ideological and European Dimensions

The negative sign on the interaction term means that as ideological group outliers become more out of sync with the EPG on European issues, their odds of switching decrease significantly. Figure 4.1 visualizes the predicted probabilities derived from the interaction term. The curves illustrate three interesting stories about switching. First, the most core EPG members, those with distance values one standard deviation below the mean on both dimensions, have very low odds of switching. Second, those odds increase significantly as a member becomes more distant from the group on either dimension. Ideologically core members switch more often if they disagree with the group's position on Europe, and members who are central on the European dimension will re-affiliate if they become ideologically incongruent with the EPG. Finally, the MEPs with the lowest odds of switching are those who are group outliers on both dimensions. This is the clearest evidence yet that outliers within political groups are less likely to re-affiliate. Unlike the core members who have low odds of switching because they have no interest in re-affiliating, those outlying members, distant from their group on both dimensions, have the lowest predicted odds of switching groups because attractive groups view them as unsuitable partners.

To summarize the findings of Models 1-4, we have several pieces of evidence that support the idea that ambitious moderates are more likely to switch groups than unreliable outliers. First, the

most extreme MEPs in the chamber, those on the very edges of the policy space, exhibit reduced odds of switching, likely because they have a difficult time finding an attractive target group that suits their preferences better than their home group. Second, policy incongruence is statistically related to switching, but the relationship is quadratic, not linear, indicating that the most incongruent MEPs have lower odds of switching than moderate outliers. I interpret this to mean that MEPs who vote against their group on specific issues, and thus exhibit a reasonable level of dissatisfaction with their EPG's position on certain topics, will be viewed as more reliable than those members who vote against the group on multiple policy dimensions. This explanation is supported by the results of Model 4, where the interaction term illustrates that members who are incongruent with the group on either ideological grounds or European policy, have higher odds of switching, but those MEPs who disagree with the group on both dimensions find it difficult to switch.

I present Model 5 as a robustness check to determine the value-added gained from restricting the dependent variable to only ambitious switchers. In the case of the distance variables, all coefficients take the same sign and level of significance. Although the differences are relatively small, four of the five coefficients are larger in Model 5 than in Model 4. The opposite is true for the control variables where the coefficients are generally smaller in Model 5 than Model 4. The most pronounced change is observable in the EPG set share variable, where both the coefficient and the standard errors become significantly larger. If the analysis focused on all switches, and not just ambitious switchers, we would miss the significant impact of EPG seat share and sex on switching while suffering from a type 1 error in regards to MEP tenure. After selecting out cases of group collapse, the age of MEPs has no relationship to ambitious switching. The measures of fit found in Table 3 indicate that restricting the outcome variable offers measurable advantages to the analysis of party group switching. Finally, since the distance variables in Model 5 corroborate the results from Model 4, this provides further support for our conclusions regarding unreliable outliers and ambitious moderates.

Discussion and Conclusion

According to Laver and Benoit (2003), members interested in re-affiliating groups must first find an attractive target party, and then that party must be willing to accept them as a new member, before a switch is successful. Research into party group switching in the EP determines that

ideological EPG outliers are the most likely to defect. This paper asks whether these two conclusions do not contradict one another and enquires about the circumstances under which an EPG would be willing to accept an MEP who regularly votes against his home group. Do attractive groups really view policy outliers as reliable partners?

To answer this question, I divide switching into three categories, including cascade switches, multi-switchers and ambitious switchers. Group collapse among weakly institutionalized EPGs, in the form of dissolution, merger, or the failure to reconvene, triggers cascade switches. Although it is common to assign strategic motivations to switchers, MEPs who re-affiliate after their group collapses may be theoretically excluded from these types of "seeking" behaviors. Likewise, there is very strong and statistically significant relationship between members who switch multiple times and cascade switches. Therefore, in order to analyze the effect of policy incongruence on party group switching, it is necessary to focus on ambitious switchers, or those MEPs who only switched once and were not involved in a cascade switch. By limiting the dependent variable in this way, we can more accurately estimate the effect of policy distance on increasing or decreasing the odds of switching.

The analysis tests several outlier hypotheses using various policy distance variables constructed from DW-Nominate scores for members of the first six EP sessions. First, members whose voting behavior places them on the fringes of the EP policy space have reduced odds of switching groups. Second, the most outlying members of EPGs are less likely to re-affiliate than more moderate, though still incongruent, MEPs. Third, being incongruent on either the ideological or the European dimension significantly increases the odds of switching, but being distant from the group's median on both dimensions make the MEP appear unreliable to potential target groups, therefore reducing the odds of switching.

These results indicate that ambitious switchers must be moderate if they hope to find a new group with whom to associate. This finding is an original contribution made by this paper, and in terms of political expediency it aligns with the logic laid out by Laver and Benoit (2003): the motivation to switch must be matched by the incentive to receive. Host groups do not necessarily have to accept every request for membership, and if the leadership views the potential switcher as too far beyond the pale in terms of voting behavior or ideological extremity, then they can simply deny the application. Although it would take interviews with MEPs to determine whether or not

they recognize members in other groups as outliers to confirm this interpretation, the results of the model point in this direction.

In summary, this paper provides some new insights into the relationship between policy incongruence and party group switching. Additionally, it offers an explanation for the relationship between group collapse and multi-switchers. Going forward, future research into party group switching may be interested in creating multiple DW-Nominate scores for MEPs, both before and after a switch. This would make it possible to determine if members change their voting behavior after they re-affiliate. It is unclear whether or not all groups hold new MEPs to the same standards as incumbent members. Therefore, it may be possible to use switchers as a test case to evaluate what effect group membership has on voting behavior. Finally, just as this study analyzed policy-seeking, it might be interesting to determine what effect office-holding and office-seeking have on discouraging or encouraging member re-affiliation.

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Appendix C

Table C1. Mixed-Effects Logistic Regression. MEPs nested in NPDs, and NPDs nested in EPGs. DV equals 1 if a member switched more than once in a session.

Outcome: Multi-Switcher (1,0)	Model 1	Model 2
Fail To Reconvene		**10.93*** (2.542)**
Merger		**3.025*** (0.877)**
Dissolve		**4.252* (1.801)**
Group Collapse	**3.381* (1.449)**	
NPD Seat Share	-4.535 (2.899)	-4.409 (2.607)
EPG Seat Share	-8.042 (8.038)	-6.796 (6.300)
NPD in Government	0.133 (0.790)	0.538 (0.745)
MEP Tenure	**1.448*** (0.361)**	**0.886** (0.311)**
Age	-0.002 (0.021)	-0.006 (0.024)
Female	-0.092 (0.515)	-0.321 (0.574)
Constant	**-11.71*** (2.486)**	**-10.02*** (2.000)**
Observations	3,842	3,842
Number of groups	20	20
Number of delegations	732	732
Log-Likelihood	-223.30	-169.51
d.f.	10	12
AIC	466.60	363.02
BIC	529.14	438.06

***** p<0.001, ** p<0.01, * p<0.05**

Table C2. The Random Part

	EPG SD	**EPG ρ**	**NPD SD**	**NPD ρ**
Model 1	2.370 (0.830)	0.221 (0.116)	4.064 (0.998)	0.871 (0.052)
Model 2	1.763 (0.734)	0.187 (0.115)	3.203 (0.903)	0.803 (0.86)

Party Group Re-affiliation in the European Parliament: Analysing the Individual- and System-Level Determinants of Switching

Inaugural-Dissertation

zur Erlangung des Doktorgrades

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Abstract

Party switching in national parliaments has become an established field of political science research entailing studies of single legislatures as well as cross-national analyses. In the case of the European Parliament (EP), approximately ten percent of all members (MEPs) change their party group label each session. When compared to national parliaments, only Brazil and Italy surpass this level of member volatility. The literature analyzing this phenomenon includes descriptive accounts and qualitative case studies, as well as single- and multi-session examinations. While this research produces valuable insights, the results have not yet provided scholars with a clear explanation for why so many MEPs change group labels.

This cumulative dissertation analyzes and explains the causes of party group switching in the EP. In order to fully understand why MEPs re-affiliate so frequently, I examine not only the individual correlates of switching, but I also re-evaluate the EP's system of party groups. In order to characterize the incentive structure MEPs face when choosing whether or not to switch groups, the first two papers examine the components of the EP party group system, including its format and mechanics. The second two papers then apply what is learned about the EP's unevenly institutionalized party group system to the analysis of party group switching. These four papers conclude that the EP depends on the fully institutionalized core of EPGs to carry out its legislative responsibilities; however, the instability endemic to the weakly institutionalized periphery remains a serious impediment to the Parliament's efficacy as a representative assembly.

Party group switching in the EP is defined as the process by which a parliamentarian, or a national party delegation (NPD), leaves a home group to re-affiliate with a new, target group. Theories of party switching fall into two broad categories. The first pertains to the individual determinants of switching whereby politicians actively attempt to change their situation in order to satisfy political goals. Scholars in this school generally rely on Müller and Strøm's (1999) theoretical tool kit to explain re-affiliation; that is, we assume that politicians who change their party label mid-career do so in an attempt to increase their odds of (re)election, to angle for key leadership positions, or to place themselves in a better position to influence policy. The second theory of switching addresses system-level conditions which make re-affiliation less costly to politicians because party labels and voter identification remain unconsolidated. The literature

using this theory observes an increased incidence of switching where parties and party systems are weakly institutionalized, such as in post-Communist, Central and Eastern Europe, or in Latin American states during their transition to democracy.

I advance the state of the art in the study of party group switching in the EP by proposing that, in an unevenly institutionalized party group system, both of these processes occur simultaneously. To explain the causes of party group re-affiliation, therefore, it is necessary to differentiate between switches caused by the collapse of inchoate groups and those originating from rational, individual motivations. Ambitious moderates change groups in search of policy influence or prestige. Yet, in parallel to these archetypal switchers, we also observe the involuntary ejection of a disintegrating group's members, MEPs who must then find a new affiliation. In order to model the determinants of the first type, it is essential to control for the second.

The first two papers use mixed methods to describe the historical emergence of the EP's two-tiered party system and to identify the sources of party group institutionalization. The second two papers rely on statistical models to determine which variables significantly increase or decrease the odds of re-affiliation among ambitious MEPs after controlling for group collapse. In what follows, I briefly detail the findings of each paper.

The first paper uses the analytical narrative approach and recounts the evolution of the EP's party group system, 1979-2009. Analytical narratives combine the benefits of historical institutionalism with rigorous quantitative analysis by employing a model to identify an equilibrium position and the then testing the historical record against hypotheses derived from that model. In this paper, I introduce the concept of cartelization to describe the patterns of behavior responsible for the development of a bifurcated party system. Unlike previous scholarship which applies the cartel party theory to the EP, I divide cartelization into two separate processes—collusion and exclusion. Analyzing every roll-call vote from the first 30 years of the EP to determine whether or not collusion among the EPP and S&D increased over time, this paper illustrates how these groups gradually became a unified voting bloc. Further, the analysis of exclusion using mixed effects models reveals that periphery groups are much less likely to gain committee leadership positions or reports than core groups. The results, therefore, indicate that the concept of cartelization best defines the patterns of behavior observed in the first 30 years of the EP, a

finding which calls into the question the long-standing belief that EPGs value consensus-building above all else.

The second paper produces a typology of EPGs using fuzzy set Ideal Type Analysis (fsITA). In this analysis, I construct four original conditions derived from the literature on institutionalization, including consistency, concentration, volatility, and fragility, as well as a measure of tenure. From these factors, the fsITA identifies five distinct types of EPGs, two of which reflect developmental phases of fully institutionalized groups, and three which are associated with weak institutionalization. The second section of this paper traces the different developmental trajectories of several party families and illustrates cases of institutional consistency, progress, regress, and collapse. Finally, based on the results of the typology I create an indicator variable for fully institutionalized groups and include this in a negative binomial analysis of rapporteurship allocation, 1979-2014. The results show that members of fully institutionalized groups have many more opportunities to impact policy by managing multiple legislative reports than do their colleagues from weakly institutionalized groups. This paper, therefore, identifies endogenous, exogenous, and inter-parliamentary dimensions of weak institutionalization, and it extends the findings from the first paper regarding the exclusion of periphery members.

Using a pooled logistic regression analysis to analyze between- and within-session switches (1979-2014), the third paper makes two vital contributions to the study of party group re-affiliation. First, the data set includes DW-Nominate scores which are used to measure delegation-to-group and member-to-group policy distances. Second, I include indicator variables which operationalize three types of party group collapse—mergers, dissolutions, and failure to reconvene following an election. In so doing, this paper accounts for both system- and individual-level determinants of re-affiliation. After controlling for weak institutionalization, the results provide original insights into the causes of switching. Most significantly, the analysis shows that large national delegations change group labels, not because they are seeking offices or policy influence, but rather because they are over-represented in collapsing, weakly institutionalized groups. The benefits of considering the impact of an unevenly institutionalized party system are clearly on display in this paper.

The final paper uses multi-level logistic regression models to study party group re-affiliation, and it tests directly the conclusion made by Hix and Noury (2018) which states that ideologically outlying MEPs are the most likely switchers. In this paper, I differentiate between cascade switchers, those members who re-affiliate following the collapse of their group, and ambitious switchers, members who switched only once during a term and who were not involved in a cascade. All members of collapsing groups, no matter their age, tenure, or position within the EPG, are forced to re-affiliate; therefore, in order to properly estimate the effect of policy-outlying on switching, it is necessary to restrict cascade switchers from the dependent variable and focus only on ambitious switchers. The results show that, in fact, outliers are often viewed as unreliable partners, and according to multiple measures, they are statistically less likely to succeed in switching party groups. Alternatively, ambitious moderates are the most likely MEPs to change groups.

In sum, these papers identify the collapse of weakly institutionalized groups as the primary explanation for the high frequency of party group switching in the EP. After controlling for cascade switches, the evidence shows that delegations are more likely to re-affiliate when they are ideologically incongruent with their group, but MEPs have higher odds of exiting if they oppose their EPG on issues associated with European integration. Finally, the evidence implies that to successfully complete a switch, ambitious MEPs have to present themselves to potential targets as reliable partners. Therefore, outliers have lower odds of switching than more moderate members who only disagree with their group on a single policy dimension.

This research rests on an original dataset compiled from several sources. The Høyland, Sircar, and Hix (2009), Automated Database for the European Parliament provides me with all of the party switching variables, as well as the original, aggregated, EPG-level variables used for the institutionalization typology. Furthermore, the roll call voting data from Hix, Roland, and Noury (2007), are pivotal for calculating the DW-Nominate scores. I used Daniel's (2015) data set for the MEP gender variable, and his replication files were also used for the report allocation model found in the second paper. Hix and Noury (2018) made their NPD in government and commissioner variables available to me for the third paper. Party positions were collected from the ParlGov dataset (Döring and Manow 2016).

My dissertation views the EP through the lens of party group switching, and the results should inspire scholars to re-evaluate some of the long-standing assumptions found in the literature. For example, the evidence of exclusion makes it difficult to argue that MEPs and EPGs are primarily consensus-oriented and focused on building over-sized, inclusive coalitions. Additionally, the disproportionate allocation of reports to members of weakly institutionalized groups counters the literature's claim that under-representation results primarily from self-exclusion. Most importantly, however, this collection of papers provides a historical and empirical account for explaining how rational political decisions, made by self-interested politicians, unintentionally created a cartelized party group system, bound together by the dual processes of collusion and exclusion. On one hand, collusion among members of the grand coalition ensured that the EP would become a functional, legislative organ within the European Union's political system. On the other hand, exclusion makes it very difficult for members of periphery groups to advocate for the interests of their constituents and therefore diminishes the EP's ability to function as a representative assembly. Further, the marginalization of non-core members encourages the emergence and reproduction of an unevenly institutionalized, two-tiered party group system. Though not the first to identify trade-offs faced by parliaments tasked with undertaking multiple responsibilities, the interpretation presented here does provide an endogenous explanation for how and why the EP came to privilege legislative efficiency over parliamentary representation.

The literature draws a clear line connecting cartelization and uneven institutionalization to the attenuation of a parliament's ability to represent its electorate. If my conclusions are accurate, then the price paid for the EP's well-documented investment in increasing its law-making effectiveness, is its inability to provide substantive representation, especially to the growing number of citizens who do not support the pursuit of an "ever closer union." Therefore, to appreciate the strength of the EP as a legislative body, one must focus on cooperation and collusion among the core groups; yet to understand the reasons why the Parliament has a had a much harder time connecting with the European electorate and acting as a representative assembly capable of imbuing the EU with input-oriented legitimacy, it is necessary to analyze the exclusion of the weakly institutionalized groups.

Zusammenfassung

Parteiwechsel in nationalen Parlamenten ist zu einem etablierten Feld der politikwissenschaftlichen Forschung geworden, die sich auf Einzelfälle wie auch länderübergreifende Analysen von Legislativen konzentriert. Im Fall des Europäischen Parlaments (EP) wechseln innerhalb jeder Legislaturperiode ungefähr zehn Prozent aller Mitglieder (MEPs) ihre Fraktion. Im Vergleich zu nationalen Parlamenten überschreiten nur Brasilien und Italien dieses Niveau an Mitgliedervolatilität. Bisherige Literatur zu diesem Phänomen beinhaltet deskriptive Analysen, qualitative Fallstudien und Untersuchungen von einzelnen und mehreren Legislaturperioden. Während diese Forschung wertvolle Erkenntnisse liefert, geben die Ergebnisse noch keine klare Erklärung dafür, warum so viele MEPs ihre Fraktionszugehörigkeit wechseln.

Die vorliegende kumulative Dissertation analysiert und erklärt die Ursachen vom Fraktionswechsel im Europäischen Parlament. Ich ziele darauf zu zeigen, warum Mitglieder des EP ihre Fraktionszugehörigkeit so oft wechseln und untersuche zu diesem Zweck nicht nur individuelle Korrelate von Fraktionswechseln, sondern evaluiere auch das Fraktionensystem im EP. Die ersten zwei Artikel untersuchen Aspekte des EP- Fraktionensystems – darunter sein Format und die Mechanik – um Anreizstrukturen zu beschreiben, mit denen MEPs bei ihrer Entscheidung für oder gegen einen Wechsel konfrontiert sind. Die weiteren zwei Artikel wenden die Befunde einer Untersuchung der unausgeglichenen Institutionalisierung des EP-Fraktionensystems auf die Analyse vom Fraktionswechsel an. Das Fazit dieser vier Artikel ist es, dass das EP den vollkommen instutionalisierten Kern von europäischen Fraktionen benötigt um seine legislativen Aufgaben zu erfüllen; die endemische Instabilität der schwach institutionalisierten Peripherie bleibt jedoch ein ernstes Hindernis für die Effizienz des EP als eine repräsentative Versammlung.

Ich definiere Fraktionswechsel im EP als ein Prozess, in dem einzelne Abgeordnete oder die Delegation einer mitgliedstaatlichen Partei ihre bisherige Gruppe verlassen und sich einer anderen Zielgruppe anschließen. Bisherige Theorien von Parteiwechsel können in zwei breite Kategorien aufgeteilt werden. Die erste erörtert individuelle Faktoren des Wechsels, wonach Politiker*innen aktiv versuchen ihre Situation zu verändern um politische Ziele zu erfüllen.

Dieser Ansatz erklärt das Wechselverhalten basierend auf der theoretischen Grundlage von Müller und Strøm (1999); es wird angenommen, dass Politiker*innen ihre Partei mitten in ihrer Karriere wechseln um zu versuchen, ihre Chancen auf (Wieder)wahl zu erhöhen, relevante Führungspositionen zu erzielen, oder sich in einer besseren Position zu stellen um Policy-Inhalte zu beeinflussen. Die zweite Theorie des Wechselverhaltens fokussiert auf Bedingungen auf systemischer Ebene, die die Kosten eines Wechsels reduzieren, da Parteibezeichnungen und Wähleridentifikation nicht konsolidiert bleiben. Dieser Forschungszweig beobachtet ein zunehmendes Vorkommen an Wechselverhalten dort, wo Parteien und Parteiensysteme schwach institutionalisiert sind, beispielsweise in postkommunistischem Mittel- und Osteuropa oder in lateinamerikanischen Staaten während ihrer demokratischen Transformationsphasen.

Mein Forschungsbeitrag zum Fraktionswechsel im EP besteht in der Behauptung, dass in einem ungleichmäßig institutionalisierten Fraktionensystem diese beiden Prozesse gleichzeitig auftreten. Um die Ursachen von Fraktionswechselverhalten zu verstehen, ist es daher relevant zwischen zwei Typen von Wechsel zu unterscheiden: Wechsel, die durch einen Zusammenbruch von schwach institutionalisierte Gruppen verursacht sind; und solche Wechsel, die ihren Ursprung in rationalen, individuellen Motivationen haben. Ambitionierte gemäßigte Mitglieder wechseln ihre Fraktion auf der Suche nach Policy-Einfluss oder Prestige. Parallel zu diesen archetypischen Wechslern beobachten wir allerdings ein unfreiwilliges Ausscheiden aus einer auseinanderfallenden Fraktion, deren MEPs eine neue Zugehörigkeit finden müssen. Um die Determinanten des ersten Wechseltyps zu modellieren, ist zugleich der zweite Wechseltyp zu kontrollieren.

Die ersten zwei Artikel verwenden gemischte Forschungsmethoden um die historische Entwicklung des zweistufigen Fraktionensystem zu erörtern und die Quellen der Institutionalisierung des EP-Fraktionensystem zu identifizieren. Die weiteren zwei Artikel basieren auf statistischen Modellen und bestimmen, welche Variablen signifikant die Chancen von Wechselverhalten ambitionierter MEPs erhöhen oder senken, und dabei für Fraktionszusammenbruch kontrollieren. Im Folgenden erläutere ich kurz die näheren Ergebnisse jeden Artikels.

Der erste Artikel benutzt den Ansatz des Analytischen Narrativen und erörtert die Evolution des EP-Fraktionensystems zwischen 1979 und 2009. Analytische Narrative verbinden die Vorteile des historischen Institutionalismus mit einer rigorosen quantitativen Analyse und verwenden ein Modell um eine Equilibrium position zu identifizieren. Mit ihnen lassen sich dann die historischen Daten mit den aus diesem Modell abgeleiteten Hypothesen vergleichen. Um Verhaltensmuster zu beschreiben, die zur Entwicklung eines gabelförmig geteilten Parteiensystems führen, stelle ich den Konzeptbegriff der Kartellierung vor. Im Unterschied zur bisherigen Forschung, die die Kartellparteitheorie auf das EP anwendet, unterteile ich Kartellierung in zwei separate Prozesse – Kollusion und Exklusion. Ich analysiere jede namentliche Abstimmung in den ersten 30 Jahren des EP um zu bestimmen, ob die Kollusion in der EVP und S&D mit der Zeit zunahm oder nicht und illustriere, wie diese Gruppen graduell zu einem einheitlichen Abstimmungsblock geworden sind. Weiterhin zeigt die Analyse von Exklusion mithilfe von Mixed-Effects-Modellen, dass periphere Fraktionen viel weniger wahrscheinlich Positionen der Ausschussleitung oder Berichterstattung erhalten als die Kernfraktionen. Die Ergebnisse zeigen daher, dass die Verhaltensmuster in den ersten 30 Jahren des EP am besten mit dem Begriff der Kartellierung definiert werden können. Dieser Befund stellt auch die anhaltende Überzeugung in Frage, dass Fraktionen im EP in ihrer Arbeit den Wert vor allem auf Konsensbildung legen.

Der zweite Arikel bietet eine Typologie von EP-Fraktionen und verwendet dafür die fuzzy set Ideal Type Analysis (fsITA). Abgeleitet aus der Institutionalismusforschung konzipiere ich vier originelle Bedingungen, darunter Konsistenz, Volatilität und Fragilität sowie eine Maßeinheit für die Dauer des Mandats. Die fsITA identifiziert anhand dieser Faktoren fünf unterschiedliche Typen von EP-Fraktionen. Zwei davon spiegeln die Entwicklungsphasen vollkommen institutionalisierter Gruppen wieder, drei davon sind assoziiert mit schwacher Institutionalisierung. Im zweiten Teil analysiert das Paper unterschiedliche Entwicklungsabläufe mehrerer Parteienfamilien und illustriert Fälle von institutioneller Konsistenz, Fortschritt, Rückschritt und Kollaps. Schließlich entwickle ich auf der Grundlage der Typologie einen Indikator für vollkommen institutionalisierte Gruppierungen und integriere ihn in eine negative binomiale Analyse von Berichterstattungszuweisung im Zeitraum von 1979 bis 2014. Die Ergebnisse zeigen, dass Mitglieder vollkommen institutionalisierter Gruppen mehr Möglichkeiten an Policy-Einfluss durch die Verwaltung mehrfacher legislativer Berichte haben als ihre

Kolleg*innen aus schwach institutionalisierten Gruppen. Das Paper identifiziert so endogene, exogene und inter-parlamentarische Dimensionen schwacher Institutionalisierung. Es erweitert die Ergebnisse des ersten Artikels bezüglich der Exklusion peripherer Mitglieder.

Der dritte Artikel verwendet eine zusammengeführte logistische Regressionsanalyse um Wechselverhalten innerhalb und zwischen den Legislaturperioden zu untersuchen (1979-2014). Es liefert dadurch zwei wesentliche Beiträge zur Analyse von Fraktionswechsel. Erstens beinhaltet der Datensatz DW-Nominate-Werte, die zur Messung von Policy-Distanzen zwischen Delegationen und Fraktionen sowie zwischen Mitgliedern und Fraktionen verwendet werden. Zweitens verwende ich Indikatoren für drei Typen von Fraktionskollaps – Fusion, Auflösung und fehlendes Wiederzusammenkommen nach einer Wahl. Dadurch berücksichtige ich sowohl systembezogene als auch individuelle Determinanten von Wechselverhalten. Ich kontrolliere das Auftreten vonschwacher Institutionalisierung und biete danach Einblicke in die Ursachen von Wechselverhalten. Ich zeige, dass große nationale Parteidelegationen ihre Fraktion nicht deswegen wechseln, weil sie nach Ämtern oder Policy-Einfluss streben, sondern vielmehr weil sie in auseinanderfallenden, schwach institutionalisierten Gruppen überrepräsentiert sind. Darin erweist sich die Berücksichtigung von asymmetrisch institutionalisierten Parteiensystemen als vorteilshaft für die weitere Forschung.

Der letzte Artikel analysiert Fraktionswechsel unter Anwendung logistischer Mehrebenenmodelle. Es untersucht direkt den Befund von Hix und Noury (2018), dass ideologisch vom Parteikern distanzierte MEPs am wahrscheinlichsten ihre Fraktion wechseln. In diesem Artikel unterscheide ich zwischen Kaskade-Wechslern, also den Mitgliedern die nach einem Zusammenbruch ihrer Fraktion wechseln, und ambitionierten Wechslern, also den Mitgliedern, die nur einmal innerhalb einer Legislaturperiode gewechselt haben und nicht Teil einer Kaskade waren. Alle Mitglieder von auseinanderfallenden Gruppierungen sind zum Wechsel gezwungen, unabhängig von ihrem Alter, der Dauer ihres Mandats oder ihrer Position innerhalb der Gruppe; um den Effekt von Policy-Abweichung auf Wechselverhalten zu schätzen ist es daher notwendig, Kaskaden-Wechsler von der abhängigen Variable zu trennen und nur ambitionierte Wechsler zu beobachten. Die Ergebnisse zeigen, dass Ausreißer oft als unzuverlässige Partner angesehen werden. Ferner ist es anhand mehrerer Messungen statistisch

weniger wahrscheinlich, dass sie ihre Fraktion erfolgreich wechseln. MEPs, die am wahrscheinlichsten ihre Fraktion wechseln, sind wiederum gemäßigte ambitionierte Mitglieder.

Zusammengefasst identifizieren diese Artikel den Kollaps von schwach institutionalisierten Gruppen als die primäre Erklärung für die hohe Häufigkeit von Fraktionswechsel im EP. Nachdem wir Kaskaden-Wechsler kontrolliert haben, zeigt sich, dass Delegationen wahrscheinlicher wechseln, wenn sie innerhalb ihrer Gruppe ideologisch inkongruent sind. Die Chancen für MEP-Wechsel sind wiederum dann höher, wenn sie mit der Position ihrer Gruppe zur Frage der Europäischen Integration nicht übereinstimmen. Schließlich suggerieren die Ergebnisse, dass ambitionierte MEPs sich als zuverlässige Partner präsentieren müssen, um erfolgreich zu wechseln. Daher sind die Chancen für einen Wechsel für Ausreißer geringer als die von eher gemäßigten Mitgliedern, die mit ihrer Gruppe nur in einer Policy-Dimension nicht übereinstimmen.

Dievorliegende Forschung basiert auf einem originellen Datensatz, der aus mehreren Quellen zusammengestellt wurde. Die Automated Database for the European Parliament von Høyland, Sircar und Hix (2009) bietet alle Variablen zum Parteiwechsel, darunter auch die originalen auf der Ebene der Fraktion aggregierten Variablen zur Typologie von Institutionalisierung. Daten für namentliche Abstimmungen von Hix, Roland, und Noury (2007) sind wiederum essenziell für die Berechnung der DW-Nominate-Werte. Für die Gender-Erfassung bei den MEPs verwende ich den Datensatz von Daniel (2015). Ich benutzte seine Replikationsdaten für das Modell zu Berichtserstattungszuweisung im zweiten Artikel. Für den dritten Artikeln haben mir Hix und Noury (2018) ihre Variablen zu nationalen Delegationen an der Regierung sowie Kommissare-Variablen zur Verfügung gestellt. Für die Parteipositionen verwende ich den ParlGov-Datensatz (Döring und Manow 2016).

Meine Dissertation untersucht das EP mit Fokus auf das Fraktionswechselverhalten der MEPs. Die Ergebnisse laden dazu ein, einige bestehende Annahmen der Literaturen neu zu bewerten.. Beispielweise zeige ich anhand von Exklusion, dass es schwierig zu argumentieren ist, dass MEPs und nationale Parteidelegationen primär konsensorientiert sind und dass sie ihren Fokus auf die Bildung von übergroßen, inklusiven Koalitionen legen. Zusätzlich spricht die ungleich verteilte Zuweisung von Berichterstattungsaufgaben an Mitglieder von schwach

institutionalisierten Gruppen gegen die Behauptung der Forschung, dass Unterrepräsentation primär durch Selbstausschluss bedingt ist. Vor allem bieten diese Artikel historische und empirische Erklärungen dafür, wie rationale politische Entscheidungen von eigen-interessierten Politiker*innen unwillentlich ein kartelliertes Fraktionensystem geschaffen haben, das durch duale Prozesse von Kollusion und Exklusion zusammengehalten wird. Einerseits stellt Kollusion der Mitglieder die Großen Koalition sicher, so dass das EP zu einem funktionsfähigen legislativen Organ im politischen System der Europäischen Union wird. Andererseits können Mitglieder peripherer Gruppen wegen der Exklusion sich viel schwerer für die Interessen ihrer Wählerschaft einsetzen, was die Handlungs- und Wirkfähigkeit des EP als eine repräsentative Versammlung verringert. Weiterhin fördert die Marginalisierung von Mitgliedern außerhalb des Kerns zur Erscheinung und Reproduktion eines ungleichmäßig institutionalisierten zweistufigen Fraktionensystems. Die hier präsentierte Interpretation ist nicht die erste, die Trade-offs zwischen unterschiedlichen Verantwortlichkeiten von Parlamenten identifiziert. Sie bietet aber eine endogene Erklärung dafür, wie und warum das EP die legislative Effizienz der parlamentarischen Repräsentation vorgezogen hat.

Die Literatur sieht eine klare Verbindung zwischen Kartellierung und ungleichmäßiger Institutionalisierung einerseits und der Schwächung der repräsentativen Fähigkeit eines Parlaments andererseits. Wenn meine Schlussfolgerungen zutreffen, ist der Preis für die gut dokumentierte Investition in die Erhöhung der legislativen Effektivität die Unfähigkeit des EP, substanzielle Repräsentanz zu bieten, insbesondere für die wachsende Anzahl der Bürger*innen, die das Ziel einer „immer engeren Union“ nicht unterstützen. Um die Stärke des EP als legislative Institution zu verstehen, muss der Fokus auf die Zusammenarbeit und die Kollusion der Kern-Gruppen gelegt werden; um allerdings zu verstehen, warum das EP sich bislang schwer tat, eine Verbindung mit der europäischen Wählerschaft herzustellen und als repräsentative Versammlung zu handeln, die imstande wäre, die EU mit Input-Legitimität zu füllen, ist es relevant, die Exklusion von schwach institutionalisierten Gruppen zu analysieren.

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Introduction

Following the 2019 European election, the seat share of the two largest European Political Groups (EPGs), the Christian (EPP) and Social (S&D) Democrats, fell to a combined 44 percent, representing the first time in the history of the European Parliament (EP) that their joint membership failed to reach an absolute majority. By re-naming themselves Renew Europe (RE), the Liberal Democrats (ALDE) abandoned a political label present in the EP since 1958. To these breaks in continuity, consider the inevitable (Br)exit of several, large UK delegations from the S&D (10 members), the Greens (11 members), and RE (17 members), and observers would justifiably conclude that the EP is entering a period of pronounced instability. The papers presented in this dissertation provide valuable historical and empirical context for clarifying how and why the EP can maintain its effectiveness as a legislative body and a representative assembly during this turbulent time.

My research project began with the goal of better understanding party group switching in the EP; yet, it became clear that to fully appreciate the high rates of re-affiliation by members of the European Parliament (MEPs), I must also re-evaluate the system of party groups. The first two papers, therefore, examine the components of the EP party group system, including its format and mechanics (Sartori, 2005), in order to describe the incentive structure MEPs face when choosing whether or not to change groups. The second two papers apply what is learned about the EP's unevenly institutionalized party group system to the analysis of party group switching. When considered alongside the EP's current state of affairs, these four papers conclude that, even when confronted by a shock similar to the 2019 election, the fully institutionalized core EPGs should have the capacity to stabilize the EP as a legislative body. However, the uncertainty endemic to the weakly institutionalized periphery remains a serious impediment to the Parliament's efficacy as a representative assembly.

In comparison to the existing literature, the first two papers offer a significantly revised interpretation of the EP's party group system, which, according to my research, is not weakly institutionalized, but rather aligns more closely with what Randall and Svåsand (2009) describe as uneven institutionalization. Thus, when characterizing the EP, observers should neither

discount the consistent leadership and reliability of the Social and Christian Democrats' Grand Coalition, nor should they exaggerate the negative impact that weakly institutionalized groups have on the consolidation of the party group system. Further, by providing compelling evidence that groups such as the Liberals, the Greens, and the Leftists, reached active institutionalization by the end of the Fifth EP session, the second paper offers evidence to counter the long-standing belief that size, measured by seat share, correlates perfectly with a group's level of institutionalization (Hix and Lord, 1995). More importantly, however, the first two papers show that MEPs from weakly institutionalized groups are less likely to become committee leaders or rapporteurs, and that this asymmetry cannot be attributed solely to the self-exclusion of disinterested parliamentarians. This disparity between weakly and fully institutionalized groups represents a system-level explanation for why ambitious, policy-seeking members may be motivated to leave a periphery group and switch into a core group. The exclusion of some MEPs from leadership positions and policy influence not only reproduces weak institutionalization among EPGs, but it incentivizes the centripetal movement of members from the weakest to the strongest groups.

Papers three and four draw directly on these insights by identifying group collapse as the causal mechanism connecting weak group institutionalization to high rates of party group switching. The disintegration of weakly institutionalized EPGs comes in three forms, including mid-session dissolution, mergers, or the failure to reconvene following an election; however, the literature has yet to link these processes to the analysis of party group switching. Because members of collapsing groups change parties no matter their level of ambition or political preferences, in both of these papers, I control for weak institutionalization before proceeding to evaluate the relationship between policy-seeking and party group switching. Among the multiple findings related to party switching, these two papers provide evidence that large delegations re-affiliate primarily because they are over-represented in weakly institutionalized groups that collapse; that MEPs from weakly institutionalized groups are the members most likely to switch groups multiple times, because they often get caught in cycles of group formation and disintegration; and, finally, that moderate MEPs are more likely to complete a successful switch than extremists because EPGs do not view outliers as reliable partners.

In all of these cases, my results differ substantially from the contemporary literature which claims that large delegations re-affiliate to gain power and policy influence, and that the most extreme ideological outliers are the most likely members to switch groups (Hix and Noury, 2018). These dissimilarities originate from the emphasis my research places on party group institutionalization. By including the system-level into the analysis, the theory and methods used here allow me to differentiate between policy-seeking members, or delegations, and those caught in the roil of group collapse. In what follows, I outline the theories used in this dissertation, and then explain how the key concepts introduced here advance our understanding of party group switching in the EP. I then discuss the research design and methods found in the corresponding papers.

Theories of Party Switching

Party group switching in the EP is defined as the process by which a parliamentarian, or a national party delegation (NPD), leaves a home group to re-affiliate with a new, target group. The process does not imply that the MEP also changes his or her national party affiliation, but this type of dual switch does sometime occur. During the first seven EP sessions, ten percent of MEPs, on average, changed their party label per term. When compared to national parliaments, only Brazil and Italy surpass the EP's average level of member volatility (O'Brien and Shomer, 2013; Heller and Mershon, 2005). The frequency of party switching in the EP, therefore, demands an explanation.

Scholars generally rely on Müller and Strøm's (1999) theoretical tool kit to explain party re-affiliation; that is, we assume that politicians who change their party label mid-career do so in an attempt to increase their odds of (re)election (Aldrich and Bianco, 1992), to angle for key leadership positions (Yoshinaka, 2016), or to place themselves in a better position to influence policy (Laver and Benoit, 2003). While the literature on party switching in national parliaments is quite deep and fully developed (Heller and Mershon, 2009)[14], the research on re-affiliation in the EP is more limited and often reaches conflicting or indeterminate conclusions (Hix and Noury,

[14] National case studies of party switching include analyses of Italy (Heller and Mershon, 2005; 2008), Brazil (Desposato, 2006), Japan (Kato and Yamamoto, 2009; Reed and Scheiner, 2003), the UK (Webb and Bale, 2014), Poland (Hug and Wuest, 2011; Zielinski, Slomczynski, and Shabad, 2005), the Baltic States (Kreuzer and Pettai, 2003), Ukraine (Thames, 2007), South Africa (McLaughlin, 2011), and the United States (Yoshinaka, 2016; Nokken, 2009; Grose and Yoshinaka, 2003).

2018; McElroy, 2008; McElroy and Benoit, 2009). My project addresses these ambiguities by analyzing the EP's party group system in order to better understand the different incentives and constraints faced by members of fully and weakly institutionalized party groups; furthermore, I ask the question: When do MEPs make the strategic, rational decision to switch groups and when are these transitions pre-determined by the collapse of a group? In other words, when is switching a variable and when is it a constant?

Theories of party switching fall into two broad categories. The first pertains to the individual determinants of switching whereby politicians actively attempt to change their situation in order to satisfy political goals. The second theory of switching addresses system-level conditions which make re-affiliation less costly to politicians because party labels and voter identification have yet to consolidate. Scholars observe an increased incidence of switching where party systems are weak, or inchoate, such as in post-Communist Central and Eastern Europe (McMenamin and Gwiazda, 2011; Shabad and Slomczynski, 2004; Zielinski et al., 2005) or in Latin American states during their transition to democracy (Mainwaring and Scully, 1995). I advance the state of the art in the study of party group switching in the EP by proposing that both of these processes occur simultaneously in an unevenly institutionalized party system. Some members may be ambitious moderates who change groups in search of policy influence or prestige, yet in parallel to these archetypal switchers, we also observe members and delegations who are involuntarily ejected from disintegrating, weakly institutionalized groups.

The literature specific to EP party group switching includes research that is descriptive (Evans and Vink, 2012), qualitative (Evans, 2009), or grounded in the study of individual-level motivations (Hix and Noury, 2018; McElroy and Benoit, 2009; McElroy, 2008). Scholars generally dismiss vote-seeking as a motive for switching in the EP (McElroy and Benoit, 2009), but both McElroy (2008) and Hix and Noury (2018) test hypotheses based on office- and policy-seeking behavior. McElroy's (2008) study of switching in the Third EP session determines that having seniority, being on an important committee, being a member in one of the two largest party groups, and holding an EPG leadership position, significantly inhibits switching. Unlike McElroy (2008), who finds no relationship between policy distance variables and switching, Hix and Noury's (2018) analysis of between- and within-session switches, 1979-2014, determines that MEPs who are incongruent with their group's median position are more likely to change

group labels. Further, members from larger groups with more access to leadership positions are less likely to re-affiliate. None of these treatments include a discussion of the party group system, party group institutionalization, or how these impact a member's motivation, or necessity, to switch. Therefore, because these analyses do not control for party group collapse, they find it difficult to accurately estimate the individual correlates of re-affiliation, especially those related to policy-seeking behavior.

A party system consists of a format, the number and types of parties, and its mechanics, the patterns of interaction that take place between those parties (Sartori, 2005). Bardi (2002) identifies three types of EP political groups: transnational, multi-party, and one-party. When a single national delegation accounts for more than one half of the group's membership, it is characterized as a one-party group. Because these groups are mainly vehicles for national (party) interests, they rarely attain full institutionalization; further, the presence of one-party groups hinders the entire system from becoming fully consolidated (Bardi, 2002). He argues that electoral shocks disproportionately disrupt the membership integrity of multi- and one-party groups; contrariwise, he claims that the transnational party groups make consistent gains at election time and consolidate their power during the parliamentary session. Bardi concludes that "the two combined effects appear to have had contrasting impacts on the number and size of party groups, thus contributing to the creation of a two-speed party system in the EU, characterized by an increasingly institutionalized core and a mutable and unstable periphery" (Bardi, 2002: 64).

The field has not yet fully explored the implications of this very important insight regarding the asymmetry of the political groups. If it is true that the EP is divided between fully and weakly institutionalized groups, then this should have implications for the system's mechanics as well as observable parliamentary behavior among members (Thames, 2007). Kreppel (2002) determines that as the EP gained competences, the newfound powers accreted disproportionately to the Christian and Social Democrats. By changing the rules of procedure to benefit themselves, and by coordinating their voting behavior, the Grand Coalition intentionally set about marginalizing the minor groups. Two things are worth noting here. First, Kreppel (2002) explicitly differentiates between major and minor group types, a classification which corresponds with Bardi's two-speed

hypothesis (2002). Second, the inter-group relations that she describes reflect the patterns he identifies in reference to consolidating power during the course of the parliamentary term.

The literature observes significant differences between "niche" and "major" groups' behavior (Jensen and Spoon, 2010) and contends that EPGs "vary significantly" in their degree of institutionalization (McElroy and Benoit, 2007: 6), but the scholarship has neither characterized these disparities by using Randall and Svåsand's (2002) concept of uneven institutionalization, nor has it empirically determined the origin of these differences. Research on EPGs skews heavily towards the analysis of core groups which makes it difficult to triangulate the presence or absence of characteristics associated with institutionalization, such as adaptability, complexity, autonomy, and coherence (Huntington, 1968), in the periphery groups.[15] For example, Bresannelli (2014) analyzes the effects of enlargement on the EP party system by outlining how the Christian Democrats, the Socialists, and the Liberals (ALDE) employed vertical and horizontal differentiation to increase their legislative efficiency and systemness; yet, of all the minor groups, he only discusses the Greens. In this respect, McElroy's claim that "smaller parties are very fluid in nature and are probably not promoting party discipline in the manner exhibited by the two dominant groups" (2008: 368) is important for two reasons. First, it assumes a significant difference between small- and large-group behavior; and, second, the characterization of small groups—fluid and lacking the ability to constrain members—implies that the source of this variation is institutionalization. For these reasons, it is necessary to examine not only the causes of institutionalization, but to determine how it relates to party group switching.

The current research project takes seriously Bardi's "two-speed" hypothesis, and Kreppel's determination that marginalization is a defining characteristic of the party system, by incorporating both of these insights into the study of party group institutionalization. The first two papers offer empirical evidence to support the claim that EPGs have varying levels of institutionalization and analyzes the interactions between the core and the periphery to determine how they produce a stable yet unevenly institutionalized party group system. Only after reaching

[15] Notable exceptions include the growing body of work on the extreme right-wing groups in the EP from Almeida (2010), Startin (2010), Brack (2015), and Bale et al. (2010).

these conclusions is it possible to estimate the effect of policy-seeking on ambitious switchers, an exercise performed in papers three and four.

Research Design

To explain the causes of party group re-affiliation in the EP, I first differentiate between switches caused by group collapse and those originating from rational, individual motivations. The first two papers, therefore, describe the historical emergence of the EP's two-tiered party system and both use a mixed methods approach. The second two papers rely on statistical models to determine which variables significantly increase or decrease the odds of re-affiliation among ambitious MEPs.

The analytical narrative approach combines the benefits of historical institutionalism with rigorous quantitative analysis by using a model to identify an equilibrium position and then testing hypotheses derived from that model. The first paper uses this method to recount the evolution of the EP's party group system, 1979-2009. Specifically, I introduce the concept of cartelization to describe the patterns of behavior responsible for the development of a bifurcated party system (Detterbeck, 2005; Koole, 1996; Katz and Mair, 1995). Unlike previous scholarship which applies the cartel party theory to the EP (Bressanelli, 2014; Rose and Borz, 2013; Hix, Kreppel, and Noury 2003), I divide cartelization into two separate processes—collusion and exclusion. Analyzing every roll-call vote from the first 30 years of the EP to determine whether or not collusion among the EPP and S&D increased over time, this paper illustrates how these two groups gradually became a unified voting bloc. Further, the analysis of exclusion using mixed effects models reveals that periphery groups are much less likely to gain committee leadership positions or reports than core groups. The results, therefore, indicate that the concept of cartelization best defines the patterns of behavior observed in the first 30 years of the EP, a finding which calls into the question the long-standing belief that EPGs value consensus-building above all else.

The second paper produces a typology of EPGs using fuzzy set Ideal Type Analysis (fsITA) (Kvist, 2007). In this analysis, I construct four original conditions derived from the literature on institutionalization, including consistency, concentration, volatility, and fragility, as well as a measure of tenure. From these factors, the fsITA identifies five distinct types of EPGs, two of

which reflect developmental phases of fully institutionalized groups, and three which are associated with weak institutionalization. I then create an indicator variable for fully institutionalized groups based on the results of the typology, which is introduced into Daniel's (2015) negative binomial analysis of rapporteurships, 1979-2014. The results show that members of fully institutionalized groups have many more opportunities to impact policy by managing multiple legislative reports than do their colleagues from weakly institutionalized groups. This paper, therefore, identifies endogenous, exogenous, and inter-parliamentary dimensions of weak institutionalization, and it extends the findings from the first paper regarding the exclusion of periphery members.

The third paper, a pooled logistic regression analysis, builds on the research of Hix and Noury (2018), who analyze between- and within-session switches (1979-2014), and makes two vital contributions. First, I measure delegation-to-group and member-to-group policy distances using DW-Nominate scores. Second, I include indicator variables which operationalize three types of party group collapse—mergers, dissolutions, and failure to reconvene following an election. In so doing, this paper accounts for both system- and individual-level determinants of switching. After controlling for weak institutionalization, the results of this paper provide original insights into the causes of switching. Most significantly, the analysis shows that large national delegations switch groups, not because they are seeking offices or policy influence, but rather because they are over-represented in collapsing, weakly institutionalized groups. The analytical benefits gained from operationalizing weak institutionalization and group disintegration are clearly on display in this paper.

The final paper uses multi-level logistic regression models to study party group re-affiliation, and it tests directly the conclusion made by Hix and Noury (2018) which states that ideological outlying MEPs are the most likely switchers. In this paper, I differentiate between cascade switchers, those members who re-affiliate following the collapse of their group, and ambitious switchers, members who switched only once during a term and were not involved in a cascade. All members of collapsing groups, no matter their age, tenure, or position within the EPG, are forced to re-affiliate; therefore, in order to properly estimate the effect of policy-outlying on switching, it is necessary to analyze only ambitious switchers. The results show that, in fact, outliers are often viewed as unreliable partners, and according to multiple measures, they are

statistically less likely to succeed in switching party groups. Alternatively, ambitious moderates are the most likely MEPs to change groups.

These analyses rely on data from several sources. The Høyland, Sircar, and Hix (2009), Automated Database for the European Parliament, was the most important data set because it allowed me to create all of the party switching variables, as well as the original, EPG variables used to for the institutionalization typology. Furthermore, the roll call voting data from Hix, Roland, and Noury (2007), were pivotal for calculating the DW-Nominate scores, a process which was undertaken for me by Keith Poole. I used Daniel's (2015) data set for the MEP gender variable, and the replication files were necessary for the analysis of report allocation in the second paper. Hix and Noury (2018) made their NPD in government and commissioner variables available to me for the third paper. Finally, I use the ParlGov data set for party position estimates (Döring and Manow, 2016).

Implications

These papers view the EP through the lens of party group switching, and the results, when aggregated, provide a characterization at odds with many standard interpretations of parliamentary behavior found in the contemporary literature. In this section, I explain the significance of my revised description of the EP's party group system before discussing how the research presented in this dissertation relates to the broader study of political science.

The first paper concludes that the EP has a cartelized party group system whereby the dual processes of collusion and exclusion produce a stable, yet highly asymmetrical, set of relationships between the core and periphery EPGs. The second paper determines that the two core groups, the EPP and S&D, as well as three smaller groups, the Liberals, the Greens, and the Leftists, have become fully institutionalized, while the rest of the EPGs remain weakly institutionalized. These combined results describe the EP's two-tiered structure and explain why certain MEPs face distinct disadvantages. More importantly, they run counter to two bedrock assumptions found in the literature: First, that consensus-seeking operates as the guiding principle in the EP (Bowler and McElroy, 2015; Burns, 2013; Settembri and Neuhold, 2009; Ringe, 2010), and second, that the disproportionate allocation of leadership positions and report assignments

results from the principled "self-exclusion" of MEPs who willingly choose not to engage with parliamentary work (Hurka and Kaeding, 2012; Almeida, 2010; Benedetto, 2005).

If by consensus-seeking, scholars mean that EPGs orient themselves primarily towards building inclusive, over-sized coalitions, then the results of the first paper provide substantial historical evidence to counter this position. The observable trends of silencing, obstructing, and under-representation detailed below do not correspond with the standard definition of consensus-building. Put simply, exclusion and consensus-seeking cannot co-exist in the same system as they are concepts diametrically opposed to one another. Prior to 2019, an agreement by the Grand Coalition to vote together assured an absolute majority and the successful passing of legislation. Such coordination should be viewed as a minimum winning coalition, and inconsequential minor group support for these bills should be considered bandwagoning, not evidence of an over-sized voting coalition.

Furthermore, the idea that MEPs elect to forego their parliamentary responsibilities by choice conforms with the narrative of consensus-seeking. If we assume that the core party groups work to form the broadest, most inclusive, voting coalitions possible, then it follows logically that marginalized members have only themselves to blame. Citing self-exclusion, therefore, makes it easier for observers to ignore the unequal legislative opportunities available to periphery MEPs. However, the empirical findings, which cover at least thirty years of parliamentary activity, provide strong counter-evidence to this interpretation of disproportionality. The results from the analysis of report allocation, 1979-2014, show that, when measured by individual EPG indicators, members from all groups except the radical right, receive a statistically significant number of reports. When these individual dummies are replaced with an indicator for full institutionalization, the subsequent disparity, under-estimated in previous research, is too large, covers too many sessions, and includes too many different types of groups, to be attributable primarily to self-exclusion. Even after controlling for group size, the analysis shows that members from weakly institutionalized groups face substantial exclusion and receive statistically fewer leadership positions.

The dual concepts of consensus-orientation and self-exclusion serve primarily to de-politicize the EP. Indeed, consensus-seeking, the practice of prioritizing decision-making processes intended to

satisfy as many participants as possible, is inherently a-political. Likewise, arguing that exclusion takes place only on a voluntary basis demands the acceptance of an utterly a-political premise: Preeminent politicians consistently refrain from using their influence to disadvantage competitors because they prefer including even political rivals in broad coalitions. Based on this dissertation's findings, these arguments do not stand up to scrutiny, and the evidence rebuts many of these assumptions. Consequently, these finding suggest that the EP has always been a politicized parliament where politicians, parties, and groups use their advantages to gain preferred outcomes, sometimes at the expense of their competitors.

Because it entails exclusion, and exclusion is incompatible with Lijphardtian consensus-seeking, cartelization rules out the a-political. Therefore, this dissertation provides the literature with a way to understand how political decisions, made by self-interested politicians, had the unintended consequence of creating two institutions simultaneously. First, collusion among the members of the Grand Coalition insured that the EP would become a functional, legislative organ within the European Union's political system. Second, exclusion makes it very difficult for members of weakly institutionalized periphery groups to advocate for the interests of their constituents and therefore diminishes the EP's ability to function as a representative assembly. Though not the first to identify the trade-offs faced by parliaments tasked with undertaking multiple responsibilities, such as providing social linkage, offering constituents representation, contributing to government oversight, and crafting legislation (Kreppel, 2014; Wessels and Katz, 1999), this interpretation does provide an endogenous explanation for how and why the EP came to privilege legislative efficiency over parliamentary representation.

The literature draws a clear line connecting cartelization and uneven institutionalization to the attenuation of a parliament's ability to represent its electorate. For example, Bressanelli (2014) warns that "the consolidation of cartel parties would not be good" because "efficient as they are in managing financial resources…[they] are not interested in providing the link between civil society and government" (54). Rose argues that consensus among Grand Coalition members equates to a *transformismo*, whereby national parties campaign on one set of issues and then vote against those positions as soon as they enter the Hemisphere. He concludes that "consensus in the European Parliament is repressive," and that "European voters cannot rely on parties…to represent their views when votes are taken" in the EP (2013: 126-7). Finally, when highlighting

uneven institutionalization's potential effects, Randal and Svåsand determine that asymmetry "detracts from the competitiveness of the party system" and that "significant social sectors are excluded not only from power but from any meaningful party representation" (2002: 9). So, if the conclusions presented here are accurate, then the price paid for the EP's well-documented investment in increasing its legislative effectiveness (Kreppel, 2002), is its inability to provide substantive representation (Pitkin, 1967), especially to the growing number of citizens who do not support the pursuit of an "ever closer union." Therefore, to appreciate the strength of the EP as a legislative body, one must focus on cooperation and collusion among the core groups; yet to understand the reasons why the Parliament has a had a much harder time connecting with the European electorate and acting as a representative assembly capable of imbuing the EU with input-oriented legitimacy, it is necessary to analyze the exclusion of the weakly institutionalized groups.

The four papers in the dissertation present an ambiguity that may be interesting for political scientists to consider going forward. On one hand, the first paper relies on a method associated with rational choice theory to explain how asymmetry among EPGs can produce equilibrium. By examining why MEPs made specific decisions at critical junctures, the analysis assumes that these leaders are both self-interested and strategically motivated. Despite many unintended consequences, the members of the Grand Coalition undoubtedly succeeded in their goals by raising the profile of the EP and cementing its role as a powerful actor within the European political system.

On the other hand, papers three and four illustrate a case where concentrating only on individuals', or political parties', rational decisions causes observers to arrive at counter-intuitive conclusions. In the case of party group switching, the literature has not yet considered what role group disintegration plays in causing cascade switches. Because the literature has thus far overlooked group-level collapse, observers generally assume individuals and parties change labels in order to maximize their political capital. In the case of the EP, this is demonstrably not the case, however. Therefore, it is prudent to consider how the system impacts agents' ability to act rationally, or at least, to act in accordance with the theories of parliamentary behavior found in most studies.

In the case of an unevenly institutionalized party group system, it is necessary to recognize that members of fully institutionalized groups work under a much different set of expectations than periphery members. For example, core MEPs can be relatively confident that their group will endure past the next election. This sense of security provides members with the time necessary to marshal a bill through the legislative process as a rapporteur, even if this process takes more than one session. The same cannot be said for members of weakly institutionalized groups who work under a much different set of incentives. In other words, what may appear rational to a core member would seem like a waste of resources to periphery members. This is not to say that one is rational and the other is not. More precisely, it means that when a system bifurcates into two tiers, as is the case in the EP, it is necessary to consider how that asymmetry shapes members' expectations about what role they can successfully fulfill as a parliamentarian.

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Paper One

Consolidated Asymmetry: On the Emergence and Reproduction of the EP's Cartelized Party Group System

Abstract

How has the European Parliament become an effective political actor vis-à-vis the Council and Commission while also failing to mature into a representative body capable of providing the European Union with sufficient input-oriented legitimacy? To address this puzzle, I present an analytical narrative, based on the economic theory of agglomeration, to identify endogenous inflection points which initiated the emergence of a cartelized party group system, founded on the twin institutions of collusion and exclusion. I present two empirical analyses. The first focuses on collusion and examines every roll call vote in the EP, 1979-2009, to construct the Agreement Index for the cartel and periphery clusters. The second presents a mixed-effects regression model and provides evidence that periphery groups are under-represented as committee leaders and rapporteurs. The implications of these findings are directly applicable to any discussion regarding the EP's role as a legitimating body or a representative chamber.

Key Words: European Parliament, Party Systems, Cartel Theory, Analytical Narrative

Introduction

By constructing the popularly elected European Parliament (EP), European elites intended to establish an assembly capable of representing constituents' interests and deliberating over legislation. In carrying out these important tasks, the EP would also provide the European Union (EU) with input-oriented legitimacy and government by the people (Rittberger 2005). Following multiple treaty reforms, the EP has become equal in standing to the Commission and the European Council; today, no ordinary regulation passes into law without its approval. Nevertheless, Eurosceptic political parties continue to gain growing support in national and European elections by shouting down Brussels' bureaucrats who they claim make laws without the consent of the governed. Therefore, it appears many voters and politicians have failed to recognize the EP as the legitimating, representative, and deliberative body European leaders envisioned upon first negotiating its formation.

How can we explain this puzzle? How can the EP be an effective institution within the EU political system yet struggle to represent its constituents? Rather than relying on extra-parliamentary interpretations, such as exogenous shocks or the second order election theory, to explain the EP's disappointing performance (Kreppel 2002; Reif and Schmitt 1980), I trace the source of this problem to internal decisions made by members of the European Parliament (MEPs) at specific points during its development. These inflection points, in turn, created and sustained a bifurcated, or two-tiered, party group system. I present an analytical narrative (Bates et al. 1998), based on the economic theory of agglomeration (Krugman 1991), which concentrates on three, critical junctures. The discussion of each decision point examines the emergence of an institution, the alternative paths open to the EP had a different decision been met, the primary source of opposition in the EP at the time, and an empirical analysis substantiating how this institution was reproduced into the future.

Using this approach, I adapt the theory of cartelization to explain the mechanics of the EP's party group system (Katz and Mair 1995; Sartori 2005). Cartelization can be disaggregated into two distinct patterns of behavior—collusion and exclusion. Collusion among the two largest European Parliamentary Groups (EPGs), the European People's Party (EPP) and the Social Democrats (SOC/PES/S&D), determines which members gain access to decision-making levers and policy-influencing mechanisms. Exclusion clarifies which parliamentarians will be under-represented or placed out of bounds. Applying the concept of cartelization helps to explain the establishment and reproduction of the informal, grand coalition which is, in turn, responsible for the asymmetry in the EP's party group system. The chamber's inability to adequately represent its constituencies originates from this, the parliament's unbalanced competitive structure.

Bressanelli (2014) offers the best overall summary of how the cartel theory applies to the EP party system. Focusing only on collusion, he finds insufficient evidence to confirm that a cartel controls the EP. Rose and Borz (2013), however, demonstrate the presence of collusion and determine that that the red-black coalition between the EPP & S&D diminishes the EP's ability to represent voters. By taking a two-dimensional approach to examining cartelization, one entailing both collusion and exclusion, this analysis adds to the previous research by describing how these processes crystallized during the development of the party group system, thus providing the literature with an innovative application of the party cartel theory to the EP.

Building on Bardi (2002), I categorize EPGs as either members of the core or the periphery. This asymmetry works at cross purposes. On one hand, the collusive core, consisting of the EPP and S&D, provides the Parliament with stable leadership and represents its institutional interests during negotiations with the Commission and the Council. Hence, the core should receive much of the credit for the EP's effectiveness as a European political body. On the other hand, the presence of non-core, periphery members who have limited influence over policy and restricted access to leadership positions, mitigates the EP's effectiveness as a representative assembly.[16]

Equality among members is a sine qua non of parliaments, as even Prime Ministers are generally *primus inter pares*. A two-tiered system, however, lacks such parity. Parliamentarians from small, challenger parties enter the EP as equals but soon find themselves excluded from the legislative process. Predictably, these periphery members use the EP plenary as a soap box to amplify their criticism of the EU's democratic deficit (Brack 2015).

Identifying this asymmetry should motivate scholars to rearticulate their standard claims regarding the EP as a consensus-seeking body (Benedetto 2007). If this study provides evidence of both collusion and exclusion, then the EP does not meet the standards of consensus, based on inclusivity and the formation of oversized majorities, articulated by Lijphart (2012). Therefore, the theory of cartelization, when applied to the EP, should inspire future scholarship to address not only the impact of party system bifurcation on electoral and parliamentary behavior but also to revise the standard argument which claims that the EP orients itself primarily towards building consensus among groups.

Analytic Narrative

In this paper, I use the analytic narrative approach to explain how rational decisions led to the formation of the grand coalition, the periphery, and a two-tiered party group system (Bates et al. 1998). The puzzle under investigation asks: How has the EP become such an effective external actor vis-à-vis the other European institutions while also failing to mature into a representative

[16] I use periphery here as heuristic device to describe the non-cartel groups. While these groups share many characteristics, it should not be assumed that they view themselves, or behave, as a unified entity.

body capable of providing the EU with sufficient input-oriented legitimacy? I hypothesize that cartelization results in the bifurcation of the EP party system. This process splits EPGs into two, unbalanced clusters, and because a two-tiered party system cannot represent its citizens effectively, this division contributes to the EP's inability to garner legitimating support from European voters. The first part of the narrative, therefore, introduces the theory of cartelization, a necessary starting point for examining this puzzle.

Analytic narratives take a formal model, and use it as a structuring device to explain why rational actors behaved as they did and how these actions generated an equilibrium. The second section presents the economic model of agglomeration and clarifies what explanatory leverage it offers to the analysis. I first translate the model into the context of the EP and then present the historical narrative.

Unlike previous scholarship, this paper does not rely solely on exogenous shocks to explain variation within the party group system; rather, I focus on the emergence and reproduction of endogenous parliamentary institutions, originating from deliberate calculations made by members or party groups (Weingast and Wittman 2006). I use Schwartz's definitions of inflection points as, "critical junctures [which] permit the identification of the beginning and end of a given path, and thus the isolation of specific institutional structures generating increasing returns" (2004, 5). This historical narrative discusses three critical junctures, including: first, the decision to sit in trans-national groups taken in 1953; second, the informal agreement reached by the Socialists and Christian Democrats to vote as a single parliamentary bloc; and third, the 1999 dissolution of the Technical Group for Non-attached Members – Mixed Group (TDI). In examining these turning points, the narrative offers an original explanation for the development of the EP's consolidated, yet asymmetrical, party group system.

Cartelization

Katz and Mair's (1995) seminal article on the theory of cartel parties spurred authors to define a related, but separate, idea—the party cartel (Koole 1996; Detterbeck 2005). This concept describes how parties cooperate with one another to maintain access to state aid, protect themselves from electoral shocks, and construct barriers intended to keep new parties weak. Party system cartelization entails two relevant conditions: first, "that the established parties

…collaborat[e] with each other," and second, that they "try to prevent the entry of newcomers," (Koole 1996, 515-516). Applying these criteria to the study of party systems, the twin behaviors of *collusion* and *exclusion* must be present to produce *cartelization*.

The literature on the EP often conflates these two processes. For example, Hix et al. suggest that the "EPP and PES collude to prevent the smaller groups from securing influence in the internal workings of the Parliament" (2003, 320). Yoshinaka et al. confirm this hypothesis, finding that "members of the EP who are opposed to further integration are systematically excluded from the report allocation process" (2010, 475), and that this inequality "may be produced by collusion to keep the extreme right-wingers on the sidelines" (2010, 463). By defining collusion and exclusion as two distinct institutions, the origin and advance of which may be identified and evaluated, this paper contributes to the study of cartelization in the EP.

Bartolini examines the relationship between competition and collusion and determines that "the proper starting question is how much collusion (i.e. non-competition) is necessary to set, to keep in motion, and to defend competitive interaction" (Bartolini 1999, 436). Therefore, the term need not imply pathology. However, the EP literature defines collusion as "the formation of the grand coalition between the EPP and PES" (Kreppel and Hix 2003, 87), a construct also referred to as a metaphorical, or "virtual 'cartel'" (Hix et al. 2003, 318). Bressanelli notes the potential negative consequences of such collaboration, contending that "a 'cartel' between the EPP and the PES makes it more difficult for the European citizens to understand what is at stake in the EU and contributes to the decline in turnout for the EP elections" (2014, 149). Although many parliaments rely on instances of cooperation between nominal party competitors to pass legislation or to form a governing coalition, in the case of the EP, scholars view collusion as potentially harmful.

Likewise, some form of exclusion is present in every parliament. For example, de jure exclusion, legitimized by democratic elections, occurs when a ruling coalition takes control of government leadership positions, thus marginalizing the opposition. De facto exclusion, legitimized by democratic norms, arises when mainstream parties collectively agree to ostracize challengers deemed "beyond the pale" by prohibiting them from entering into government (Van Spanje 2010). However, in the case of a party cartel, cooperation should supplant competition as the

primary mode of legislating, and this collaboration must be paired with various forms of illegitimate exclusion. To define a system as cartelized, collusion and exclusion must be dominant patterns of behavior and both trends must be observable.

Cartelization bifurcates a party system, and members from the different tiers have asymmetrical access to offices and policy influence. This disproportionality nourishes anti-system parties, which "lump together all of the established parties as a 'bloc' to be opposed," and encourages them to "translate a particular opposition to what [they] see as the cartelization of parties into a more generalized assault on the party system as a whole" (Katz and Mair 2002, 134). Those once engaged in "classical opposition" shift to "principled opposition," where they attempt to delegitimize the "whole system of governance" (Mair 2007, 5). The core's discrimination of the periphery implies biased law-making procedures. This negative throughput nullifies the input-oriented legitimacy gained from free and fair elections as well as the output-oriented legitimacy derived from effective policy implementation (Schmidt 2013). Therefore, cartelization not only produces actors bent on de-legitimizing the political system, but it also taints much of the legislation passed by the EP.

I define collusion in the EP as informal interactions which led to the emergence of the grand coalition. The first component, informality, indicates that these relations took place in the parliamentary arena. In the governmental arena, collusion would correspond to de jure coalition formation. Lacking that option, EPGs routinize their coordination via informal, though repeated, interactions. The second component, fashioning a grand coalition, reflects the substitution of competition for cooperation among typically adversarial party families.

I define exclusion, the obverse of collusion, as the systematic silencing, obstructing, or under-representing of non-core, political groups. The cartel utilizes its majority to re-write rules which disadvantage the smaller groups (Kreppel 2002); therefore, while collusion is informal, exclusion has both legal and ad hoc dimensions. In the case of silencing, consider first that the EPP and S&D act as an "agenda cartel" (Hix et al. 2007, 111-115), and they use this advantage to keep bills concerning European integration from being tabled (Hix 1999), because this issue exaggerates the differences between their pro- and anti-European factions (Crum 2007). Therefore, many of the periphery groups, whose policy preferences are best defined by either

hard or soft Euroscepticism (Taggart 1998), rarely experience the opportunity to legislate on the issue of integration because the core silences debate on this topic. This sort of exclusion is deleterious because it diminishes periphery members' ability to represent their constituencies' preferences vis-à-vis European integration. Obstruction occurs most noticeably when the core groups keep certain delegations from joining their ranks, when they change the rules to make it harder for delegations to form a political group, and when they challenge a group's very existence.

The literature finds numerous instances of under-representation in the EP. Referring to the Technical Group of the European Far Right (DR), Fieschi states that the group was "never afforded access to the normal channels for cooperation between parliamentary groups nor were they given any committee chairs" (2000, 523). This was true despite the fact that DR had only four fewer members than the Rainbow Group (RBW) in EP2 and began EP3 with more MEPs than both the United Left (CG) and the RBW (Bardi 2002, 308). The two largest groups are overrepresented in terms of report allocation, while the radical right groups rarely receive rapporteurships and are often barred from holding committee leadership positions; moreover, "the non-allocation of reports and committee vice-chairmanships to radical right MEPs indicates that there is a cordon sanitaire enclosing the radical right at the European level" (Almeida 2010, 249). These findings exemplify how the core uses exclusion to produce a parliamentary periphery.

The presence of exclusion in the EP is notable for two reasons. First, because the EP does not form a government and lacks a winner-take-all mechanism for allocating leadership positions, it depends on the norm of proportionality to distribute offices (Ringe 2010). Exclusion from leadership positions in the EP cannot be legitimized by formal rules similar to those found in national parliaments. Consequently, under-representation originating in the parliamentary arena and implemented through informal channels represents a clear violation of this norm. Second, scholars investigating the disproportional allocation of offices in the EP recognize the de facto nature of this exclusion and justify this inequality by referencing the cordon sanitaire. While these authors focus primarily on Eurosceptics and the radical right, the current analysis expands the investigation to cover all non-core groups, and my results show that exclusion impacts the entire periphery, not just ideological extremists. Therefore, exclusion in the EP does not share the

normative justifications used in national parliaments to place anti-system parties out of bounds and may be viewed as illegitimate.

One of the strongest critiques of the party cartel hypothesis comes from Kitschelt (2000), who claims that collusion among parliamentary parties is not sustainable because it reflects a prisoner's dilemma. Likewise, he argues mainstream parties have a limited ability to exclude challengers from running in elections or entering the legislative chamber. While these criticisms are applicable to national contexts, they do not travel to the EP.

There are two ways to overcome competing individual's self-interested behavior, i.e. defection, in the prisoner's dilemma. First, the participants may share internal values which make defection unlikely. Second, the players can engage in iterated negotiations such that short-term interests are subsumed under the shadow of future negotiations, thus encouraging cooperation (Axelrod 2006). In the EP, we find evidence to support both sociological and instrumental mechanisms for overcoming defection. First, the EPP and S&D each share a common value—support for European integration (Rose and Borz 2013). Despite ideological disputes over certain issues (Bressanelli 2014), this common denominator is the foundation on which the grand coalition rests. Second, a voting coalition consisting of both the Christian and Social Democrats represents the most efficient route for gaining an absolute majority; therefore, these groups participate in constant negotiations within the committee system and in informal trilogues (Reh et al. 2013). These groups' coordinated behavior ensures that the EP operates as a functional parliament, capable of passing legislation. Therefore, the EPP and S&D share common values regarding support for the EU, common interests in making the EP an efficacious parliamentary chamber, and multiple opportunities to participate in iterated negotiations. All of these characteristics help overcome the prisoner's dilemma by encouraging cooperation which in turn consolidates the cartel. Therefore, collusion is more viable in the EP than in national parliaments.

Kitschelt (2000) also argues that party cartels cannot prohibit challengers from running and winning seats. This is true. However, once those members join the EP, periphery members face challenges that cartel members do not. At the highest level, in the EP's Conference of Presidents, all groups are represented by a chairperson; however, even here "given the pre-eminence of the EPP-ED and the PSE, the duopoly of power…finds institutional expression in [its] meetings"

(Judge and Earnshaw 2008, 164). In this case, the periphery members are indeed represented, but they can always be silenced. While Kitschelt (2000) is correct that a party cartel cannot influence the electoral sphere, in the EP, the core administers most dimensions of the parliamentary arena.

The Model

I base my analytical narrative on an empirical model originally used by economists to explain agglomeration, or the concentration of production facilities in geographic areas. Agglomeration theory explains three key points: First, why manufacturing concentrates in certain regions; second, why agricultural sectors surrounding these manufacturing regions remain less developed; and third, how this disparity produces a stable equilibrium for both clusters. According to this model, "with low transportation costs, a higher manufacturing share, or stronger economies of scale, circular causation sets in, and manufacturing will concentrate in which ever region gets a head start" (Krugman 1991, 497). Below, I translate this definition to the EP context.

The agglomeration cycle starts when a first mover begins manufacturing in a specific region. Low transportation costs are important because they make it possible for workers living in rural areas to move to the industrializing region. With more workers entering the market, the price of labor goes down, which spurs more companies to begin manufacturing in the region. Competition among firms and workers improves overall productivity, thus increasing the share of the economy originating from manufacturing, and decreasing the costs of inputs due to economies of scale. These compounding effects lead to higher wages, which attract more workers from the rural to the urban cluster. The cycle then repeats, and over time the urban sector gains strength while the rural areas face continuing losses to their workforce. This repetition is what Krugman refers to as circular causation, and it is the mechanism that locks in the agglomeration process. By his own definition, Krugman's theory of agglomeration describes a "core-periphery" relationship, whereby the manufacturing cluster represents the core, the agricultural sector stands in for the periphery, and their interactions produce an equilibrium (Krugman 2011, 4). I employ Krugman's model to explain the asymmetric, though stable, relationship between the EP's core and periphery groups.

In the political science literature, circular causation is referred to as increasing returns, and authors apply this concept, in conjunction with path dependence, to explain the uneven

development of common units, such as states, regions, or neighborhoods in a city. Pierson's discussion of agglomeration is enlightening. He writes: "initial centers of economic activity may act like a magnet and influence the locational decisions and investments of other economic actors. The concentration of these factors may in turn make the particular location attractive to other firms that produce similar goods…. Increasing returns arguments help explain the prevalence of pockets of specialized economic activity" (Pierson 2000, 255). Therefore, the application of Krugman's theory aligns closely with qualitative approaches found in political science research.

Two dimensions structure the EP's policy space (Benoit and Laver 2012). Classic left-right ideological issues fall along the primary axis, while issues of supra-nationalism versus national sovereignty compose the secondary dimension (McElroy and Benoit 2009). Groups take positions in this space that are non-overlapping and which are consistent across parliamentary terms (McElroy and Benoit 2012). To understand how agglomeration informs the bifurcation of the EP party system, we can assume that locations within this policy space represent natural resources, or voters whose preferences align with the groups'. Each group, therefore, represents a "cluster" with access to a certain type of voter. The theory of agglomeration allows us to understand how some of these clusters become the core, others become the periphery, and how this dynamic finds an equilibrium.

The application of Krugman's model to the EP party group system is straightforward. First, low transportation costs between geographic clusters correlates with the low cost of switching party groups in the EP (Hix and Noury 2018). Compared to national parliaments, the EP witnesses an exceptional number of party switchers per session (O'Brien and Shomer 2015). Without this element of carriage between clusters, increasing returns would be impossible. Table 1.1 provides counts of switchers, sorted by their start and end clusters. Note that during the first six EP sessions, about 12 percent of all members changed group labels. Of those, over 85 percent of switchers originated in the highly volatile periphery, and 26 percent of switchers left a periphery group to join the core. Not only do we see high rates of switching, indicating that the costs to re-affiliating are relatively low, but the data show a centripetal flow of switchers moving from the periphery to the core, as the model suggests.

Start Session	Cartel	Cartel	Periphery	Periphery	
End Session	**Cartel**	**Periphery**	**Cartel**	**Periphery**	**Total**
Non-Switcher	2,318 (0.66) (0.985)	0 (0.0) (0.0)	0 (0.0) (0.0)	1,186 (0.34) (0.81)	3,504 (1.0) (0.88)
Switcher	37 (0.08) (0.015)	30 (0.06) (1.0)	123 (0.26) (1.0)	283 (0.60) (0.19)	473 (1.0) (0.12)
Total	2,355 (0.59) (1.0)	30 (0.01) (1.0)	123 (0.03) (1.0)	1,469 (0.37) (1.0)	3,977 (1.0) (1.0)

Table 1.1 Transportation Between Cartel and Periphery Clusters (1979-2009)

The second condition, "high manufacturing share," relates to the cartel's legislative output. In this sense, the core cluster, which for the first eight EP sessions could reach the absolute majority threshold without support from the other groups, has a clear advantage when it comes to enacting its preferred policies. If other policy-seeking, periphery members recognize this, then due to low transportation costs, they will switch to the high-productivity, core cluster.

Finally, the "economies of scale" concept correlates with seat share, and the discrepancy in size between the cartel and periphery is visualized in Figure 1.1. Based on the norms of proportionality which ostensibly constrain the distribution of offices, all things being equal, membership in a larger group is more attractive than membership in a smaller one (McElroy and Benoit 2009). Therefore, the dominant seat share of the core cluster should have a positive impact on attracting office-seeking members.

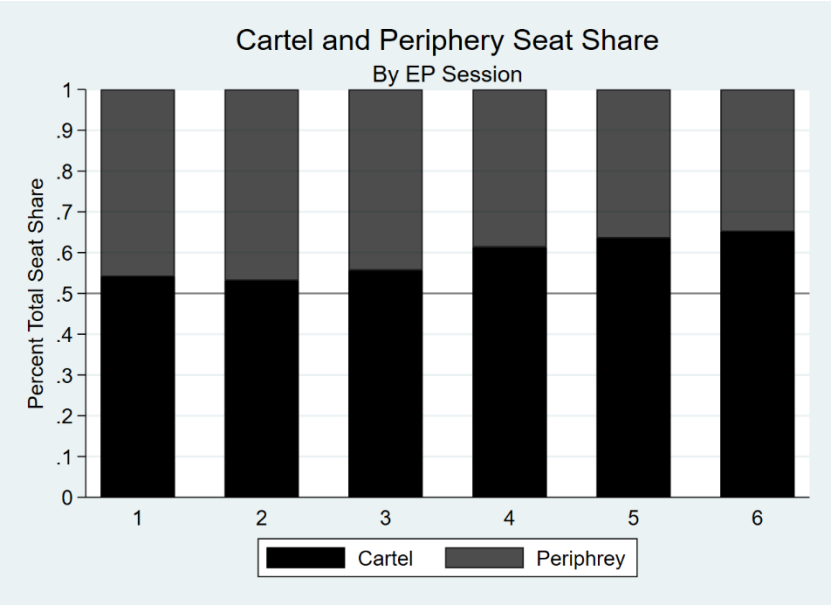

Figure 1.1 Comparison of Seat Share for Cartel and Periphery Clusters, by Parliamentary Session

These processes lead to increasing returns for the core and the debilitation of the periphery; yet, according to agglomeration theory, this relationship generates a stable, though unbalanced, equilibrium. How is that possible? From a rational perspective, if the core controls policy and offices, then all ambitious members should join. This is not the case, however. Krugman contends that "the location decisions of producers themselves determined the location of large markets. Under the right circumstances, this could produce a circular causation in which concentrating production fed on itself. *But that was not a necessary result, because the 'centripetal' pull of market size was opposed by the 'centrifugal' force of dispersed natural resources*" (Krugman 2011, 4-5, my italics). This quote speaks to the electoral advantage that periphery members may achieve based on their ideological extremity, outsider status, or Euroscepticism (De Vries and Edwards 2009). In this sense, party-level opposition to European integration and motivated Eurosceptic voters represent natural resources which make it possible for periphery members to continue existing, although precariously, in their own spatial clusters. Certain members will have no interest in joining the core, while other members might try to affiliate but face rejection. The documentation of both push and pull mechanisms is critical for a theory describing a two-tiered party group system because this dynamic stabilizes a system populated by clusters of unbalanced strength.

Historical Narrative

The First Critical Juncture: Defining the Units

Emergence

The historical narrative begins in the Common Assembly of the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC). As early as June 1952, during the inaugural sitting of the Assembly, the members, while crafting the original Rules of Procedure, came to a decision which represents the first inflection point in the historical development of the EP. According to Fitzmaurice, "the early debates on the rules of procedure, as well as the form in which these were finally adopted, give ample evidence of the conscious effort being made to facilitate—nay, encourage—the formation of formal party groups of a trans-national character within the assembly" (1975, 20). It took just two years for the political groups to gain a "dominant position within the organizational structure of the assembly;" further, each of the groups had a "corporate identity…distinctive policies and styles which differentiated one from another" (Fitzmaurice 1975, 24-25).

At this time, the Socialist group viewed itself as a "supranational opposition" and sought "a more social, interventionist policy" than the Liberals and Christian Democrats, who referred to these challengers as a dirigiste, "precursor opposition" at odds with their own "liberal" ideology (Fitzmaurice 1975, 1998-9). The Gaullist group (UDE) presented an anti-system, sovereigntist critique and argued for regaining national control over decision-making powers as well as the cessation or reversal of the integration process. Interestingly, despite this proto-Euroscepticism, the French Gaullists (UDR) did not cross the same red lines as "the extreme right wing groups such as the French UDCA and the Sozialistische Reichspartei (SRP) from Germany," parties which were, even at this early stage, placed out of bounds (Fitzmaurice 1975, 19).

From 1952 until the passing of the Single European Act (SEA) in 1986, the process of politicization led to left-right polarization, floating vote coalitions, and the predominance of *ad hoc* policy arrangements among the groups (Pradhan and Pridham 1981, 50). Kreppel cites similar trends and argues that the groups tended towards "ideological extremes and dogmatism" (Kreppel 2002, 36). During this period, party groups were undergoing differentiation while the patterns of competition remained grounded in ideological conflict.

Counterfactual

Viewing these historical instances through the prism of path dependence makes it possible to identify a starting point for several different processes which would later mature into full institutions. Most significantly, if the members of the Common Assembly had chosen to sit as national delegations rather than trans-national party groups affiliated with established party families, then the historical development of the EP would be completely different. An alternative resolution at this critical moment could have caused the EP to end up resembling the Consultative Committee of the Council of Europe, an ineffective "talking shop" (Rittberger 2005, 74-78). Furthermore, at this early stage, the groups were staking out their own individual trajectories. This is relevant because endogenous group characteristics influence patterns of interaction and in turn determine the shape of the party group system.

Sources of Opposition

Ideological competition between the Socialists, on one hand, and the Christian Democrats and Liberals, on the other, defines this time period. The former tabled an official motion of censure against the High Authority in 1956 and was generally critical of its decisions (Fitzmaurice 1975, 198). In contrast, the latter two groups supported the High Authority, and in the case of the EPP "one can say that the cement which holds the group together is support for integration" (Fitzmaurice 1975, 76). A faction in the EPP led by the German CDU viewed the Socialists primarily as political competitors. Kurt Biedenkopf, for example, intended to make the EPP "a broad, conservative, non-confessional, anti-socialist alliance which can confront the socialists in direct elections" (Fitzmaurice 1978, 113).

Anti-system groups, such as the Communists and the UDE, represented a different type of opposition which produced a centrifugal force within the emerging party group system. Lacking the de jure structure of a government-opposition framework, this polarization represented a serious impediment to coordination. Finally, even at this early stage, we detect three types of delegations—1) the two core groups plus the Liberals, 2) those outside the core but seated in the Assembly, and 3) those deemed beyond the pale and totally excluded from the Assembly. At a time before popular elections, it was much easier to reject the third type of delegation, and this form of exclusion will play an important role later in the discussion. By identifying sources and types of opposition, it is possible to better apprehend groups' strategic motivations.

Reproduction

The choice to sit as trans-national groups was one of the first, and most important, decisions made by the Common Assembly. The EP has preserved this institution as the fundamental political component of its parliamentary system in two ways. First, it regularly updates the Rules of Procedure and reforms the minimum threshold requirements for creating a group (Kreppel 2002). Second, it uses the Rules to make group membership much more attractive than sitting as an un-affiliated member. Groups receive access to budgetary funds and support staff, as well as representation in the Conference of Presidents; additionally, they control plenary speaking time, committee membership and the distribution of rapporteurships (Corbett et al. 2003, 58). Consequently, it greatly benefits MEPs to affiliate with a party group. Beyond the confines of the EP, transnational parties support the workings of the EP party groups, thus offering external, institutional support (Hanley 2008). All of these factors help reproduce the trans-national EPGs as the pre-eminent political units in the EP.

The Second Critical Juncture: Staking a Claim

Emergence

The decision taken at the so-called "meeting of the giants," which occurred at the start of the EP's second term (1984-89), signifies the second critical juncture. According to Rudi Arndt of the German Social Democrats (SPD), at this meeting, the SOC and the EPP "agreed that there was no point in a mutual flexing of muscles; the only sensible strategy was to achieve the appropriate majorities" (Westlake 1994, 186). In order to pass budgets, the two largest groups substituted competition for cooperation. I interpret this critical juncture as the emergence of a new institution, collusion, which directly impacts every subsequent organizational development in the EP.

The effects of this decision are immediately observable. In EP1 the SOC group voted with the EPP and the Liberals around 60 percent of the time, and in EP2 the frequency jumps to 70 percent. By EP3 and EP4, the Socialists are voting with the EPP and Liberals at least 3 out of 4 votes (Hix et al. 2009, 153). Bowler and McElroy find extraordinary voting cohesion between the three largest groups and determine that "the divisions and partisan battles amongst the main three political groups have been settled long before bills get to the floor" (2015, 1361). This pattern of voting behavior is directly attributable to the meeting of the giants.

This meeting occurred prior to the Single European Act (SEA) of 1986, yet the literature identifies this treaty reform as the primary catalyst for spurring cooperation among the major groups and the formation of the grand coalition. According to this account, the implementation of new rules, such as weighted voting in the Conference of Presidents, "coincide[d] with exogenous increases in the legislative powers and political authority of the EP," leading to "a shift…that began to privilege the largest parties to the detriment of everyone else" which in turn helped to the grand coalition to become "hegemonic within the organizational structures of the EP" (Kreppel 2002, 215-16). While we have no reason to dispute the significant role treaty reform played, the meeting of the giants preceded the SEA by two years, and because arguments using path dependency take sequencing seriously (Thelen 1999), it is also important to consider how the agreement to substitute cooperation for competition made it possible for the EPP and SOC to take full advantage of their new powers. Had these groups continued to view each other as adversaries, as they had during the period prior to the meeting of the giants, it is not clear that passing the SEA would have had the same results on the EP's party system.

From the perspective of Krugman's agglomeration theory, collusion represents a staking out of territory and the "decision to create the market" in a specific region. The grand coalition won the "first mover's" benefit by laying claim to the moderate, pro-Europe region within the EP's policy space. An unintended consequence of this choice was that the core cluster could draw switchers from both ideological sides of the spectrum. For example, in the Third Session (1989-1994), fifteen Italian MEPs from the Italian Communist Party (PCI) left the Group for the European United Left (GUE) in May of 1993 to join the Socialists[17]; likewise, the entire European Democratic Group (ED), led by the UK Conservatives, merged with the EPP in 1992. If we view these changes through an ideological lens, it is difficult to discern similarities between Italian Communists and UK Tories; yet, when we use the logic of agglomeration, which is predicated on low costs to switching, the core's overwhelming seat share, and the grand coalition's ability to shape the agenda and enact policy, these shifts from the periphery to the core make perfect sense. Agglomeration draws members and delegations towards the core, thus consolidating and

[17] They would not stay members for long, as they later combined with the French Communists to establish a reformed GUE-NGL group to begin the 4th EP session.

expanding the moderate, pro-European cluster while simultaneously draining the periphery of its most ambitious members. In the cases cited above, two periphery groups dissolved and those members were then absorbed directly into the cartel.

Counterfactual

Had the meeting of the giants produced a different outcome, the EP's party group system would look completely different. In such a counterfactual world, either "major" group would have been forced to fashion pacts with more ideologically congruent groups. For example, the SOC could have tried to muster a United Front coalition including the Rainbow Group, the Communists, and some of the left-leaning members in the Liberal Group. Likewise, the EPP could have forged a Conservative-Nationalist Bloc with their natural allies, the Liberals, as well the Gaullists and UK Conservatives. Had one of these alternative alliances gained traction, then the other would have been forced to do the same, and the history of the EP's party groups system may have followed a more majoritarian trajectory. The choice to form a moderate, pro-European cartel effectively split the potential opposition into two separate ideological camps, one on the left and one on the right, weakening the periphery in the process.

Opposition

This second inflection point turns on an explicit choice made by the Socialists to forfeit their dirigiste critique of the Community's integration process, to forego their standing as the chamber's constructive opposition, and instead, to formulate a new partnership with the pro-integration Christian Democrats. From this point forward, the party group system would be dominated by two groups working together and seeking consensus for the betterment of the EP and the European Community.

The periods divided by this second critical juncture revolve around two different interpretations of the term consensus. In the first period, the Socialists often criticized the High Authority, the EPP and the Liberals, so when these actors aimed at "presenting a united position to the council" (Fitzmaurice 1975, 197), this implied negotiating with an antagonistic opposition. In the period following the meeting of the giants, hostilities were put aside, and the assumption of cooperation acted as an informal standing order. In the first period, because the Socialist vote could not be taken for granted, consensus was the product of active compromise, or the formation of what Lijphart (2012) refers to as an inclusive or oversized coalition. In the second period, consensus

resulted from explicit collusion, and oversized majorities were replaced by a minimum winning coalition. Scholars continue to refer to the EP as consensus-oriented (Bowler and McElroy 2015; Burns 2013; Settembri and Neuhold 2009); however, this tendency only conceals an uneven power dynamic and legitimizes the collusive core's dominate position within the party group system.

To confirm this shift in meaning, simply refer to Pierre Pflimlin's account of the giants' meeting. He recalls that the small groups reacted to the formation of the informal grand coalition by referring to Arndt (SOC) and Klepsch (EPP) as "co-dictators" (Westlake 1994, 187). Likewise, Arndt himself admitted "that this is not entirely above board. It has meant steamrolling the smaller factions in the Group, and of course, the smaller Groups who often got very annoyed" (Westlake 1994,187). Would groups view consensus-seeking negotiations as dictatorial? If they were cooperating in an oversized voting coalition, would these periphery groups feel steamrolled? In fact, consensus-seeking continued, but in this second period its meaning changed; starting in the second term, consensus equated to the EPP and SOC formulating a common position and then waiting to see which groups joined the bandwagon.

As a secondary benefit of the Socialists' turn towards collusion, the EP could now focus on the Council as its main source of opposition. The Council had always had an "ambiguous relationship" with the EP (Judge and Earnshaw 2008, 61). According to the Treaties of Rome, the Council "was not obliged to take notice of any opinions" presented by the EP; furthermore, it was slow to determine the date of the first popular European election, which finally occurred two decades after Rome (Westlake 1994, 35). The weakness of the supranational EP was therefore reflected in the lack of respect accorded it by the intergovernmental Council. Following the meeting of the giants, the EP could ensure an easier path towards an absolute majority. When the Liberals voted with the bloc, which they did frequently, the EP could indeed present a common position to the Council. Further, once the cooperation procedure was introduced by the SEA, the EP gained conditional agenda-setting powers (Tsebelis 1995), and the Council could no longer ignore its influence over legislative proceedings. Therefore, the formation of the collusive cartel made the EP a much stronger chamber in terms of inter-institutional competition.

Reproduction

The evidence of collusion is overwhelming. Regarding the Parliament's leadership and administration, Westlake (1994) argues that the three main groups, the EPP, SOC/PES and the Liberals (ALDE), form an "oligopoly." This idea extends most obviously to the informal agreement between the EPP and PES to rotate the Presidency between themselves, "effectively excluding all other groups" from this office (Kreppel 2002, 188). Hix et al. (2003) find that the core groups collude primarily on issues pertaining to European integration and *whenever an absolute majority is needed to pass legislation*, a tendency which persists into the post-Enlargement era (Bressanelli 2014). Further, the literature determines that "the three main party families have a strong incentive not to compete on Integration-Independence issues. But, as long as the main party families form a pro-Integration cartel, there will be an incentive for anti-European forces to mobilise" (Hix 1999, 93).

Collusion extends to voting behavior within the EP as well. Almost no difference exists between the EPP, PES, and ALDE when they vote on issues dealing with European integration; in fact, using an indicator variable to identify these groups as a single bloc produces the same results as analyzing them individually (Thomassen, Noury and Voeten 2004, 158). Further, the modal figure for "close votes" in the first seven Parliaments is unanimity among members from the three largest groups (Bowler and McElroy 2015).

In order to determine whether or not the EPP and S&D behave collusively, I calculate the agreement index (AI) (Hix et al. 2007) for EP sessions 1-6. The Agreement Index ranges from 0, when a party is evenly divided between Yeas, Nays, and Abstentions, to 1, when every member of the party votes the same way. Rather than calculating each group's AI individually, I combine the EPP & S&D into a cartel cluster, and place the other groups into a second periphery cluster. Figure 1.2 illustrates the increase in cartel cluster voting unity. The graph shows that between EP1-EP3, the members of cartel and the periphery were acting as individual groups, with average AI scores around 0.4. However, by the 4th EP session the trend line indicates that the EPP and S&D groups began coordinating their behavior, with the AI increasing to over 70 percent by EP6. The periphery, as expected remains divided across all sessions. The graph provides evidence to show the process of cartelization is historical in nature and developed over several sessions. That the meeting of the giants predated the coming to force of the SEA and Maastricht Treaties is

historical fact; that the increase in voting unity lagged several sessions behind both the meeting and the treaties reflects the complexity of the institution and speaks to how both the micro-trends, taking place within the EP, and the macro-trends, occurring outside the Hemicycle, eventually converged to produce a cartel that in EP6 had an Agreement Index of over 0.72.

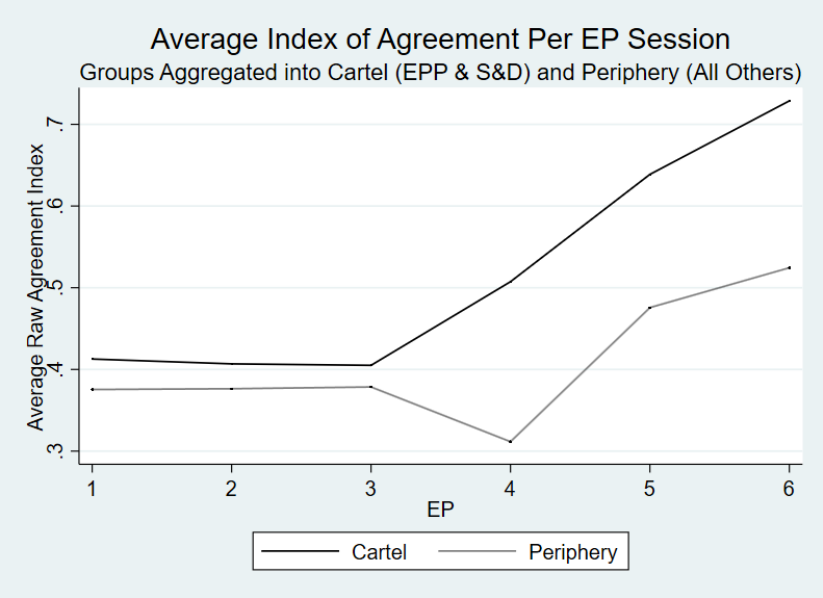

Figure 1.2 Agreement Index for Cartel and Periphery Clusters

Changes to the Rules of Procedure certainly benefitted the grand coalition (Kreppel 2002). However, these regulations are not collusion's source, they are its sustenance. As Pierson notes, "when certain actors are in a position to impose rules on others, the employment of power may be self-reinforcing. Actors…use political authority to generate changes in rules…designed to enhance power. Relatively small disparities in political resources among contending groups may widen dramatically over time as positive feedback sets it" (Pierson 2000, 259). Indeed, changing the rules of the EP is a formal response to an informal agreement that was necessary precisely because no de jure mechanism existed to create a governing coalition. Rule changes create a "lasting legacy," thus making the informal grand coalition "reproduce-able" across multiple sessions (Thelen 1999, 390).

The theoretical literature on informal institutions offers greater insights into how the collusive core reproduces itself. Noted already, is the presence of repeated play among core members, which according to Axelrod's seminal work (2006), helps to reduce the likelihood of defection. In examining stability and change in informal institutions, Knight argues that "social institutions are self-reinforcing if they constitute an equilibrium outcome for the individual actors. As long as an individual actor cannot do better by pursuing a different strategy—given the strategies of other actors—he or she will continue to act in accordance with the institution" (1992, 177). As long as MEPs cannot find a substitute constellation of groups capable of consistently reaching the absolute majority threshold, the grand coalition will remain stable.

A large coalition gains an advantage by providing ambitious MEPs with the offices and policies they seek. However, size can also disadvantage an informal coalition because, as groups become larger, monitoring becomes more difficult, the risk of defection increases, and the likelihood of disciplining defectors declines (Knight 1992, 180). The EP's "intergroups," informal networks of MEPs interested in policies outside the purview of the standing committee system, represent a space where cartel members may interact and keep tabs on one another. Representatives from the two largest groups are highly over-represented in intergroups, and results from network analyses show that for the Sixth and Seventh EPs, 71 out of 76 (93.4 percent) of the "high frequency" intergroup joiners are members of the EPP or S&D. Additionally, none of the "most connected" or "most central" intergroup members come from the periphery, reflecting an extreme level of core dominance (Ringe and Victor 2013, 131-2). In other words, cartel members are not only the most frequent participants, but they are the most influential members, in those networks. Intergroup participation provides a secondary context for core members to engage with one another, and this is important because repeated interactions and increased information sharing make tit-for-tat strategies more effective which in turn helps to offset the potential problems of increased group size.

The reproduction of the informal institution of collusion, therefore, comes from a combination of low transportation costs, advantageous seat share, and control over policy outputs. These characteristics make it possible for the cartel to rewrite laws specifically intended to "marginalize" the periphery groups. By tilting the playing field to its advantage, the cartel introduces unequal payoffs for its members and makes defection less likely. Finally, even as the

grand coalition grows in size, and thus faces the increased risk of non-compliance, core members use informal networks, such as intergroups, to maintain open channels of communication and information sharing, thus decreasing the cost of monitoring and increasing the likelihood of successful coordination.

The Third Critical Juncture: Setting the Boundaries

Emergence

If the first decision defined the nature of legitimate units, and the second inflection point prepared the chamber for the emergence of a collusive cartel, then the third critical juncture represents the use of exclusion to clearly demarcate insiders from outsiders. Recall that the three types of exclusion include silencing, obstructing and under-representing. In its most extreme version, obstruction is equivalent to dissolving an entire group, and the third event illustrates such an example.

On October 2, 2001 the Court of First Instance formally dissolved the Technical Group of Independent Members (TDI) because its members lacked "political affinity" and were therefore in breach of Rule 29(1). This decision upheld the EP Committee on Constitutional Affair's dissolution of the group on September 14, 1999 and marked the first time in the EP's history that a group was coercively disbanded. The dissolution of the TDI set a precedent for the collapse of the Identity, Tradition and Sovereignty (ITS) Group, which existed for eleven months in 2007. Despite the fact that TDI is described as a "technical group" (Settembri 2004), and the ITS is categorized as a radical right parties (RRP) group (Startin 2010), they drew from the exact same pool of delegations, including France's Front National (FN), Italy's Liga Nord and Lista Bonino, and Belgium's Vlaams Blok (VB). Therefore, the ITS descended directly from the TDI, and their histories are closely intertwined.

Startin uses the term "cordon sanitaire" to describe the tactics used by the core against the ITS (2010, 432). He partially attributes the collapse of the group to the "sheer institutional force of the EP," personified in this case by Socialist MEP Martin Schulz and a contingent of EPP members. Initially, the cartel attempted to block the ITS from even forming, and then it made efforts to keep ITS members from gaining representation on the Conference of Presidents (Startin 2010, 440-1). When he accused the sovereigntists of lacking a "shared political affinity," Schulz discredited the

ITS by relying on the same language found in the Court's ruling against the TDI (Mahony 2007). According to Startin's formulation, the grand coalition is equivalent to the "force of the EP," and it deliberately used the cordon sanitaire to exclude members from parliamentary participation—an obvious case of obstruction.

Shortly after ITS dissolved, the cartel initiated and passed legislation raising the minimum number of members necessary to form a group from 20 to 25, a move that was intended to restrict the future formation of similar mixed and far right-wing groups. The core used its seat share and influence to change the Rules of Procedure in order to disadvantage smaller groups and individual members. As Settembri notes in his discussion of the TDI, "Rules revisions are also about managing internal complexity and this results in 'inegalitarian' choices that empower certain actors to the detriment of others" (Settembri 2004, 154). This, of course, echoes Pierson's explanation for how rule reform generates both increasing returns and asymmetrical units. As noted in the first section, even as a consultative Assembly, the EP took a dim view of certain extremist parties and refused to let them participate. The third inflection point, therefore, transfers this same logic to the elected chamber.

Counterfactual

Parties and members observed the actions taken by the cartel and adjusted their behavior accordingly; indeed, "in the search for legitimacy (as the key to electoral success) the more 'reconstructed' RRPs [radical right parties] were wary about formal association with those parties perceived to be more extreme than themselves" (Startin and Brack 2016, 36). This tendency is analyzed by McDonnell and Werner (2017), who determine that parties described as extremist by national media use their affiliation with "legitimate" groups in the EP as a way to gain respectability back home. Therefore, the dissolution of the technical and far right groups has impacted the strategies that parties use when determining which group best suits their long-term interest. Indeed, these acts of exclusion may have inadvertently had a "mainstreaming" effect on radical right parties. Whether the long-term impact of this is positive, i.e. the RRPs soften their rhetoric and policies, or negative, i.e. the mainstream parties subsume RRP positions in order to maintain their seat share, remains to be seen. However, had these groups been left to their own devices, given that they were formed out of "tactical necessity rather than any meaningful political collaboration" (Startin and Brack 2015), it is highly probable that they would have met

the same end as many other small, weakly institutionalized groups in the EP—they would have simply collapsed on their own without the cartel's intervention.

Opposition

The third inflection point shifts the focus of opposition from outside the EP to within its own chambers. Given the EP's increased stature, the cartel transitioned from concerning itself with the parliament's position vis-à-vis the Council, and began focusing on internal challengers. Recall that the Agreement Index increased substantially in the 5th EP session (1999-2004), the same time that the cartel was using exclusion to determine which types of groups were beyond the pale. By the time ITS was formed, the cartel was acting as a unified bloc and it used its influence against the technical group. The processes of collusion and exclusion are both necessary for the cartelization of the EP party group system, and we see both converging in this case.

Reproduction

Because exclusion has multiple dimensions, the obstruction described above may be reproduced using other means, such as under-representation. In this section I test whether being a member of a periphery group has negative consequences for becoming a committee leader, a member of a "key" committee, or a rapporteur. I base my analysis on Benedetto's (2007) model for testing consensus and proportionality in the assignment of committee "mega-seats," defined here as committee chairs and vice-chairs.

The dependent variables for these models are aggregated office counts for each group-session. For example, in EP6 the Christian Democrats had 20 committee leaders and the Socialists had 18, while the Leftists (GUE-NGL) and the Union for Europe of the Nations (UEN) each had two. Key committees, as defined by McElroy (2008, 220), include the Environmental Committee, Economic and Monetary Affairs, and the Industrial and Research Committees, a categorization confirmed by Yordanova (2013, 39). The rapporteur outcome is not a measure of the number of reports; rather, it aggregates single rapporteurs per group, so it measures the number of MEPs who held at least one report during the term. I center each dependent variable on its mean.

Table 1.2 Mixed Effects Regression Models. The effect of periphery membership on receiving three leadership positions: Committee Leaders, Key Committee Members, Rapporteurships.

	Total Committee Leaders/EPG		Total Key Committee Members/EPG		Total Rapporteurs/ EPG	
	Model 1	**Model 2**	**Model 3**	**Model 4**	**Model 5**	**Model 6**
VARIABLES	**Log Odds**					
Periphery Member		-18.60*** (1.620)		9.544*** (1.588)		-3.596 (5.618)
EP1	-5.688*** (0.234)	-8.969*** (0.134)	-9.404*** (0.259)	-11.72*** (0.169)	-16.71*** (0.699)	-23.19*** (0.305)
EP2	-2.342*** (0.215)	-3.365*** (0.128)	-5.658*** (0.239)	-8.828*** (0.161)	1.897** (0.644)	6.284*** (0.292)
EP4	-18.97*** (0.212)	-26.25*** (0.119)	0.482* (0.236)	0.005 (0.150)	38.79*** (0.636)	51.48*** (0.272)
EP5	-7.140*** (0.224)	-10.18*** (0.125)	13.27*** (0.249)	16.82*** (0.157)	25.66*** (0.672)	31.99*** (0.285)
EP6	-11.43*** (0.211)	-15.77*** (0.117)	15.19*** (0.234)	19.11*** (0.147)	54.13*** (0.631)	70.89*** (0.266)
Periphery*EP1		7.999*** (0.227)		7.913*** (0.284)		21.54*** (0.517)
Periphery*EP2		2.742*** (0.204)		9.042*** (0.257)		-6.504*** (0.466)
Periphery*EP4		23.19*** (0.208)		0.046 (0.261)		-42.11*** (0.475)
Periphery*EP5		9.407*** (0.218)		-13.22*** (0.274)		-21.60*** (0.499)
Periphery*EP6		13.46*** (0.202)		-13.84*** (0.254)		-53.73*** (0.462)
EPG Seat Share	33.07*** (1.597)	42.67*** (0.771)	209.4*** (1.771)	185.6*** (0.969)	509.7*** (4.787)	461.7*** (1.757)
Constant	2.755* (1.224)	14.71*** (1.538)	3.481** (1.347)	-7.255*** (1.498)	-29.59*** (3.936)	-20.92*** (5.365)
Observations	3,977	3,977	3,977	3,977	3,977	3,977
Number of groups	25	25	25	25	25	25
Log-Likelihood	-10735.49	-7639.62	-11147.66	-8545.87	-15100.26	-10924.16
EPG Variance	34.653 (9.99)	4.708 (1.350)	41.920 (12.071)	4.452 (1.312)	362.038 (104.588)	57.443 (16.404)
Residual Variance	12.555 (0.282)	2.654 (0.060)	15.449 (0.348)	4.200 (0.094)	112.642 (2.534)	13.770 (0.310)
Rho	0.734	0.640	0.731	0.515	0.763	0.807
AIC	21488.99	15308.24	22313.33	17121.73	30218.53	21878.33
BIC	21545.58	15403.57	22369.92	17216.06	30275.12	21972.65

Notes. Committee Leaders hold either chair or vice-chair positions. Key Committees follow McElroy's (2006, 220) coding scheme and include the Environmental Committee, Economic and Monetary Affairs, or the Industrial and Research Committees. "Total rapporteurs" does not count

the total number of reports. It aggregates the number of group members who managed at least one report during the session.
Standard errors in parentheses *** p<0.001, ** p<0.01, * p<0.05

The primary explanatory variable is an indicator for whether the MEP began the session in a periphery group. The expectation for each model is that the coefficients on these dummies should be significant and negative, suggesting that MEPs from periphery groups receive fewer leadership positions. I include fixed effects for EP sessions where EP3 is the baseline. In order to determine the change in periphery membership's effect on attaining offices over time, I also use interaction terms between the periphery dummy and each session. I include EPG seat share to control for proportional distribution of offices, and I expect larger groups to receive more leadership positions. To estimate the effect of these covariates on winning committee leadership posts, seats on key committees, or reports, I use a linear mixed-effects model where each MEP is nested in their starting EPG (Rabe-Heskett and Skrondal 2012).

Table 1.2 presents six models, two for each of the three outcomes. Models 2, 4 and 6 include the periphery group-EP session interaction terms. In Model 2, for committee leadership posts, all components of the interaction term are highly significant. As expected, the coefficient for the periphery indicator is negative, indicating that MEPs from these groups hold significantly fewer committee leadership positions, even after controlling for the size of the party groups. Figure 1.3 illustrates this relationship. We see that in every session, except for EP4, cartel groups have held more committee leadership posts than periphery groups, although the discrepancy shrinks over time.

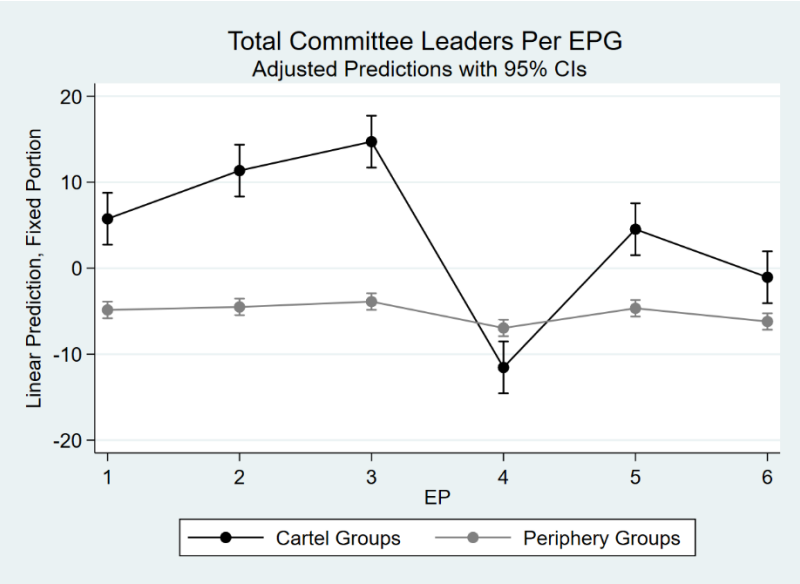

Figure 1.3 Predicted Probabilities for Model 2. Committee Leaders Per Group Per Session

Model 4 tests the effect of periphery membership on gaining seats on key committees, and in this case, the coefficient on the periphery indicator is positive, indicating that members from these groups are more likely to sit on one of these committees. This result is certainly due to the fact that the Greens are both a periphery group and highly active on the Environmental Committee.

Model 6 analyzes the effect of periphery membership on rapporteurs per EPG, and although the periphery indicator is not significant, it does take a negative sign, as expected. However, because all five of the interaction terms are highly significant, we can reject the null hypothesis which states that there is no relationship between periphery EPGs and winning rapporteurships. Figure 1.4 provides an interesting story regarding the development of the cartel's control over report allocation. For the first three sessions (1979-1994), the periphery groups either gained more rapporteurs than the cartel, or there was no difference. However, after the introduction of the co-decision procedure in 1992, we see a pronounced increase in cartel members becoming rapporteurs. This trend aligns nicely with previous discussion of cartel collusion, which also began coalescing during this same time period. As hypothesized, the results show that, since 1994, the periphery groups have received significantly fewer reports than the cartel groups. Given that the Liberals and the Greens are coded as periphery members, this effect cannot be explained solely by self-exclusion (Benedetto 2007; Almeida 2010).

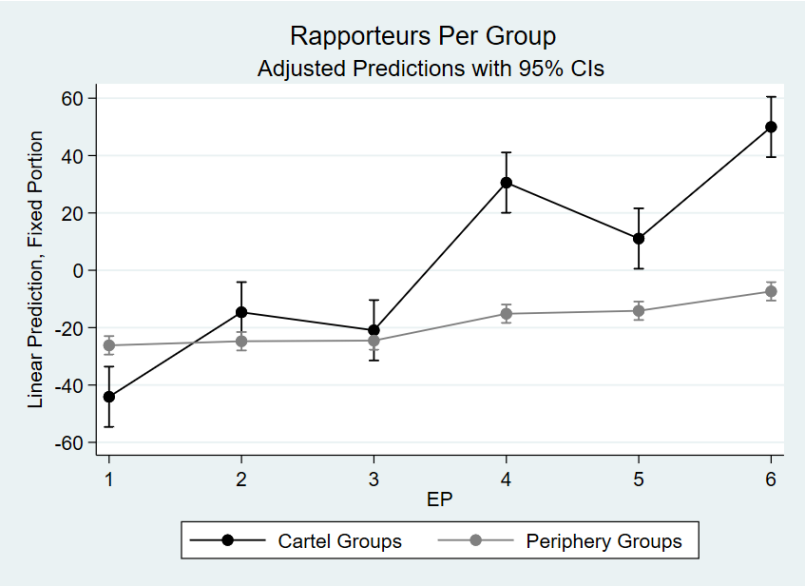

Figure 1.4 Predicted Probabilities for Model 6. Rapporteurs Per Group Per Session

These models provide strong evidence that periphery groups are under-represented in the distribution of committee leadership positions and the allocation of reports. The findings run parallel to Almeida (2010), who observes similar effects using a smaller sample. Identifying these trends across multiple sessions allows us to better understand the relationship between exclusion and the norm or proportionality. Where the Rules of Procedure codify periphery members' right to hold offices, such as in the Conference of Presidents or EP Bureau, we should expect to find silencing. In cases such as committee leadership and report allocation, where the norm is more flexible, we expect to find under-representation as the cartel's dominant strategy. Finally, in extreme cases, and as a last resort, we expect the cartel to employ obstruction, as in the case of the TDI's dissolution.

Conclusions

This paper begins by presenting a puzzle: How has the EP become such an effective external actor vis-à-vis the other European institutions, while also failing to mature into a representative body capable of providing the EU with sufficient input-oriented legitimacy? In addressing this question, this study makes two major contributions. First, it presents a two-dimensional, theoretical conceptualization of cartelization which includes the processes of collusion and exclusion. Second, it uses the analytical narrative approach to apply this theory to the European Parliament. The agglomeration model provides a template for understanding how asymmetry can represent an equilibrium in systems with low transportation costs and economies of scale.

Identifying historical inflection points makes it possible to trace the development of two political institutions—collusion and exclusion— and to illustrate what key decisions led to the consolidation of the grand coalition. The literature on exclusion, which thus far has focused only on Eurosceptic and radical right groups, is expanded to include the entire periphery cluster. The results show that, at least in terms of committee leadership posts and report allocation, the periphery has been at a steep disadvantage for many years.

The cartelization of the party group system is to blame for the EP's ineffectiveness as a representative body. A two-tier party system does not meet the criteria for procedural democracy. If parliamentarians do not stand as equals, then this curtails their ability to speak for their constituencies. In turn, if voters feel that their voices are not being heard in Strasbourg, this undercuts the legitimacy gained through popular elections. Therefore, one reason that the EP is not satisfying its legitimating role can be traced to rational decisions made by strategic actors working within the EP itself.

The cartel's exclusionary tactics may be acceptable in political systems controlled by a de jure, governing coalition, but in the EP, where collusion takes place informally, the silencing, under-representing, and obstructing of periphery members is inappropriate. As noted by Bartolini (1999), minimal levels of collusion often help systems remain stable, and this reasoning led the EPP and the S&D to form a grand coalition. Shared interests in presenting a unified position to the Council and Commission as well as common support for European integration permitted these two groups to substitute competition for collusion. These decisions had unintended consequences, however. The result is a bifurcated party group system which reduces the Hemicycle's capacity to serve the interests of all Europeans, and as Katz and Mair (1995) predicted, such cartelization provides ammunition to periphery members who use their exclusion as a justification for de-legitimizing the EP and the EU.

Finally, based on the asymmetry identified in this analysis, it is no longer tenable to argue that the EP primarily orients itself towards achieving consensus. The institution of exclusion cannot coexist with Lijphart's conceptualization of oversized majorities and inclusiveness. Consensus among grand coalition members is collusion, the cartel adheres to the logic of a minimum winning coalition, and when we observe the formation of oversized voting coalitions, this should

be considered an example of bandwagoning. Given these findings, it is likely that political competition has always existed within the EU, yet a dominant frame, namely consensus-seeking, has obscured the true relationship between unequal EP participants. The dominance and collusion of the cartel served a very important purpose. Had it not coalesced, then the EP would not hold the position within the EU's broader political system that it does today. However, the decisions that led to the formation of the cartel, and the exclusion which serves to maintain and stabilize it, have negative consequences, not only for the party group system but for the assembly's capacity to act as a representative assembly.

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Paper Two

Who Works and Why? Uneven Institutionalization in the European Parliament's Party Group System

Abstract

Scholars often assign the European Parliament's political groups either the major or minor label; however, this categorization, based primarily on seat share, does not capture the similarities between the two largest groups and several of the smaller ones. Drawing on the institutionalization literature, this paper introduces four original conditions—consistency, concentration, fragility, and volatility—to construct a typology of groups using fuzzy set Ideal Type Analysis (fsITA). The typology indicates that the Liberals, the Greens, and the Leftists share more in common with the Christian and Social Democrats than with weakly institutionalized groups. I display this typology's utility in two ways. First, I trace the developmental trajectories of selected groups in order to illustrate how the process of (de)institutionalization occurred during the first seven EP terms. Second, I analyze rapporteurship allocation (1979-2014) to demonstrate the disadvantage faced by members of weakly institutionalized groups hoping to influence policy. The implications of this research are far-reaching as the findings open new avenues for examining parliamentary behavior in the EP's unevenly institutionalized party group system.

Keywords: European Parliament, parliamentary groups, uneven institutionalization, Fuzzy Set Ideal Type Analysis

Introduction

Empirical and descriptive analyses of the European Parliament (EP) rely on seat share as the pivotal characteristic for distinguishing between types of European Parliamentary Groups (EPGs). Due to their size, scholars refer to the European People's Party (EPP/EPP-ED) and the Social Democrats (SOC/PES/S&D) as major groups, while designating small to mid-sized EPGs as minor groups (Kreppel, 2002). Major groups receive the lion's share of academic attention (Hix et al. 2007), but the field has also examined medium-sized groups, such as the Liberals (LD/LDR/ELDR/ALDE) and the Greens (V/V-EFA) (Bressanelli, 2014; Jensen & Spoon, 2010). Analysis of small EPGs, specifically those identified with the radical right (Bale et al. 2010; Fieschi, 2000; McDonnell & Werner, 2019), Euroscepticism (Brack, 2015; Whitaker & Lynch,

2014), or technical groups (Settembri, 2004; Startin, 2010), is present but limited. Notwithstanding its ubiquity, the major-minor dichotomy has trouble accounting for a group like the Liberals, which has held seats in the EP since its founding, and despite its size, often plays the role of kingmaker (Rasmussen, 2012). To address such borderline cases, this paper develops a typology of EPGs using institutionalization as the key qualifier.

In order to refine our understanding of what types of political groups populate the Hemicycle, I analyze the European Parliament (EP), 1979-2014, and construct a typology for comparing the differences between party groups vis-à-vis their levels of institutionalization. Using fuzzy set Ideal Type Analysis (fsITA) and four original conditions—consistency, concentration, fragility, and member volatility—this paper identifies the sources of full and weak institutionalization among EPGs. Accounting for both exogenous, electoral shocks and endogenous, group characteristics, I describe how levels of institutionalization change over time (Janda, 1980). The results of the typology make it possible to trace the developmental trajectories of groups across the first 35 years of the European Parliament. Additionally, I demonstrate the empirical utility of the typology by analyzing how affiliation with weakly institutionalized party groups impacts a member's ability to gain rapporteurships.

My findings show that EPGs fall into five distinct categories: potentially institutionalized, actively institutionalized, merged, electorally shocked, and one-party. Small and mid-sized EPGs, such as the Liberals (EP1-7), the Greens (EP4-7), and the Leftists (EP4-7), achieve active institutionalization, indicating that these so-called minor groups share more characteristics with the EPP and S&D than they do with radical right or Eurosceptic EPGs. Tracing group trajectories clarifies how institutionalization proceeds at different speeds and in different directions; indeed, de-institutionalization is an observable occurrence. Finally, the results confirm that members of weakly institutionalized EPGs receive significantly fewer reports than members of fully institutionalized groups, providing an intra-parliamentary dimension of group consolidation unaccounted for by exogenous shocks or endogenous group characteristics.

The literature review begins by discussing institutionalization and how authors have applied this concept to the EP party groups. The next section explains how fsITA is employed, after which, I present the conditions used to build the typology and describe how they are calibrated. In the

Analysis and Results section, I present the typology, the developmental trajectories, and the empirical analysis of report allocation. The Discussion and Conclusion section summarizes the findings and notes the implications for future research.

Institutionalization(s)

Institutionalization, defined by Huntington (1965) as "the process by which organizations and procedures acquire value and stability" (p. 12), can be a problematic concept because it is difficult to operationalize (Judge, 2003), it is non-monotonic, in that de-institutionalization is a distinct possibility (Harmel et al. 2016), and it often implicates multiple levels of analysis (Casal Bértoa, 2018). The literature proliferates with dimensions along which parties, party systems, and parliaments become more or less institutionalized; [18] yet, by using Huntington's generalizable criteria, which include adaptability, complexity, autonomy, and coherence, it should be possible to identify specific factors which lead to EPG institutionalization.

Scholars address multiple dimensions of the EP's complexity, or the multiplication and differentiation of its organizational sub-units, and its coherence, or the unity among organizational members. These include: the structure of its policy space (Hix et al. 2009; McElroy & Benoit, 2007, 2012), its party system (Kreppel, 2002; Bardi, 2002), the political groups (Hix & Lord, 1997), their voting cohesion (Hix et al., 2007), and the relationship between national parties and EPGs (Hix, 2002). The literature provides a deep understanding of the EP's committee system (Mamadou and Raunio 2003; Whitaker, 2005; Yordanova, 2013), rapporteurships (Benedetto, 2005; Hurka and Kaeding, 2012; Kaeding, 2005), coordinator assignments (Daniel and Thierse, 2017), and parliamentary career paths (Daniel, 2015). Evidence shows that the political groups have undergone internal reforms to manage increased workloads following enlargement (Bressanelli, 2014; Raunio, 1997). Güngör (2009) analyzes the committee system, staffing increases, and reforms to the Rules of Procedure to further substantiate the ways the EP has acquired value and stability over time. In aggregate, this research establishes the EP as an internally institutionalized parliamentary chamber (Ragsdale and Theis, 1997).

[18] For a detailed literature review on the various dimensions of party institutionalization, see Harmel, Svåsand and Mjelde (2018; 2016), and for detailed studies of specific cases, see Harmel and Svåsand (2019). For a discussion of the literature on party group institutionalization in the EP, see Bressanelli (2014).

Regarding the institutionalization of EPGs, McElroy and Benoit (2007) examine the number and types of political groups in the EP, which they locate within a two-dimensional policy space, and they determine that EPGs position themselves along the entirety of the traditional socio-economic spectrum while also maintaining consistent, ideological positions across sessions (McElroy and Benoit 2012). The literature also differentiates between "established" groups (EPP and S&D), with mature internal organizations and robust "mechanisms of coordination" (Raunio 2000, pp. 233-238), and "temporary alliances" which suffer excessively from electoral shocks and internal "defections" (Raunio, 2000, p. 242). This description corresponds to the distinction between major and minor group types used by Kreppel (2002) as a substitute for "governing" and "opposition" parties. The theoretical ability to "govern" follows directly from the two largest group's seat share; when the EPP and S&D agree on a common position, their combined majority insures the successful passage of legislation. The systems of categorization proposed by Raunio (2000) and Kreppel (2002) imply a strong correlation between group size and levels of institutionalization, a distinction first articulated by Hix and Lord, who find "a precise overlap between the size of groups, their institutionalisation and spread of countries represented. The largest are also the most permanent and transnational" (1997, p. 79).

Observers generally agree that the EP's party group system is weakly institutionalized. They identify a variety of reasons for this deficiency, such as national parties' control over European election ballots, the multi-level nature of party group competition, and the issue-to-issue formation of voting coalitions (Evans and Vink, 2009). Likewise, high turnover rates among members of the European Parliament (MEPs) account for one of many "factors that are stacked against the EP institutionalizing and developing strong party groups" (Bowler and McElroy, 2015, p. 1362). Drawing an important connection between EPG instability and the weakly institutionalized party group system, Bardi (2002) contends that "one-party groups" with a single, dominant delegation that controls more than half of group's seats, are both weakly institutionalized and largely responsible for the party system's inability to consolidate. Therefore, he concludes that the EP is divided into a "two-speed party system" consisting of an "institutionalized core and a mutable and unstable periphery" (Bardi, 2002, p. 64).

The processes of party institutionalization (PI) and party system institutionalization (PSI) are independent and need not converge (Casal Bértoa, 2018). Established parties facilitate PSI, but this is not a necessary condition for long-term consolidation. The opposite is also true: The presence of weakly institutionalized groups does not automatically prevent a system from stabilizing. Randall and Svåsand (2002) coin the term uneven party institutionalization to describe the asymmetric development of different parties in the same system. Uneven institutionalization fosters an uncompetitive and unresponsive system which leads to "significant social sectors [being] excluded not only from power but from meaningful party representation" (Randall and Svåsand, 2002, p. 9). Research into this phenomenon determines that variation in levels of party institutionalization has a significant effect on party discipline, and may be implicated in other parliamentary behaviors, as well (Thames, 2007).

In their seminal work on parliamentary institutionalization, Copeland and Patterson (1994), arguing from a functionalist point of view, claim that institutionalized parliaments "work"—that is, they are effective at fulfilling the specific tasks assigned to them. Just like parliaments, institutionalized EPGs are those that exhibit the capacity to carry out their primary functions, whether that is training leaders, representing constituents, or formulating policy by managing committee reports. Indeed, some groups' behavior reflect this pragmatic approach. When preparing for enlargement into Central and Eastern Europe, and an influx of new members, the EPP, PES, and ALDE revised their organizational structures in order to increase their functional capabilities. Through the processes of vertical and horizontal differentiation, these EPGs improved their complexity and autonomy, thus becoming more institutionalized and ensuring their ability to legislate effectively into the future (Bressanelli, 2014).

The typology presented in the next section details the characteristics associated with fully and weakly institutionalized groups. Such a division implies that the EP party group system is unevenly, not weakly, institutionalized. After presenting the typology, this argument will be articulated in more detail by tracing the developmental paths of some EPGs and analyzing how reports are allocated disproportionately between the two types of groups.

Fuzzy Set Ideal Type Analysis and Explanatory Conditions

Because they allow us to organize complex relationships and reduce them into parsimonious categories which can then be used in empirical analyses, typologies play an important role in social science research. Typology building is useful for "identify[ing] multiple ideal types, each of which represents a unique combination of the organizational attributes" (Doty and Glick, 1994, p. 232); additionally, Schneider and Wagemann contend that a qualitative comparative analysis (QCA) approach is suitable for generating empirical typologies (2010, p. 4). Here, I build on the work of Büchel et al. (2016) and Kvist (2007) and use fuzzy set ideal type analysis as a method for distinguishing between types of party groups in the EP.

Unlike statistical methods which rely on correlational relationships, fsITA uses set theory to determine what configurations of conditions are consistent with an underlying type (Berg-Schlosser et al., 2009; Ragin, 2009). This approach addresses causal complexity directly by building on the assumption that social processes are subject to equifinality, conjunctural causation, and asymmetric causality (Braumoeller, 2003). In the case of EPGs specifically, this means that more than one configuration of factors may be associated with institutionalization, some conditions will only be important given the presence of other factors, and the same condition may be consistent with both fully and weakly institutionalized groups.

The first step of any QCA analysis is to transform variables into sets through the process of calibration (Ragin, 2009). Using the direct method of calibration, I identify three anchor points to represent the thresholds for groups being "fully in" a set, when values are above the upper anchor, or "fully out" of a set, when values are below the lower anchor. The third anchor is known as the cross-over point, and it represents the value of greatest ambiguity regarding a case's relationship to the set. All cases are assigned a fuzzy score ranging from 0 to 1 for each condition, and each set resembles a logarithmic curve. One method of identifying appropriate anchors is to look for "gaps," or natural breaks, in the histogram of each variable; therefore, I present scatterplots and anchor points for each factor below.

Fuzzy set Qualitative Comparative Analysis (fsQCA) identifies necessary and sufficient causal conditions by analyzing a calibrated outcome. Alternatively, in fsITA the outcome for all cases is set to (1), because each solution path represents a constellation of conditions observed among the

cases. Logical remainders are coded (0) because these combinations are not present and therefore do not contribute to the typology. The complex, parsimonious, and intermediate outcomes produce the same series of solutions which are then reduced using the Boolean minimization process. The truth table presented in Table 2.2 lists the logical combinations observed in the data, as well as which EPGs share these attributes.

Data, Operationalization, and Calibration

According to Heidar and Koole, EPGs "are of a different order" than national parliamentary groups, so they propose treating them as "*sui generis* organizations" (2000, p. 8). For this reason, all conditions described and calibrated below are considered relative to the EP as a particular system. The unit of analysis is the EPG-session, and each variable reflects the group's status at the end of each term. This allows me to track a group's progress towards, or retreat from, institutionalization across parliamentary sessions. All variables are aggregations of individual MEPs derived from the Automated Database of the EP (Høyland et al., 2009). I benefitted greatly from the Thomann et. al (2018) R manual for calibrating fuzzy sets; specifically, I used the "QCA" (Dusa, 2018) and the "SetMethods" (Oana, et al., 2018) packages.

The fsITA typology employs five conditions identified by the literature as theoretically associated with institutionalization: *tenure, consistency, concentration, member volatility, and fragility*. These factors fulfil several criteria. First, *consistency* speaks to the presence of exogenous, electoral shocks which can unsettle a group's continuity. Second, four variables measure the internal characteristics of groups in different ways. For example, the *tenure* and the *concentration* variables operationalize adaptability and complexity and should be associated with full institutionalization. Likewise, *fragility* and *volatility* identify specific sources of disruption which inhibit groups from becoming consolidated. These conditions are 'first order' constructs and when combined in diverse configurations, they produce fully institutionalized or weakly institutionalized 'ideal types' (Doty and Glick, 1994).

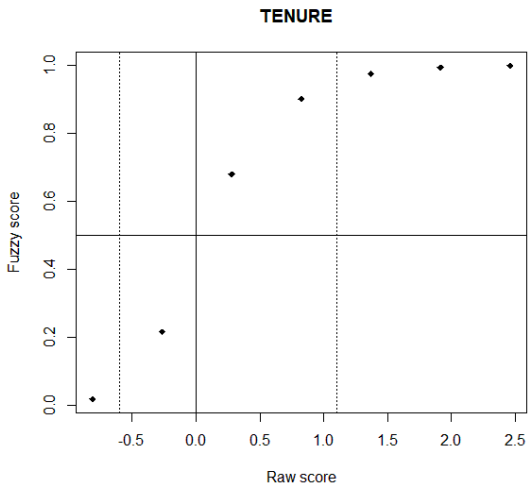
Tenure

Organizations gain experience as they get older, and the literature finds a strong relationship between age and stability (Huntington, 1965, p. 395). The tenure condition operationalizes this concept and relies on the group's name remaining recognizable across multiple parliaments, as this political label helps groups become reified in society (Randall and Svåsand, 2002). Changing

names, therefore, resets the group's tenure to zero. Scholars identify cases where a party's name change represents the consolidation of an identity and contend that re-branding does not necessarily signal weak institutionalization (Harmel, et al., 2016). However, in the EP, new group names result from session-specific negotiations between delegations, not the purification of an identity, as most recently witnessed when the Emmanuel Macron-led, French coalition of delegations joined ALDE in 2019 and immediately used its political leverage to re-name the group Renew Europe (RE).

To create the tenure condition, I standardize each groups' current number of terms around the overall EP mean. This makes it possible to determine if groups with HIGH TENURE are more likely to become fully institutionalized. Standardization does not change the underlying nature of the variable, and when these values are calibrated, the results reflect the group's tenure relative to its peers within the EP. I set the lower anchor point at -0.6, indicating that only EPGs with one session experience, or less, are fully out of the set of HIGH TENURE groups. The upper anchor, set at 1.1, implies that the gains to institutionalization follow the logic of decreasing returns—once a group has four terms' experience, each extra term has a diminishing impact on group institutionalization. The cross-over point is set to 0; therefore, groups with two terms of experience are more out than in, and groups with three and four terms are more in than out the set of HIGH TENURE EPGs.

Figure 2.1 Scatterplot and Anchor Points for Tenure



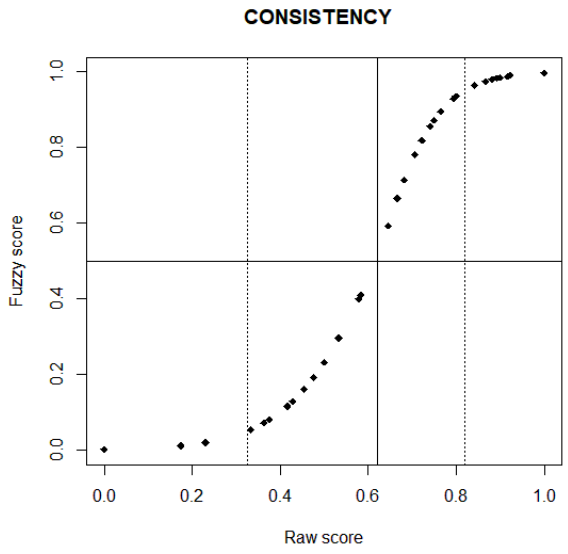
Note: Dotted lines indicate upper and lower anchors. Heavy line indicates cross-over point.

Consistency

The second condition, *consistency*, measures how many of the group's delegations return after an election. The literature argues that minor groups suffer disproportionately from electoral shocks (Raunio, 2000), suggesting that some EPGs find it difficult to maintain consistent membership across sessions. To become fully institutionalized, groups need experienced delegations. Without such consistency, organizational learning and the transfer of knowledge across sessions becomes impossible (Panebianco, 1988; LaPalombara, 2003). Therefore, low consistency groups are expected to remain weakly institutionalized because they lack experienced delegations.

To create the consistency condition, I build an expression which uses the number of delegations present in both the current EP session (*t*) and the previous session (*t-1*) as the numerator. The total number of delegations in the current session (*t*) is the denominator. Therefore, consistency equals 1 if every delegation from period *t-1* was present at time *t*. If no delegation from the previous session is present in the current session, then consistency equals zero. Because it relates group membership back to a previous version of itself, this calculation is not affected by enlargement induced "delegation inflation."

Figure 2.2 Scatterplot and Anchor Points for Consistency

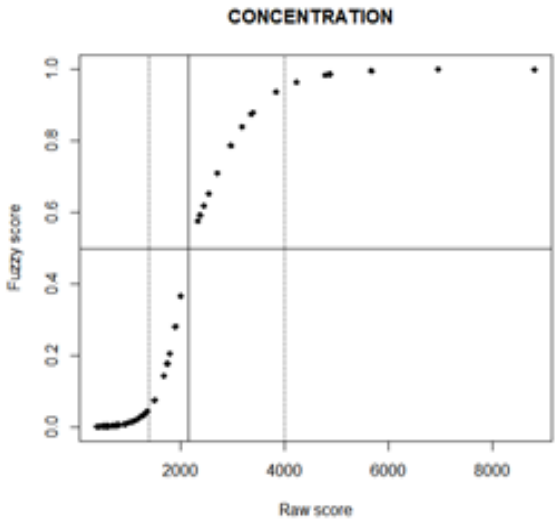


Note: Dotted lines indicate upper and lower anchors. Heavy line indicates cross-over point.

Concentration

The third condition, *concentration*, tests Bardi's (2002) claim that "one-party groups" are weakly institutionalized. The configurational analysis makes it possible to determine if HIGH CONCENTRATION is the primary condition associated with weak institutionalization or if the presence or absence of other conditions is also a contributing factor. I use the Herfindahl–Hirschman Index (HHI) of market concentration to operationalize this variable. According to the US Department of Justice, a market that has an HHI of 1,500 to 2,500 is moderately concentrated; anything over 2,500 is highly concentrated. To calculate the HHI, I sum the squares of each national delegation's percentage of seats per political group. Groups in the set of HIGH CONCENTRATION will be dominated by one or two delegations.

Figure 2.3 Scatterplot and Anchor Points for Concentration



Note: Dotted lines indicate upper and lower anchors. Heavy line indicates cross-over point.

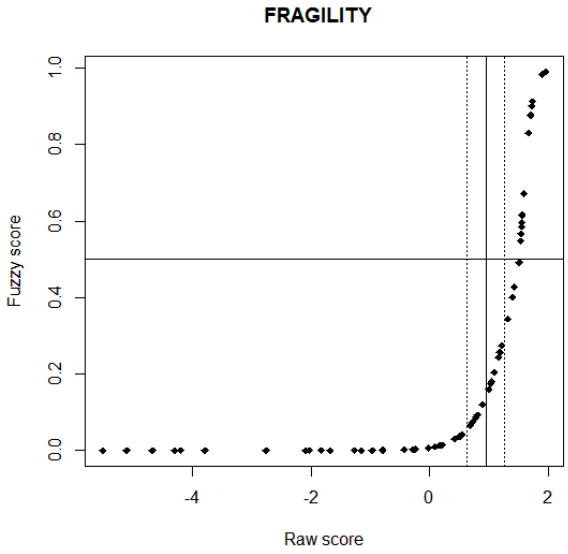
Fragility

The fourth condition, *fragility*, measures a group's proximity to the member count and country count thresholds for maintaining political group status encoded in the EP Rules of Procedure. HIGH FRAGILITY indicates that a group is very close to the threshold criteria for dissolution. This operationalizes Huntington's (1965) concept of complexity; groups that have many members and multiple delegations from various member states should be more institutionalized (Hix and Lord, 1997). The more diverse the group, the less it suffers from fragility. Groups that barely

reach the membership thresholds face no incentive to either "multiply" or "differentiate" their internal organs (Huntington, 1965, p. 399). Therefore, HIGH FRAGILITY is expected to be associated with weak institutionalization.

Fragility is constructed by first subtracting the number of total MEPs at the beginning of each session from the member threshold.[19] The same is done for the number of member states. These two numbers are standardized, thus making them comparable, and then they are summed. EPGs with negative values are closer to the combined dissolution threshold. Because the fuzzy set must be positive to measure set membership, I take the inverse of each groups' standardized total, thus flipping the sign and making the most fragile groups those with the highest values.

Figure 2.4 Scatterplot and Anchor Points for Fragility



Note: Dotted lines indicate upper and lower anchors. Heavy line indicates cross-over point.

Member Volatility

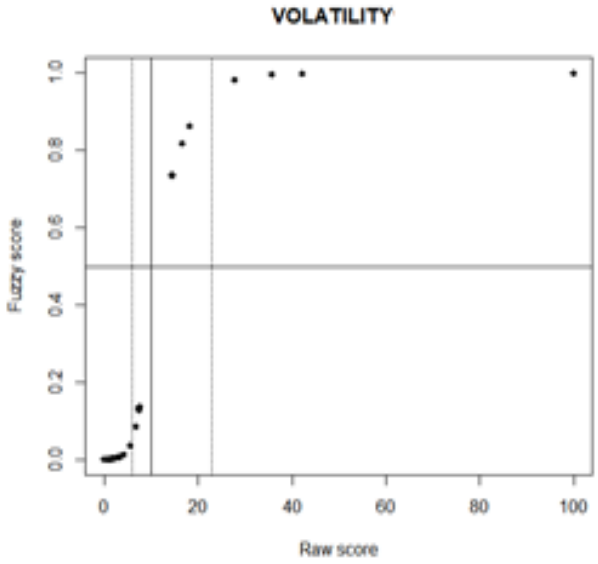
The final factor for determining institutionalization among political groups is *member volatility*, a variable that accounts for within-session, party group switches (Hix and Noury, 2018). Unlike traditional volatility which compares the change in a party's vote share across elections

[19] The threshold rules for determining group formation have changed many times over the life of the EP. See the Online Appendix for the different rules used for each session.

(Pedersen, 1979), this condition measures the decrease in groups' seat share from the beginning to the end of each EP session (Mershon and Shvetsova, 2013). The literature finds a strong empirical relationship between weak PI and party switching (McMenamin and Gwiazda, 2011), and Raunio (2000) also identifies this trend in the EP; therefore, HIGHLY VOLATILE groups should be weakly institutionalized.

Volatility describes the change in membership from the official start of the group-session to the end of the EP term. Volatility equals 1 if the entire group dissolved or switched and equals zero if the exact number of members who started the session, ended the session. Because every subtraction from one group is an addition to another, member volatility values are offsetting. Therefore, to avoid counting each switch twice, I set all positive values to zero, and then take the absolute value of each group's negative change in membership.

Figure 2.5 Scatterplot and Anchor Points for Member Volatility



Note: Dotted lines indicate upper and lower anchors. Heavy line indicates cross-over point.

Table 2.1 summarizes how these factors are expected to relate to types of institutionalization as well as the anchor points for each calibrated condition.

Sets	Expected Relationship	Full Non-Membership Anchor	Cross-over Point	Full Membership Anchor
HIGH TENURE	Full Institutionalization	-0.6	0	1.1
HIGH CONSISTENCY	Full Institutionalization	0.325	0.62	0.82
HIGH CONCENTRATION	Weak Institutionalization	1400	2150	4000
HIGH FRAGILITY	Weak Institutionalization	0.6	0.95	1.65
HIGH VOLATILITY	Weak Institutionalization	3.25	7	22

Table 2.1 Calibration Anchor Points and Expectations for all Explanatory Conditions

Typology

The truth table in Table 2.2 lists the five group types presented in the Solution Paths found in Table 2.3, which include potentially institutionalized actively institutionalized, mergers, electorally shocked, and one-party groups.[20] The potential and active types, both related to full institutionalization, should be viewed as stages of maturation. They share a lack of fragility and the absence of concentration. Potential institutionalizers (Rows 1-3, Table 2.2) begin with a diverse membership, and if they remain consistent, that is, if a high percentage of their delegations return in the following term, this combination of conditions produces active institutionalization (Rows 4-5, Table 2.2). Three of the four groups that reached full institutionalization went through this two-step progression, moving from potentially to actively institutionalized. It is also notable that groups with long tenure (Row 6) can overcome electoral shocks, the negation of consistency, to remain actively institutionalized. This aligns closely with how we would expect institutionalization to function—as the EPG becomes its own entity, separate from its particular units, generalized group experience minimizes the loss of specific delegations.

[20] All conditions and their negation were analyzed for necessity, and none had a consistency score greater than the ninety percent threshold. Results can be found in the Appendix.

Type	ROW	TENURE	FRAGILITY	VOLATILITY	CONSISTENCY	CONCENTRATION	N	Cases Per Solution Path
Potential Institutionalizers	1	0	0	0	0	0	4	SOC1, LD1, EPP1, V4
	2	0	0	1	0	0	2	UEN5, In-Dem6
	3	1	0	1	0	0	1	ELDR4
Actively Institutionalized	4	1	0	0	1	0	15	PES3, LDR3, EPP3, PES4, EPP4, PES5, ELDR5, EPP-ED5, V/EFA5, PES6, ALDE6, EPP-ED6, GUE/NGL6, V/EFA6, S&D7
	5	0	0	0	1	0	5	SOC2, LDR2, EPP2, GUE/NGL4, GUE/NGL5
	6	1	0	0	0	0	4	ALDE7, EPP7, GUE/NGL7, V/EFA7
One-Party Groups	7	0	1	0	0	1	8	DEP1, ED1, COM1, DR2, RDE3, CG3, EDD5, EFD7
	8	0	1	0	1	1	1	RDE2, ED2
	9	0	0	0	1	1	2	COM2
	10	0	0	0	0	1	2	V3, ECR7
Electorally Shocked	11	0	1	1	0	0	5	TCDI2, GUE3, EDN4, EDD5, TDI5, ITS6
	12	0	1	0	0	0	5	CDI1, RBW2, RBW3, ARE4, UEN6
	13	0	1	1	0	1	4	DR3, I-EDN4, UPE4, FE4
Merged	14	1	1	1	1	1	1	RDE4
	15	1	1	1	0	1	1	ED3

Table 2.2 Truth Table Results

Note: Political Group Abbreviation Key, Session Number Follows Group Abbreviation: Social Democrats (SOC/PES/S&D); European People's Party, Christian Democrats (EPP/EPP-ED); Liberal Democrats (LD/LDR/ELDR/ALDE and ARE); Greens (V/V/EFA); Left-Communists(COM/CG/GUE/GUE/NGL); Gaullist Groups (DEP/RDE); Regionalist (RBW); Conservatives (ED/FE); Various Eurosceptic (EDN/I-EDN/EDD/InDem/EFD/UPE/UEN/ECR); Technical Groups (CDI/TCDI/DR/TDI/ITS)

The typology identifies three paths for producing weakly institutionalized groups. The one-party group constellation validates Bardi's (2002) intuition. Here, high levels of concentration, low volatility and inexperience are common to this type. According to my expectations, high volatility

should be associated with weak institutionalization; yet, in this weakly institutionalized type, we observe low volatility. This counter-intuitive result derives from the presence of a single, dominant national delegation which ensures party unity among the group members. It is unlikely that any member or faction from one of these highly concentrated party groups could defect mid-session without being demoted on the next election ballot by their national party. Therefore, the presence of high concentration makes volatility unlikely in these cases.

Type 1: Potentially Institutionalized	**Type 2: Actively Institutionalized**	**Type 3: One-Party**	**Type 4: Electorally Shocked**	**Type 5: Mergers**
~concentration * ~fragility * ~consistency	**~concentration * ~fragility * ~volatility**	**CONCENTRATION * ~volatility * ~tenure**	**FRAGILITY * ~consistency * ~tenure**	**TENURE * CONCENTRATION * VOLATILITY * FRAGILITY**
SOC1	SOC2-3	COM1-2	CDI1	RDE4
EPP1	PES4-6	ED1-2	RBW2-3	ED3
LD1	S&D7	DEP1	TCDI2	
ELDR4	EPP2-4	RDE2-3	GUE3	
V4	EPP-ED5-6	DR2	CG3	
UEN5	EPP7	V3	DR3	
InDem6	LDR2-3	ECR7	FE4	
	ELDR5	EFD7	ARE4	
	ALDE6-7		I-EDN4	
	GUE/NGL4-7		UPE4	
	V/EFA5-7		EDN4	
			EDD5	
			TDI5	
			ITS6	
			UEN6	

Table 2.3 Typology Solution Paths, Cases, and Consistency Scores
Note: The presence of a factor is represented by Capital Letters. A Tilda represents the negation of a factor.

The second type of weak institutionalization, characterized by a lack of consistency, inexperience, and high fragility, relates to electoral shocks. While HIGH CONCENTRATION is the condition most associated with one-party groups, low consistency is the key factor for electorally shocked groups. These groups exhibit low levels of membership continuity across sessions. All but one of the Technical Groups (CDI1, TCDI2, DR3, RBW2, RBW3, TDI5, ITS6)

sort into this type. Given that these alliances organize primarily for pragmatic reasons (Settembri, 2009; Startin, 2010), they should not be expected to institutionalize. Therefore, the fact that the typology places these groups in the same weakly institutionalized path provides it with face validity. So far, the fsITA distinguishes between two separate processes—the concentration path and the electoral shock path. The typology determines that exogenous factors are most detrimental to the technical groups, and that this process is separate from group weakness originating from over-concentration.

The final group type shares a host of characteristics including HIGH CONCENTRATION, HIGH VOLATILITY, HIGH FRAGILITY, and HIGH TENURE. The European Democrats from EP3 and the Gaullists from EP4 (RDE) are the only two members in this type. Both of these eventually *merged* with another group. As leaders of the ED Group, the UK Conservatives' consistency, tenure, and ability to direct the voting behavior of its MEPs, likely made it an attractive partner for the EPP. The RDE joined forces with Forza Europa (FE) to form the UPE. Comparing this merger type to the one-party groups discussed earlier supports the previous analysis regarding volatility. If highly concentrated groups exhibit volatility, it will be extreme, because the entire group will switch as a single unit.

In these three solution paths, the analysis produces clear examples of equifinality, conjunctural causation, and asymmetric causality. First, multiple paths produce full and weak institutionalization. Second, HIGH VOLATILITY is related to weak institutionalization, but only given the presence of a host of other factors. Finally, both full and weak institutionalization solution paths include low consistency and low volatility. Table 2.4 summarizes the typology's solution paths.

	TENURE	CONSISTENCY	CONCENTRATION	VOLATILITY	FRAGILITY
Potential Institutionalizers			○	○	○
Actively Institutionalized		○	○		○
One-Party Groups	○		●	○	
Electorally Shocked	○	○			●
Mergers	●		●	●	●

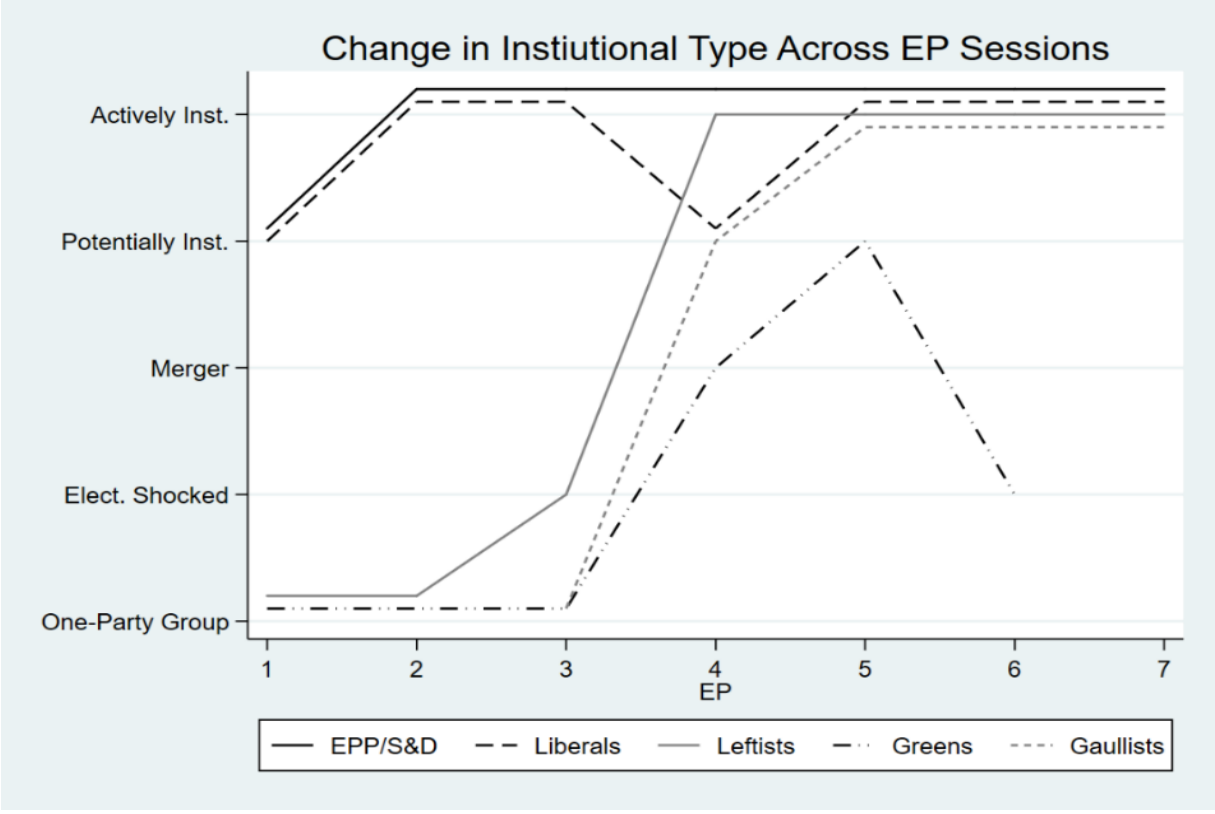
Table 2.4 Fuzzy Set Typology Solutions

Note: An open circle represents the absence of the factor. A closed circle represents the presence of a factor

Group Trajectories And (De)Institutionalization

In this section, I trace the development of several groups across sessions in order to illustrate the observable (de)institutionalization trajectories found in the EP. I select the Social Democrats, the Christian Democrats, the Liberals, the Leftists (COM1-2, GUE3, GUE-NGL4-7), as well as the Greens and the Gaullists (DEP1, RDE2-3, UPE4, and the UEN5).

Figure 2.6 Institutional Trajectories of Selected EP Political Groups



The EPP and S&D, illustrated with a single line, follow the same institutional trajectory and reflect the archetypal, developmental path that we expect to find in a major group. During the first EP session, both groups were potential institutionalizers after which they progressed to become actively institutionalized. The Liberals follow a similar path; however, in EP4, the group had twenty total delegations with only eleven returning from EP3. Due to this moderate level of inconsistency, ELDR4 slid back to the potentially institutionalized type. Note that a lack of consistency, if offset by solid tenure and low fragility, is not enough to destabilize the group entirely, i.e. to send it into the electorally shocked type. From EP5 to EP7, ALDE regained its position as actively institutionalized.

The Leftist groups represent a case of emergent institutionalization. Like the SOC, EPP, and Liberals, the Leftists began their EP tenure in 1952. Unlike these three groups, however, due to their high concentration, the typology labels them a one-party group for the first and second EP sessions. In EP3, a schism caused the French and Italian factions to form their own groups, at which point the typology sorts both into the electorally shocked category. The GUE3 group dissolved before the end of EP3 but was reconvened in EP4, under the moniker GUE-NGL, after the reconciled Italian and French delegations joined forces with the Nordic Greens. At this point, the fsITA sorts them into the actively institutionalized type, which they maintain through the seventh EP session. The Communist groups, therefore, embody an important case of a weakly institutionalized group transforming into a fully institutionalized group. By reducing fragility and expanding membership, the GUE-NGL4 skipped the potentially institutionalized type and went directly to active institutionalization.

The Gaullist groups began their tenure in the popularly-elected EP as a one-party group in the First through Third EP sessions. In EP4, RDE merged with FE to form the UPE. By EP5, the UEN, which grew out of the UPE, reaches potentially institutionalized status, indicating that the group had diversified its membership by gaining new delegations from various member states, thus making positive steps towards becoming actively institutionalized. The UEN was unable to maintain this diversity, however, and after the election of 2004, they exhibit an archetypal example of an exogenous shock—only three delegations returned from the previous session. This case exemplifies both de-institutionalization and group collapse.

The Greens illustrate how a smaller group can become actively institutionalized and why categorizing EPGs based solely on seat share overlooks important differences within the set of small groups. The origin of the contemporary Green Group (V/EFA) begins with the Rainbow Group in EP2. Despite the colorful name, this was essentially a technical group composed of regionalists and Green parties, and like other technical groups, it was short-lived due to an electoral shock. In EP3, the first Green Group split from the Rainbow Group and emerged as weakly institutionalized, moderately concentrated around the German Green Party, which held eleven out of its 29 seats. In EP4, the Green Group reached potential institutionalization status by significantly reducing its fragility and decreasing its level of concentration, down from 2385 in EP3 to 1804 in EP4. In the Fifth EP session the Greens achieved active institutionalization status and maintained that level through the Seventh session. This is a story of concentration giving way to diversification, eventually leading to full institutionalization; however, unlike the Leftists, the Greens progressed through the potentially institutionalized type before reaching active institutionalization.

In summary, the analysis of trajectories illustrates examples of both institutional consistency, progress, and regress. Importantly, it makes clear that institutionalization and seat share are not perfectly correlated phenomena. The Greens and the Leftists provide examples of small groups developing into fully institutionalized EPGs.

Disproportional Report Allocation

One way to observe how well EPGs and their members contribute to the parliament's legislative workload is to analyze rapporteurship assignments. Rapporteurs are "legislative entrepreneurs" (Thierse, 2019), who guide bills through the EP's law-making process. Based on their seat share, EPGs receive points that they use to bid on reports they wish to control (Ringe, 2010). This process was designed to distribute rapporteurs proportionally across all groups; however, some research shows that the major groups are slightly over-represented (Benedetto, 2005; Mamadou and Raunio, 2003), while other authors conclude that the "world of commission reports is one of disproportionality" where "the PES and EPP have clearly dominated the distribution of rapporteurs over the years" (Kaeding, 2005, p. 99).

When analyzing report allocation, the literature observes multiple forms of bias. For example, MEPs from ruling parties with representation in the Council receive more co-decision reports (Høyland, 2006), members from Eurosceptic (Kaeding, 2005) and radical right groups (Almeida 2010) are less likely to receive reports, and members from newly acceded states are also significantly disadvantaged (Hurka and Kaeding, 2012). This disproportionality is important because, as Daniel explains, "the office of committee rapporteur is not only linked to prestige…but [it is] also the main way that an individual MEP can shape EU policy. Thus, for serious MEPs…the accrual of reports is an important way of contributing to both the power and content of the EP's work" (2015, p. 104). If institutionalized groups are those that make the parliament "work," then they should control the most reports. Likewise, MEPs from weakly institutionalized groups are predicted to receive fewer reports.

In this this section, I replicate Daniel's (2015) analysis of report allocation for the first 35 years of the EP. I substitute the authors' original, party family indicators with two dummy variables. The first "major group" dummy takes a value of 1 for all members affiliated with either the Christian or Social Democratic groups. The second indicator operationalizes full institutionalization. All members from groups categorized as potentially or actively institutionalized take the value of 1 on this variable. Because all major groups are a subset of fully institutionalized groups, I estimate the impact of these variables separately.

The outcome variable, the number of reports per member per session, is over-inflated; therefore, Daniel (2015) uses a negative binomial regression model. I assume that this model is properly specified and that the variables included are appropriate for studying the research question. The goal here is not to improve this analysis per se, but rather to determine whether or not replacing separate party family indicators with a full institutionalization dummy benefits our understanding of institutionalization's effect on parliamentary behavior (Thames, 2007). Further, this exercise tests the empirical utility of the typology.

Table 2.5 presents the coefficients for the variables of interest. The first model is a direct replication of Daniel's Table 5.5, Model 3; the second replaces the individual party family

indicators with the major group dummy; and the third includes the full institutionalization indicator. Model 1 shows that all individual party family dummies are positive; further, with the

Table 2.5 Results Table for Analysis of Report Allocation

VARIABLES	(1) IRR	(2) IRR	(3) IRR
DV. Reports Count			
Christian Democrat	1.130*** (0.192)		
Social Democrat	1.063*** (0.191)		
Liberal	1.007*** (0.199)		
Greens	0.887*** (0.198)		
Communists	0.864*** (0.210)		
Eurosceptics	0.122 (0.274)		
National Conservatives	0.988*** 1.130		
Major Group		0.258*** (0.0523	
Fully Institutionalized Group			0.371*** (0.079)
Constant	-0.272 (0.565)	0.564 (0.536)	0.798 (0.535)
ln(alpha)	-0.138** (0.044)	-0.106* (0.044)	-0.108* (0.044)
Fixed Effects MS	YES	YES	YES
Fixed Effects EPG	YES	YES	YES
Fixed Effects EP Term	YES	YES	YES
Observations	4,639	4,639	4,639
Log-Likelihood	-9574.3	-9626.8	-9625.7
AIC	19256.7	19349.6	19347.5
BIC	19604.6	19658.9	19656.7
R^2	0.0575	0.0523	0.0524

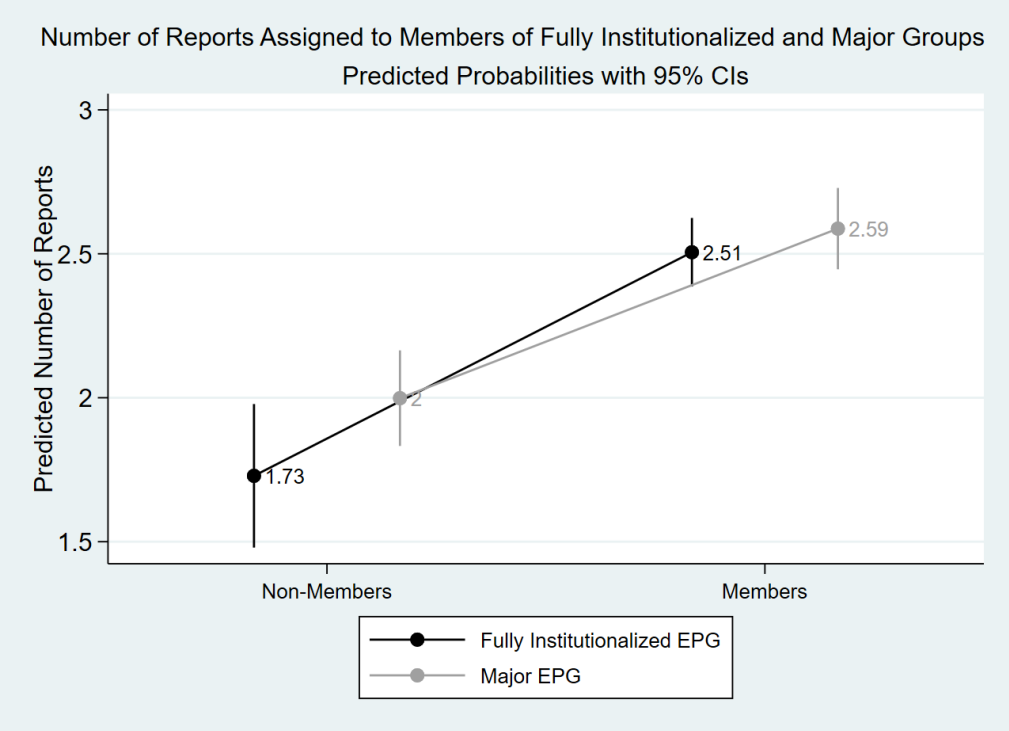
Note: Negative binomial regression with errors clustered on member ID. Robust standard errors in parentheses. I am reporting on the IRRs for the notable variables. The full table can be found in the Appendix. *** p<0.001, ** p<0.010, *p<0.05

exception of the Eurosceptics, all coefficients are highly significant. A series of Wald tests comparing the equality between pairs of party families show that all EPGs receive significantly more reports than the Eurosceptics, while the Christian Democrats and the Socialists gain more reports than the Greens and the Communists. According to Almeida, the observable under-representation of Eurosceptics is likely caused by members of these groups self-excluding (2010, p. 248). However, when analyzed separately, the model suggests that the other groups receive a significant number of reports.

Model 2 substitutes the major group dummy for the party family indicators, and the results corroborate previous findings—the two major groups control significantly more reports than the minor EPGs. Based on these estimates, MEPs from major groups are expected to win an average of 2.59 reports per term, compared to only 2 for minor group MEPs. Model 3 introduces the weak institutionalization dummy. The coefficient on this variable is positive and significant, demonstrating that, holding all other variables constant, MEPs from weakly institutionalized groups receive 0.78 fewer reports than members of fully institutionalized groups, and this difference is statistically significant ($p<0.000$).

Graph 7 presents the combined marginal effects of the two dummies from Models 2 and 3. There is no significant difference between members of fully institutionalized groups and members of major groups access to reports. However, because MEPs from the actively institutionalized Liberals, Greens, and Communist groups are coded as minor, the estimates for these groups are inflated by almost 14 percent when compared to the results of the weak institutionalization dummy. Consequently, observers who rely on the standard major-minor typology will not recognize the true level of inequality present in the distribution of reports. Model 3 loses very little in terms of fit, and it performs better than Model 1, where all party family coefficients are positive but substantive differences are limited; furthermore, Model 3 maintains the advantages of Model 2 in terms of modelling major group effects, while also more accurately estimating the disproportionality of weakly institutionalized groups. Therefore, the evidence shows that the fully institutionalized dummy variable contributes something very useful to the model—a clearer assessment of unbalanced access to the mechanisms of policy control in the EP.

Figure 2.7 Predicted Probabilities Graph for Report Allocation



Note: Predicted Probabilities for Models 2 and 3. Major Groups include all members of the Christian and Social Democrats; non-members include MEPs from all other groups. Members of Fully Institutionalized EPG include MEPs from any group that was either Potentially or Actively Institutionalized; non-members include all MEPs from weakly institutionalized group types.

The implications of these three models should not be understated. When viewed through the lens of uneven institutionalization, the disproportionality in report allocation appears more extreme than once believed, thus confirming the expectations of systemic inequality enunciated by Randall and Svåsand (2002). The standard explanation for this under-representation is self-exclusion. While this might explain the behavior of some anti-establishment, radical-right members, the application of this same logic to all weakly institutionalized groups, including early iterations of the Greens and Communists, the UK Conservatives' ED groups, and many of the Gaullist formations, is less convincing. Model 1 shows that, when estimated individually, all groups except Eurosceptics receive a significant number of reports. It is highly unlikely, therefore, that self-exclusion can explain the level of imbalance observed in Model 3.

To summarize, I use the typology constructed using fsITA to generate a full institutionalization dummy variable. The variable performs as expected, and it shows that membership in a weakly institutionalized group prohibits members from receiving reports, even after controlling for important personal factors such as seniority, education and age. This result points to a third dimension of weak institutionalization that has not yet been discussed. On top of exogenous, electoral shocks, and endogenous, group characteristics such as fragility, volatility, and concentration, these models direct our attention to an intra-parliamentary dynamic that reproduces the weak institutionalization of EPGs. If fully institutionalized groups are those that work, then it makes sense for these groups to control reports. However, excluding some groups from access to rapporteurship equates to never giving these members a chance to "contribut[e] to the…content of the EP's work" (Daniel, 2015, p. 104). Members of weakly institutionalized groups cannot work if they have limited access to the legislative levers of power in the EP. Not only do they face electoral shocks, and internal volatility, but these groups never share in the legislative responsibilities associated with being a rapporteur, a pressure which, according to Bressanelli (2014), is very important for spurring groups to re-organize and streamline their internal organization.

Discussion and Conclusion

For the EP's first forty years, the Christian and Social Democrats combined to control an absolute majority of the parliament's seats, and due to this overwhelming seat share, scholars often refer to them as major groups, while labelling the rest minors (Kreppel, 2002). Although this distinction has become universal in the literature, Raunio (2000) and Bardi (2002) introduced the concept of institutionalization to categorize EPGs. This paper builds on their intuition and presents an innovative method for classifying the political groups of the EP; namely, I employ fsITA to construct a typology of EPGs which clarifies the differences between fully and weakly institutionalized groups.

Using five conditions, including tenure, consistency, concentration, fragility, and volatility, the fsITA typology produces five ideal types: potentially institutionalized, actively institutionalized, one-party, electorally shocked, and merged. The first two represent stages of development through which most groups pass before becoming fully institutionalized. The last three reflect

specific archetypes already found in the literature. This analysis, therefore, provides empirical evidence to support previous claims about weakly institutionalized parties being susceptible to electoral shocks and overly reliant on a single, dominant national delegation.

The results of the typology are applied in two different ways. First, I trace the development of several party families over the first seven EP sessions. In this section, the analysis illustrates how the two largest groups moved directly from potentially to actively institutionalized and then remained at that level for the rest of their tenure. Furthermore, it exemplifies how two small groups, the Greens and the Leftists, transitioned from weak to active institutionalization, following two distinct paths. The major-minor coding system emphasizes seat share and therefore overlooks the fact that these two smaller groups have more in common with the Christian and Social Democrats than they do with technical groups, Eurosceptics, or national conservatives. The analysis of trajectories also includes an example of de-institutionalization and group collapse. These cases exemplify the multi-faceted and dynamic nature of institutionalization while also illustrating the ways group size does not correlate perfectly with party group consolidation.

In the empirical analysis, I use the results of the typology to construct an indicator for full institutionalization and test the empirical utility of this concept as it applies to report allocation. I include the dummy variable to Daniel's (2015) negative binomial regression analysis, 1979-2014, and the results show that weakly institutionalized group members receive significantly fewer rapporteurships, than MEPs from fully institutionalized groups. This effect is stronger than previously observed in analyses of major groups, which means that the literature has thus far under-estimated the disproportionality prevalent in committee report allocation.

The results indicate that the field may benefit greatly from introducing the fully institutionalized EPG indicator in future analyses of parliamentary behavior in the EP. As it stands, the literature either chooses to include party family fixed effects, or based on theoretical grounds, it selects specific group dummies to analyze. However, the coding of EPGs into party families is not always consistent. For example, should Jean-Marie Le Pen's Group of the European Right (DR2-3) be coded as a technical group (as its EP3 name implies), a conservative group, a Eurosceptic group, or a radical-right group? Is the European Radical Alliance (ARE) from EP4 more like the Liberals or the Green-Regionalists? Is the distinguishing characteristic of the European

Conservatives and Reformists (ECR) group, its conservativism or its Euroscepticism? Authors have justifiable reasons for coding these groups differently, but these individual decisions may result in inconsistent analytical estimations of party group effects across various studies.

The current analysis goes beyond party family indicators, and provides evidence that weak institutionalization represents a common denominator for all these borderline cases. The benefits of the full institutionalization indicator are numerous. First, it simplifies the coding of groups into types. Second, members from all groups, not just the major ones, and not just the oldest ones, are included in the analysis. Third, the indicator entails within-group variation across terms. Fourth, we have theoretical grounds to believe that this indicator may have significant effects on parliamentary behavior; thus, excluding it may introduce omitted variable bias into studies. Finally, from a practical standpoint, using a single dummy instead of multiple fixed effects, mitigates the degrees of freedom problem.

The implications of this research are far-reaching as the findings open new avenues for examining parliamentary behavior in the EP's unevenly institutionalized party group system. For example, scholars can now compare the EP against the findings in the literature on emerging democracies, which conclude that unevenly institutionalized party systems negatively impact the parliament's ability to represent its constituencies (Randall and Svåsand, 2002). Likewise, members in weakly institutionalized groups, those faced with possible group collapse following an election, work within a completely different incentive structure than members of stable, fully institutionalized groups. One would expect, therefore, that such uncertainty impacts parliamentary activities, especially since the analysis here shows that these MEPs do not share in the parliamentary burden of crafting and enacting legislation.

Lacking access to rapporteurships, does the average member of a weakly institutionalized party group spend more time with her constituency? Is she more connected to her national party? Does she abstain more, make longer speeches, or submit more questions? The literature on Eurosceptics and radical right parties addresses some of these questions, but it is important to note that these anti-system groups are only a sub-set of all weakly institutionalized EPGs, and, as the second portion of the analysis illustrates, de-institutionalization can potentially affect any group. Therefore, by establishing a historical referent for the behavior of MEPs from weakly

institutionalized groups, scholars would be developing a baseline against which to compare the behavior of members in newly established, or back-sliding, groups in future EP sessions.

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Appendix A

Table A1. Descriptive Statistics for Group-Level Variables

Variable	Obs.	Mean	Std. Dev.	Min	Max
Tenure	60	0.000	1.000	-0.808	2.459
Consistency	60	0.463	0.367	0.000	1.000
Concentration	60	1924.097	1664.016	405.625	8803.711
Fragility	60	0.000	1.921	-5.513	1.963
Volatility	60	16.807	33.937	0.000	100.000

Figure A1. Histogram of Tenure

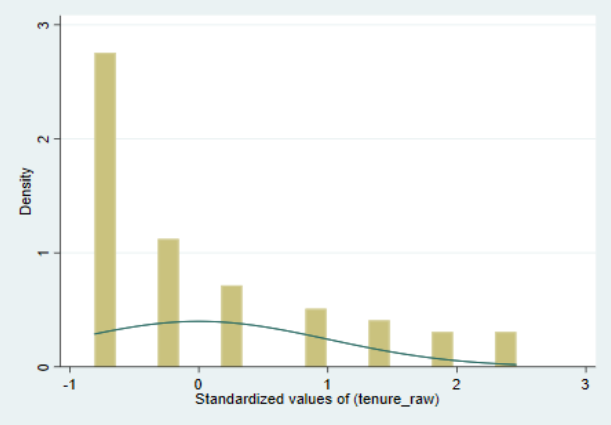


Figure A2. Histogram of Consistency

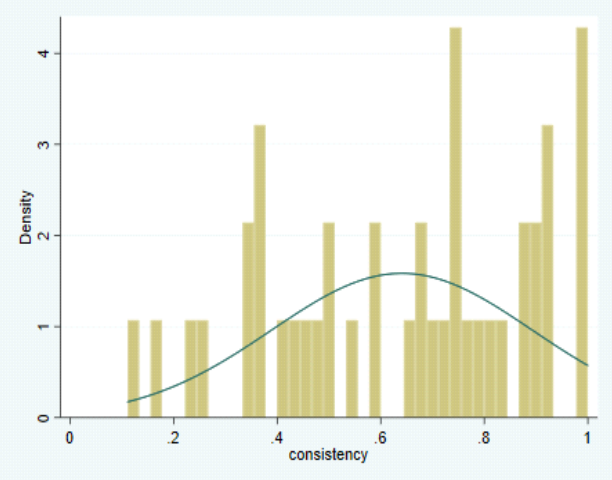


Figure A3. Histogram for Concentration

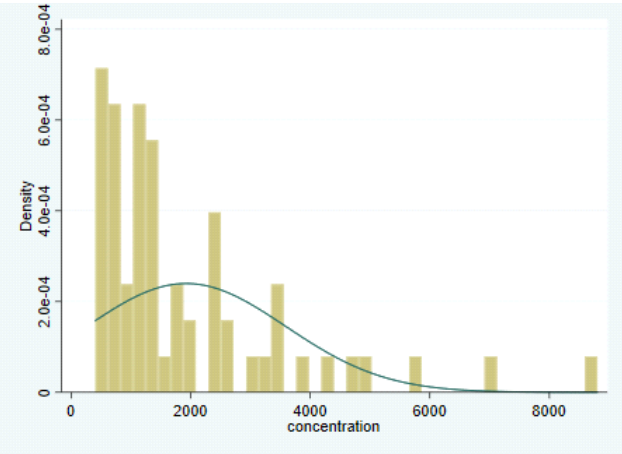


Figure A4. Histogram for Fragility

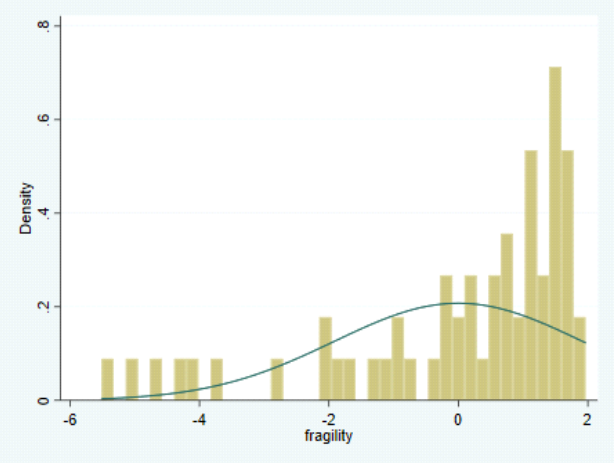


Figure A5. Histogram for Volatility

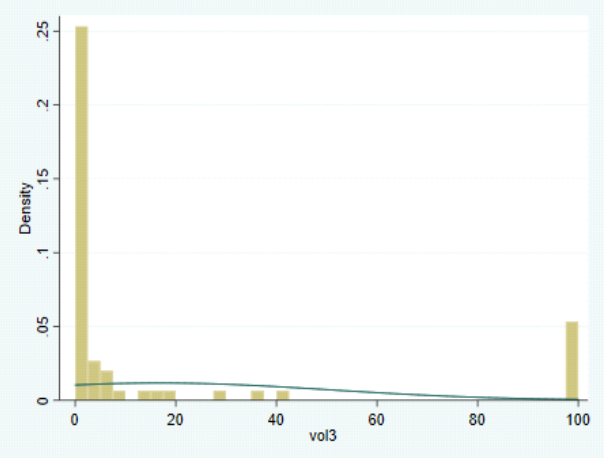


Table A2. Member and MS Thresholds for Calculating Fragility

EP Session	Minimum Members	Minimum MSs	Source
1979	10	3	Fitzmaurice (1975)
	14	1	
1984	10	3	
	14	1	
1989	12	3	Jacobs & Corbett (1990)
	18	2	
	23	1	
1994	14	4	Corbett, Jacobs, and Shackleton (2003)
	18	3	
	23	2	
	29	1	
1999	16	3	Corbett, Jacobs, and Shackleton (2003)
2004	19	5	Nugent (2006)
2008	25	7	Startin (2010)

Table A3. P-Values for Pairwise Tests of Equality for Party Family Coefficients in Model 1.

	Christian Democrats	Social Democrats	Liberals	Greens	Communists	Eurosceptics
Social Democrats	0.203					
Liberals	0.122	0.467				
Greens	0.003**	0.027*	0.207			
Communists	0.013*	0.059	0.228	0.848		
Eurosceptics	0.000***	0.000***	0.000***	0.000***	0.001**	
National Conservatives	0.189	0.489	0.877	0.420	0.374	0.000***

Significant p-values indicate that the null hypothesis which states that two estimations are equal can be rejected.
*** p<0.001, ** p<0.01, * p<0.05

Table A4. Analysis of Consistency

Condition	Consistency	Coverage
TENURE	0.367	1.00
FRAGILITY	0.403	1.00
VOLATILTY	0.226	1.00
CONSISTENCY	0.368	1.00
CONCENTRATION	0.288	1.00
~tenure	0.633	1.00
~fragility	0.597	1.00
~volatility	0.774	1.00
~consistency	0.632	1.00
~concentration	0.712	1.00

Note: The outcome condition equals 1. Consistency scores must be at least 0.90 for a condition to be deemed Necessary.

Table A5. Full Results from Negative Binomial Regression. Dependent Variable Is Report count per MEP per Session. Based on Daniel (2015), Table 5.5, Model 3

	(1)	(3)	(5)
VARIABLES	H1 Log Odds	H1 Log Odds	H1 Log Odds
education	0.0801	0.0845	0.0692
	(0.0549)	(0.0557)	(0.0559)
terms_complete	0.313**	0.351**	0.331**
	(0.111)	(0.113)	(0.112)
wave	-0.165	-0.165	-0.176
	(0.0892)	(0.0908)	(0.0909)
edu_seniority	-0.0634*	-0.0725*	-0.0718*
	(0.0289)	(0.0290)	(0.0292)
edu_wave	0.0340*	0.0347**	0.0378**
	(0.0132)	(0.0134)	(0.0135)
seniority_wave	0.00109	-0.00159	0.00329
	(0.0159)	(0.0161)	(0.0161)
EP_leader	0.217**	0.228***	0.215**
	(0.0686)	(0.0687)	(0.0692)
leadership	0.644***	0.664***	0.654***
	(0.0497)	(0.0508)	(0.0505)
EP_reelect	0.224***	0.217***	0.222***
	(0.0435)	(0.0443)	(0.0446)
dropout	-0.884***	-0.872***	-0.863***
	(0.0860)	(0.0875)	(0.0878)
natl_govt	-0.0635	-0.0181	-0.00264
	(0.0422)	(0.0417)	(0.0411)
age	-0.00511*	-0.00477	-0.00480
	(0.00245)	(0.00246)	(0.00248)
female	0.147**	0.165**	0.159**
	(0.0500)	(0.0504)	(0.0508)
new_ms	-0.696***	-0.693***	-0.718***
	(0.0870)	(0.0872)	(0.0872)
christian_democrat	1.130***		
	(0.192)		
socialist	1.063***		
	(0.191)		
liberal	1.007***		
	(0.199)		
green	0.887***		
	(0.198)		
communist	0.864***		
	(0.210)		
euroskeptic	0.122		
	(0.274)		
conservative	0.988***		
	(0.215)		

austria	0.405*	0.228	0.269
	(0.166)	(0.163)	(0.158)
belgium	0.188	0.127	0.0782
	(0.157)	(0.155)	(0.153)
bulgaria	-0.563*	-0.649**	-0.633**
	(0.252)	(0.243)	(0.242)
cyprus	-0.170	-0.199	-0.244
	(0.433)	(0.439)	(0.405)
czech	-0.136	-0.169	-0.120
	(0.215)	(0.219)	(0.220)
denmark	0.104	0.0439	-0.0206
	(0.177)	(0.177)	(0.173)
estonia	-0.953**	-0.954**	-1.018**
	(0.340)	(0.339)	(0.336)
finland	0.677**	0.653**	0.594*
	(0.237)	(0.235)	(0.239)
france	0.0224	-0.0572	-0.0391
	(0.137)	(0.137)	(0.132)
germany	0.403**	0.347**	0.348**
	(0.129)	(0.126)	(0.123)
greece	0.156	0.0802	0.106
	(0.151)	(0.148)	(0.145)
hungary	0.633*	0.540	0.623*
	(0.278)	(0.280)	(0.279)
italy	0.211	0.0913	0.129
	(0.141)	(0.137)	(0.134)
latvia	-0.316	-0.311	-0.276
	(0.292)	(0.290)	(0.303)
lithuania	-0.580	-0.593	-0.607
	(0.327)	(0.339)	(0.329)
luxembourg	0.201	0.163	0.130
	(0.252)	(0.251)	(0.255)
malta	0.197	0.139	0.212
	(0.334)	(0.348)	(0.343)
netherlands	0.833***	0.763***	0.715***
	(0.144)	(0.142)	(0.139)
poland	0.138	0.0965	0.187
	(0.198)	(0.196)	(0.193)
portugal	0.423**	0.391*	0.379*
	(0.155)	(0.153)	(0.153)
romania	0.0242	-0.0431	0.00587
	(0.288)	(0.289)	(0.293)
slovakia	-0.116	-0.212	-0.132
	(0.352)	(0.353)	(0.351)
slovenia	0.495	0.465	0.502
	(0.302)	(0.299)	(0.298)
spain	0.329*	0.276*	0.292*

	(0.140)	(0.138)	(0.134)
sweden	0.641***	0.605***	0.541***
	(0.170)	(0.163)	(0.162)
uk	0.275*	0.209	0.215
	(0.133)	(0.131)	(0.128)
wave1	-0.197	-0.172	-0.113
	(0.391)	(0.396)	(0.398)
wave2	-0.135	-0.117	-0.0540
	(0.309)	(0.313)	(0.315)
wave3	0.115	0.123	0.189
	(0.240)	(0.243)	(0.245)
wave4	0.0177	0.0109	0.0556
	(0.170)	(0.171)	(0.172)
wave5	0.0106	0.000939	0.00730
	(0.105)	(0.105)	(0.105)
major		0.258***	
		(0.0523)	
weak_inst			-0.371***
			(0.0791)
Constant	-0.272	0.564	0.798
	(0.565)	(0.536)	(0.535)
lnalpha	-0.138**	-0.106*	-0.108*
	(0.0440)	(0.0441)	(0.0444)
Observations	4,639	4,639	4,639
ll	-9574	-9627	-9626
chi2	980.3	938.5	921.6
r2_p	0.0575	0.0523	0.0524

Paper Three

Members, Parties or Groups: Analysing Individual and Collective Party Group Switches in the European Parliament

Abstract

The literature on party group switching in the European Parliament contends that members re-affiliate primarily for strategic reasons. In this paper, I examine how the collapse of weakly institutionalized groups explains a large number of collective switches, specifically among large delegations. To account for policy-seeking behavior, I calculate policy distances using DW-Nominate scores for the first seven sessions of the EP (1979-2009). The pooled logistic regression models show that when delegations become ideologically distant from their group, they are more likely to re-affiliate; however, individual members who find themselves at odds with their group over issues of European integration have increased odds of switching. This paper will have important implications for future research investigating the relationship between weak institutionalization and parliamentary behavior.

Introduction

On November 26, 2007, Sajjad Karim, a member of the European Parliament (MEP) from the United Kingdom (UK), announced that he would be leaving both the Liberal Democrats and the Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe (ALDE) to sit under the Conservative whip as a newly affiliated member of the European People's Party and European Democrats' (EPP-ED) Tory delegation. Citing David Cameron's speech on immigration reform as the reason for his transition (Conservative Home Blog: Tory Diary, 2007a), observers immediately began speculating about whether the Tories would reward Karim with favorable ballot positioning in the upcoming election (Conservative Home Blog: Tory Diary, 2007b). Just ten days earlier, and less than a year after it was formed, the Identity, Tradition, Sovereignty (ITS) Technical group dissolved. Due to disparaging remarks made by Alessandra Mussolini, the Greater Romania Party (PRM) exited ITS, thus triggering a collapse which forced the remaining members to re-affiliate as well. Both of these cases represent instances of party group switching in the EP, but how similar are they really?

Party switching is an established field of research (Heller and Mershon, 2009), incorporating both analyses of individual parliaments (Desposato, 2006; Heller and Mershon, 2008; Yoshinaka, 2015), as well as comparative, cross-national studies (Mershon and Shvetsova, 2013; O'Brien and Shomer, 2013; Volpi, 2019). The literature confirms that politicians in national parliaments change party labels to increase their odds of (re)election (Aldrich and Bianco, 1992), to gain key leadership positions (Yoshinaka, 2015), or to influence policy (Laver and Benoit, 2003). Karim's interests in immigration policy and gaining favorable ballot positioning reflect this logic. However, a separate literature on emerging democracies finds a very strong empirical relationship between weakly institutionalized parties and party switching (McMenamin and Gwiazda, 2011; Shabad and Slomczynski, 2004; Zielinski et al., 2005). The collapse of the ITS party group, which had not yet reached its first anniversary, falls under this category.

To account for both of these types of re-affiliation, this paper analyzes individual policy-seeking behavior, as well as the effect of weak institutionalization, on party group switching in the European Parliament (EP). In their multi-session treatment of re-affiliation in the EP, Evans and Vink conclude that "collective switches" occur more frequently among delegations in "party groups on the fringes," while individuals are more likely to exit the large, ideologically moderate groups (2012: 105). This finding encapsulates many of the assumptions underpinning the analysis of party group switching in the EP. First, distinguishing between individual MEPs, national party delegations (NPDs), and European Party groups (EPGs), presupposes that members' interests depend on their relationship to the delegation or group (Hix, 2002). Second, the literature assumes MEPs and NPDs to be rationally motivated (Müller and Strøm, 1999). Finally, much of the scholarship internalizes the division between major and minor party groups without clearly articulating how this distinction impacts parliamentary behavior (Kreppel, 2002).

In this analysis of party group switching during the first six EP sessions (1979-2009), I complicate and expand upon these three assumptions. First, I introduce the concept of weakly institutionalized party groups and explain how the most dominant NPDs are over-represented in fringe EPGs. If, by construction, weakly institutionalized groups like the ITS are more likely to suffer a collapse, e.g. merging with other groups, dissolving mid-session, or failing to reconvene after an election, then group-level instability offers an alternative explanation for collective

switches. In other words, large delegations re-affiliate when groups collapse, not because they are seeking offices or policy change.

Second, I use DW-Nominate scores to measure NPD to EPG and MEP to EPG policy distances. The delegation to group distances relate to collective switches while the member to delegation distances model individual re-affiliation. The results of the pooled logistic regression models show that being ideologically incongruent with the group impacts collective switches, but individuals who are distant from their EPGs on the European dimension have the highest odds of re-affiliating. Therefore, to properly estimate the correlates of collective and individual party group switching, the paper incorporates the collapse of weakly institutionalized groups, as well as MEP-level measures of policy incongruence, into the analysis.

The literature review first discusses institutionalization and its relationship to party switching, and then recounts what previous authors have said about the relationship between policy distance variables and party group re-affiliation in the EP. I then present my data and methods before turning to the results. The findings are summarized and I consider the implications of these in the Discussion and Conclusion section.

Institutionalization and Party Switching

As Huntington defines the concept, "institutionalization is the process by which organizations and procedures acquire value and stability" (1965: 394). Observers commonly agree that the EP's party group system is weakly institutionalized. They attribute this deficiency to a constellation of factors such as the "unique mix of electoral contests based on national party list, internal legislative organization, and political dynamics dominated by international party groups," which is "not conducive to party system stability" (Evans and Vink, 2012: 110). Likewise, high turnover rates among members of the European Parliament (MEPs) contribute to a "list of factors that are stacked against the EP institutionalizing and developing strong party groups" (Bowler and McElroy 2015: 1362). Therefore, the literature generally maintains that the party group system remains unconsolidated.

McElroy and Benoit (2007) analyze the number and types of EPGs, locating them within the EP's two- dimensional policy space. They conclude that groups are ideologically non-overlapping and spatially stable across sessions; furthermore, EPGs are dispersed across the entirety of the traditional socio-economic axis with anti-system EPGs populating the extreme end of the European integration dimension, thus producing the policy space's inverted-U shaped (McElroy and Benoit 2012). Beyond this ideological approach, Bardi (2002) examines the membership composition of the groups and identifies three types, including transnational, multi-party, and one-party. Transnational and multi-party EPGs have relatively large and diversified casts of delegations while one or two dominant NPDs control one-party groups. Bardi argues that these highly concentrated groups are unlikely to institutionalize because they mobilize only national interests; therefore, their presence hinders the consolidation of the EP's party system. Based on these differences, Bardi (2002) identifies a stable core of groups that consolidates its power during the parliamentary session, as well as a weakly institutionalized periphery, which he claims is disproportionately susceptible to electoral shocks.

Raunio (2000) draws a distinction between the EP's smaller groups, characterized as "temporary alliances" that are "particularly vulnerable to…defections" (242), and those more "established groups" that have "developed their internal organisations and consolidated their positions in the EP" (233). The group differences he identifies reflect variation in levels of institutionalization. According to Evans and Vink, whose categorization of fringe and moderate groups mirrors Bardi's (2002) core and periphery formulation, "it is a well-known fact among observers of party politics in the EP that electoral losses at the time of European elections contribute to the disappearance of parliamentary groups at the start of a new legislative mandate in the EP" (2012: 109). Hence, we should observe weakly institutionalized, temporary alliances on the periphery of the EP's party group system, suffer various forms of collapse, such as mass defections or the failure to reconvene after an electoral shock.

I identify three specific types of EPG collapse. *Mergers* occur when one hundred percent of a group' membership collectively takes on another group label during the course of a session. This happened, for example, when the Forza Europa (FE) merged with the members of the Group of the European Democratic Alliance (RDE) to form the Union for Europe (UPE) in EP4. *Dissolution* occurs during the course of a session, when a party disbands. Many technical groups

(TCDI2, TDI5, ITS6) have dissolved mid-session, but other groups, such as the Group for the European United Left (GUE) also disintegrated.[21] A *failure to reconvene* (FTR) captures the phenomenon described by Evans and Vink (2012). If the membership of a group is shocked by an EP election and cannot re-form itself in the following session, then all members must switch into a new group. When we observe an EPG merge, dissolve, or fail to reconvene, this indicates the conclusion of a series of events which led to the collapse of a weakly institutionalized group.

The goal of this paper is not to describe group collapse or to explain the causes of weak institutionalization among EPGs; rather, I identify the connection between weakly institutionalized groups and the occurrence of EPG collapse, which I then used as a causal explanation for party group switching. This nexus of events is implied in the literature, but to this point it has never been tested. Including weak institutionalization in the analysis shifts the focus from the member, or the delegation, to the group, and this re-calibration represents a clear contribution to the study of party group switching.

Having identified weak institutionalization and party group collapse as a potential explanation for switching, I now explain how this phenomenon relates to collective switches. Hix and Noury find that 75 percent of all switches take place by "groups," or at least two members of the same national delegation (2018: 14).[22] Likewise, McElroy and Benoit identify not only the high frequency of switching in the EP, but the prevalence of entire delegations changing labels (2009: 152). To describe this phenomenon, they list a table containing 29 notable examples of national party switching. Of the 23 enumerated cases of delegations exiting weakly institutionalized group, we see an instance of group merger (UK Conservatives leaving the ED to join the EPP), of group dissolution (the Italian Party of the Left (PDS) leaving the GUE to join the SOC), and many examples of groups failing to reconvene. For example, the authors list the Spanish United Left (IU), French Communist Party (PCF), and the Danish Socialist People's Party (SF) as switching out of the Communist and Allies Group (COM) in 1989 to join either the Left Unity (CG) or the Group for the European United Left (GUE). Due to a schism between the French and

[21] This is considered a dissolution instead of a merger because after the Italian Communist Party joined the Social Democrats (SOC), the rest of the GUE delegations affiliated with the non-inscrits (NI).

[22] This operationalization does not account for single-member delegations.

Italian Communist parties, the COM group did not re-form in EP3, so all members and delegations had no choice but to re-affiliate. Consequently, the failure to reconvene by the Leftists prompted each of these collective switches.

In short, group collapse explains many of the national party switches listed in the McElroy and Benoit (2009) table. This discussion is not meant to rule out the existence of collective switches orchestrated by strategically-oriented delegations; however, it does reveal that a significant proportion of this type of re-affiliation originates with group collapse and not political calculation. Table 3.1 provides a list of all of the groups that either merged, dissolved, or failed to reconvene in the first six EP sessions.

	Within-Session Collapse		**Between Session Collapse**
EP	**Merger**	**Dissolve**	**Fail to Reconvene**
2		Group for Technical Coordination and Defence of Independent Groupings and Members (TCDI)	Group for the Technical Coordination and Defense of Independent Groups and Members (CDI)
			Group of European Progressive Democrats (DEP)
3	European Democrats (ED)	Group for the European United Left (GUE)	Communist and Allies Group (COM)
4	Forza Europa (FE)	Europe of Nations Group-Coordination Group (EDN)	Left Unity (CG)
	Group of the European Democratic Alliance (RDE)		Technical Group of the European Right (DR)
			Rainbow Group (RBW)
5		Technical Group of Independent Members- Mixed Group (TDI)	Group of the European Radical Alliance (ARE)
			Group of Independents for a Europe of Nations (I-EDN)
			Union for Europe (UPE)
6		Identity, Tradition, and Sovereignty Group (ITS)	Europe of Democracies and Diversities (EDD)

Table 3.1 All cases of group collapse, 1979-2009

To understand the relationship between weak institutionalization and national delegation size, consider Hix and Noury' determination that MEPs from the largest EPGs have lower odds of re-affiliating, but members from the most powerful delegations are more likely to switch during the course of a session (2018: 567). Indeed, as an NPD's seat share approaches 100 percent of the group, the odds of switching increase dramatically. By conducting a study which privileges

political parties, observers may assume that this tendency occurs because large national delegations leverage their size to gain more prestigious offices or leadership positions in a different group. However, viewing switches through the lens of weak institutionalization makes it clear that the most dominant NPDs are disproportionately represented in weakly institutionalized groups. When these minor, peripheral or fringe groups collapse, then dominant delegations find it necessary to switch groups.

Figure 3.1 The Relationship Between EPG Seat Share and NPD Seat Share, Coded for Group Collapse

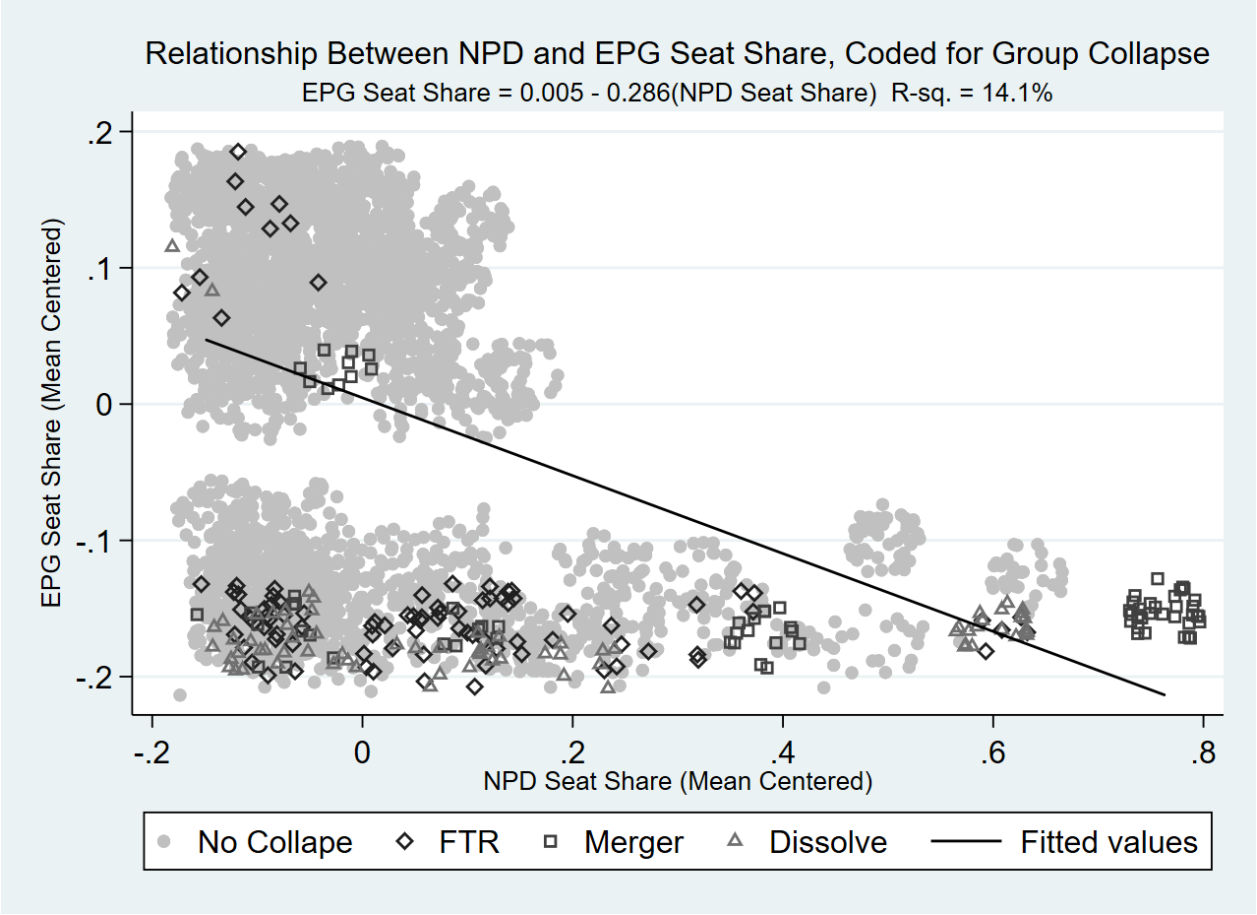


Figure 3.1 provides a scatterplot to illustrate the relationship between delegation and group seat share. Both variables are centered on their mean, so negative values stand for smaller than average NPDs or EPGs, and positive values indicated larger than average seat share. The relationship is negative. While small NPDs join both small and large EPGs, the most dominant NPDs are only found in small, weakly institutionalized groups. In fact, we find no delegation

with more than twenty percent of a group's seat share in a large EPG. On the regression line, we see the relatively large Gaullist delegation which merged with the FE in EP4, as well as the Italian Communists who joined the Socialists in EP3, thus initiating the dissolution of GUE3. Finally, note that the vast majority of group collapse occurs in small groups. This scatterplot, therefore, confirms Bardi's (2002) intuition—an important correlation exists between large delegations and weakly institutionalized party groups.

This discussion of weak institutionalization highlights an opportunity to contribute to the literature. Although it is natural to focus on rational behavior, within the context of the EP, and especially for the discussion of party group switching, concentrating solely on policy-, office-, and vote-seeking overlooks the fact that not all members, especially those affiliated with small groups perpetually facing the possibility of collapse, share the same capacity to act strategically. While it is certainly the case that some national parties make the rational choice to re-affiliate, in order to fully understand the causes of EPG switching, it is necessary to account for both ambition as well as weak institutionalization.

Policy Distance with DW-Nominate Scores

To this point, the paper has explained how weak institutionalization can be implicated in the high incidence of collective switches in the EP; however, it is still necessary to understand the relationship between policy-seeking and re-affiliation. When applying Müller and Strøm's (1999) theory of political behavior to the study of switching in the EP, authors recognize that ambitious MEPs are most likely motivated by office- or policy-seeking (Hix and Noury 2018, 570; McElroy, 2008; McElroy and Benoit, 2009). Nominate estimates can be used to operationalize policy-seeking behavior. To this end, I use DW-Nominate scores and measure NPD to EPG and MEP to EPG policy distances.

Nominate is an algorithmic scaling technique which analyzes roll call votes and produces two-dimensional ideal points for each legislator. Poole and Rosenthal (1997) introduced these scores and utilize them to address topics such as issue dimensionality, party system polarization, and party realignment in the US Congress. Relative to the discussion of party group switching, several authors use Nominate scores to study re-affiliation in the American context (Nokken,

2009; Nokken and Poole, 2004). For example, Yoshinaka analyzes whether switchers gain committee assignments as a reward for re-affiliating, and determines that high congruence, or low policy distance, is associated with winning committee leadership positions after switching parties (2015, 165-6).

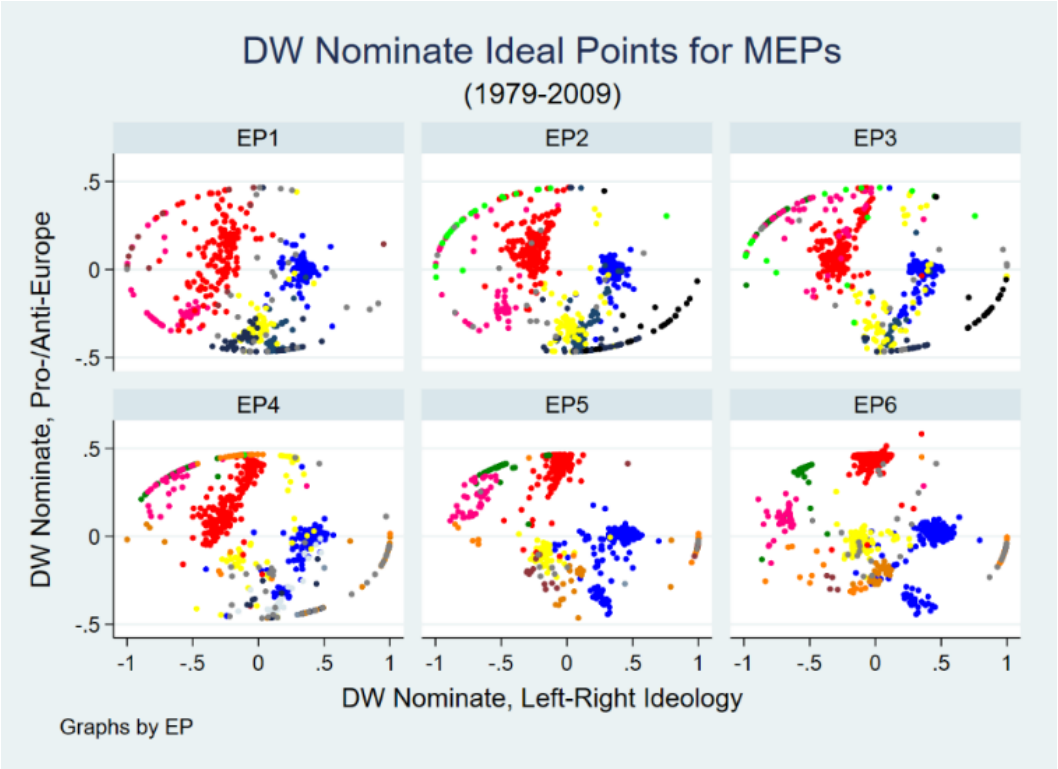
In the case of the EP, Hix, Noury and Roland (2007) introduce Nominate scores to analyze the dimensionality of the EP's policy space. The literature on EP committee assignments regularly relies on Nominate scores to test the effect of ideological congruence on gaining offices (Hausemer, 2006; McElroy, 2006; Rasmussen, 2008; Yordanova, 2013). In their analysis of rapporteur assignments, Yoshinaka, McElroy and Bowler (2010) employ several distance variables, including MEP to NPD and MEP to EPG measures. Further, they estimate single-session models because the "Hix, Noury, and Roland's ideal-point estimates are not dynamic, which means they are estimated separately in each Parliament and not comparable across terms" (Yoshinaka et al., 2010: 471). The DW-Nominate scores presented here are dynamic; therefore, this analysis covers all switches in the first six EP sessions using panel data.

The literature analyzing the effect of policy distance on party group switching in the EP produces mixed results. On one hand, studies employing conditional logit models to explain a switcher's group choice find a significant, negative relationship between policy distance and EPG selection: once they have decided to change labels, MEPs select the group closest to their preferred policy position (Hix and Noury, 2018; McElroy and Benoit, 2009). On the other hand, the two analyses using dichotomous outcome variables to evaluate the causes of switching determine that ideological policy distance is unrelated to switching (Hix and Noury, 2018; McElroy, 2008). The policy distance variables in these models are either statistically insignificant or they take negative coefficients, indicating that as incongruence increases, the odds of switching decrease. By creating policy distance variables from DW-Nominate estimates, this paper offers a method for measuring MEP to EPG and NPD to EPG distances, thus making it possible to examine both individual and collective switches independently.

The DW-Nominate scores used in this paper were produced by Keith Poole, who derives them from a dataset including all roll call votes collected by Hix et al. (2007) for the years 1979-2009. The scaling had a correct classification of 89.45 percent with an APRE of 0.5720 and a geometric

mean probability of 0.77. These standardized "measures of fit" indicate that these ideal-points are viable, indeed strong, estimations (Poole, 2005: 129-130). Figure 3.2 visualizes the scores.

Figure 3.2 DW-Nominate Scores, EP1-6, 1979-2009



Note: Social Democrats (SOC/PES) have red dots; Christian Democrats (EPP/EPP-ED) have blue dots; Liberals (LD; LDR; ELDR; ALDE) have yellow dots; Leftists (COM; CG; GUE; GUE-NGL) have pink dots; the Rainbow Group has lime dots; the Greens (V; V/EFA) have green dots; European Democrats (ED) have navy blue dots; The European Right (DR) has black dots; The UEN and UEN Coordinating Group are dark Orange; The Eurosceptics (I-EDN; EDD; InDem) are orange; Technical groups (CDI; TDI; ITS) are maroon; Non Inscrits (NI) are grey.

Some scholars find Nominate scores problematic because, especially in the first sessions, a minority of votes were recorded as roll calls (McElroy, 2006). Critics also contend that a selection effects biases roll call votes (Carrubba, Gabel and Hug, 2008), especially when specific groups use them to either signal their policy positions to third parties or to enforce discipline among their own ranks (Carrubba et al., 2006). The literature notes that, with such high levels of group cohesion (Hix at al., 2007) and delegation control over roll call votes (Hix, 2002), variation within delegations or groups may not be significant enough to measure policy distance.

Despite these critiques, the EP literature (McElroy, 2006; Rasmussen, 2008; Yordanova, 2013), as well as research focused specifically on group switching (McElroy 2008; McElroy and Benoit 2009), uses Nominate scores to measure MEP to EPG policy distances. Furthermore, the literature may be over-estimating the cohesiveness of party groups because relying on Nominate scores that do not account for the different types of votes leads to the "underreporting of the heterogeneity within the groups" (Høyland 2010: 598). Therefore, using DW-Nominate scores derived from the entire universe of roll call votes, the method used here, de-emphasizes the differences between members of the same group, which should produce conservative estimates of MEP to EPG policy incongruence. Likewise, if roll call votes used as a tool for exerting "party pressure" worked equally well on all members (Hug 2016), then we would not see the within-group disparities in policy distances presented below. Figures 3.3 and 3.4 present boxplots for the mean-centered, MEP to EPG distances on both the ideological and European dimensions and illustrate the variation within groups, across parliamentary terms, and between groups.

Figure 3.3 Boxplots of Ideological and European Distances (Mean Centered), By Group-Session. Social Democrats (SOC/PES); Liberal Democrats (ALDE); Christian Democrats (EPP)

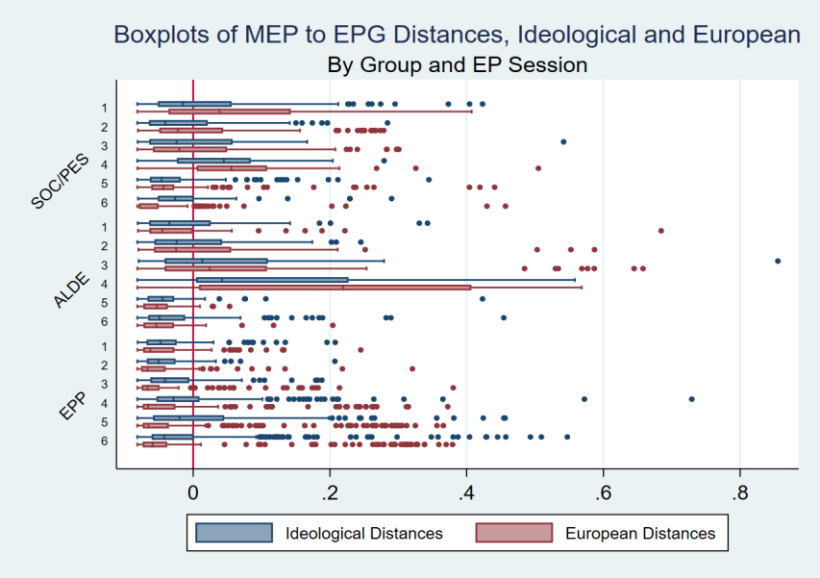
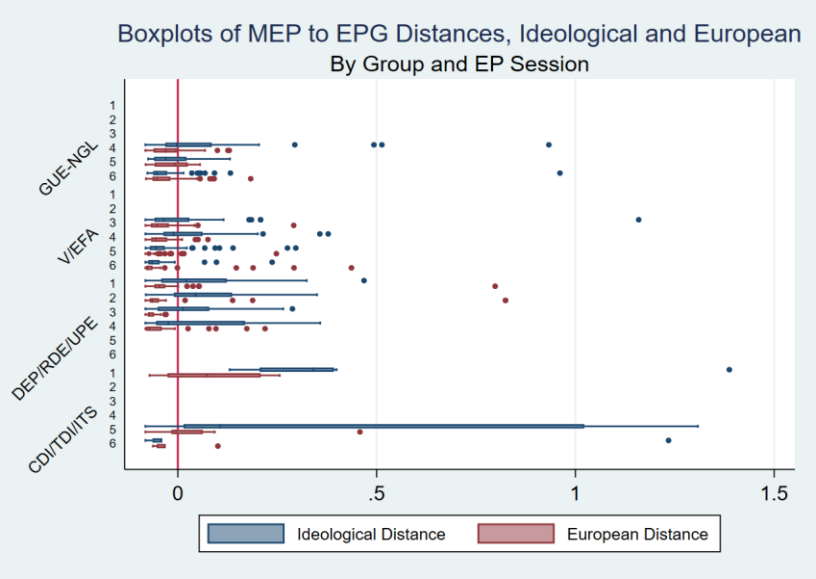


Figure 3.4 Boxplots of Ideological and European Distances, By Group-Session. Leftists (GUE-NGL); Greens (V-EFA); Gaullists (DEP/RDE/UPE); Technical Groups (CDI/TDI/ITS)



Turning to the dependent variable, I define switchers as those members who change affiliations and stay in the new group for at least two weeks. Following Evans and Vink (2012), I distinguish between within- and between-session switches. Within-session switches occur during the course of a term, and between-session switches result when an incumbent changes groups after an election. Unlike Evans and Vink (2012), I treat members who switched from the DEP to the RDE after the 1984 election, for example, as switchers. Name changes indicate internal negotiations between delegations, and unless the name of the group is recognizable, I count it as a new group.[23] This method does not reflect party family continuity, but rather the internal dynamics of party group stability, as reproduced by consistent political branding, an important facet of institutionalization (Randall and Svåsand, 2002).

[23] Unlike the cases identified by Harmel et al. (2018) name changes in the EP represent (often contentious) internal negotiations between factions and therefore do not represent a purifying or clarifying of the party brand meant to more accurately define themselves voters.

		Independent Variable	Expectation
Within-Session	Collective	Merger or Dissolve	(+)
		NPD to EPG Distance	(+)
	Individual	MEP to EPG Distance	(+)
Between-Session	Collective	Fail to Reconvene	(+)
		NPD to EPG Distance	(+)
	Individual	MEP to EPG Distance	(+)

Table 3.2 Hypotheses of Switching. Plus Sign (+) indicates the expected sign on coefficients

Combining within- and between-session switches with the weak institutionalization and policy distance variables makes it possible to theorize how we should expect these relationships to behave, and these hypotheses are listed in Table 3.2. In all cases, the expectation is that the coefficients on distance variables should be positive—as the distance variables increase, so too should the odds of switching.

Data and Methods

We now proceed to analyze the effect of weak institutionalization and policy incongruence on party group switching. The two dichotomous dependent variables used in the following models are within-session and between-session switches. For within-session switchers, I operationalize weak institutionalization with an indicator variable for mergers or dissolution, and for between-session switches, I use a dummy for parties that failed to reconvene. Members in groups that merge, dissolve, or fail to reconvene will necessarily switch, but failing to account for group collapse omits an important variable, the absence of which biases the results. By including these indicators, it is possible to more accurately estimate the effect of the policy distance variables.

I measure NPD to EPG distance to account for collective switches, and I use MEP to EPG incongruence to explain individual switches. I use the DW-Nominate estimates to calculate policy distance variables on both the left-right ideological and pro-/anti Europe dimensions. These measure the absolute distance between the member's, or delegation's, position on the relevant dimension to the group's median on that dimension. NPD positions are calculated by aggregating co-members' individual ideal points. All distance variables are centered on their mean.

Because DW-Nominate scores are comparable across sessions, for all models analyzing between-session switches, I use the distance variable from the previous session. For example, if the MEP switched from the Greens to the Social Democrats at the beginning of EP5 (time *t*), then the distance used to explain this between-session switch is calculated from her position relative to the Greens in EP4 (time *t-1*). This lagging procedure is used for NPD distances as well.

I use several control variables derived from the literature on party group switching. For example, in order to account for the power of each group or delegation, I include mean-centered, seat share proportions for both the NPD, relative to the group, and the EPG, relative to the entire parliament (McElroy, 2008). I expect that, after controlling for weakly institutionalized group collapse, members from larger NPDs and EPGs should be less likely to switch groups. I test this directly using an interaction term between the collapse variable and the NPD seat share variable for group switches. This allows me to examine the conditional effect of delegation size on switching after controlling for party collapse. I include an indicator for whether an MEP switched groups previously in their career, as well as controls for MEP experience, gender, age, and whether the MEP's delegation was a member of the national government or had a Commissioner (Hix and Noury, 2018).

My dataset aggregates information from several sources. First, I combine all of the Hix et al. (2007) member data with Høyland, Sircar and Hix (2010) data from the Automated Database of the European Parliament, from which I attain the timing of every switch as well as the aggregated party group and national delegation power variables. I use the Parlgov dataset's (Döring and Manow, 2016) "party in government" variable, as well as Daniel's (2015) variable on MEP sex. Hix and Noury (2018) graciously provide me with the NPD in government and commissioner variables.

Following Hix and Noury (2018), I use pooled logistic regression models. To account for NPDs which divide their membership between groups, I construct a unique delegation identifier for each specific combination of the NPD-EPG-EP, and then I cluster errors on this ID. The models also include fixed effects for EP sessions where EP1 is the baseline. The outcome is a dichotomous switch variable, divided between within- and between-session types; within each

type, I present models for individual switches and collective switches. This method is standard across multiple studies (Evans and Vink, 2012; Hix and Noury, 2018).

Analysis and Results

Table 3.3 presents the results for the models examining collective (Models 1-4) and individual (Models 5-7), *within-session switches*. Model 1 includes all control variables, including the NPD and EPG seat share variables. The coefficients for these size variables are highly significant, but the sign is positive for delegations and negative for groups. Power, as measured by number of members, therefore, functions differently at the two levels of aggregation, and this relationship is consistent across the first four models.

Model 2 introduces the dissolve-merge indicator, which, as expected, takes a positive sign and correlates strongly with switching. The coefficients on both seat share variables shrink but maintain previous levels of significance, and the pseudo-R^2 increases from 0.437 to 0.548. Model 3 includes the NPD to EPG policy distance variables, and as hypothesized, both coefficients are positive. After controlling for mergers and disintegration, as delegations become more ideologically incongruent with their group, they have statistically higher odds of switching groups. This is not the case for distance on the European dimension, however, which is not related to within-session, collective switches. Model 4 presents the results of the interaction term between NPD seat share and weak institutionalization. All three terms take positive coefficients and the interaction term is highly significant, indicating that NPD seat share's effect on switching is conditioned by whether or not a group collapsed.

Table 3.3 Results Table for Logistic Regression, Within-Session Switches, Collective and Individual

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
	Within-Session, Collective Switches				Within-Session, Individual Switches		
NPD Seat Share	**4.211*** (1.241)**	**3.065** (1.042)**	**3.972*** (1.131)**	2.410 (1.443)	**-12.06*** (3.584)**	**-13.22*** (3.931)**	**-13.43** (4.252)**
EPG Seat Share	**-17.72*** (4.02)**	**-14.21*** (3.738)**	**-12.43** (3.875)**	**-13.69** (4.404)**	**-8.447*** (1.157)**	**-7.419*** (1.122)**	**-6.788*** (1.163)**
Dissolve-Merge		**3.726*** (0.491)**	**3.647*** (0.516)**	**6.339*** (1.313)**		**2.172*** (0.385)**	**2.122*** (0.377)**
NPD to EPG Ideo. Distance			**1.859*** (0.463)**	**1.927*** (0.462)**			
NPD to EPG Europe Distance			2.549 (1.623)	1.942 (1.658)			
Dissolve-Merge* NPD Seat Share				**52.93*** (13.40)**			
MEP to EPG Ideo. Distance							**0.825* (0.403)**
MEP to EPG Europe Distance							**2.214*** (0.667)**
Lag Switch	0.556 (0.317)	0.556 (0.392)	0.335 (0.405)	0.589 (0.413)	0.693 (0.368)	0.435 (0.400)	0.185 (0.407)
MEP Experience	**0.281* (0.119)**	0.220 (0.144)	0.185 (0.175)	0.131 (0.177)	0.133 (0.121)	0.134 (0.127)	0.115 (0.124)
Female	**-0.501* (0.218)**	**-0.509* (0.247)**	-0.413 (0.238)	-0.456 (0.257)	**-0.945** (0.320)**	**-0.911** (0.321)**	**-0.863** (0.322)**
Age	-0.008 (0.010)	-0.005 (0.012)	-0.006 (0.012)	-0.001 (0.013)	-0.001 (0.010)	-0.002 (0.011)	-0.001 (0.011)
NPD in Gov't	0.206 (0.435)	0.255 (0.382)	0.332 (0.382)	0.555 (0.421)	0.165 (0.259)	0.279 (0.261)	0.387 (0.265)
NPD has a Commissioner	0.915 (0.601)	0.498 (0.749)	0.668 (0.817)	0.600 (0.915)	0.458 (0.309)	0.435 (0.308)	0.494 (0.319)
Constant	**-7.77*** (1.496)**	**-6.659*** (1.363)**	**-6.972*** (1.340)**	**-6.984*** (1.324)**	**-5.806*** (0.867)**	**-5.852*** (0.894)**	**-6.136*** (0.878)**
EP Fixed Effects	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
Observations	3,826	3,826	3,826	3,826	3,826	3,826	3,826
Pseudo R^2	0.437	0.548	0.576	0.616	0.184	0.222	0.238

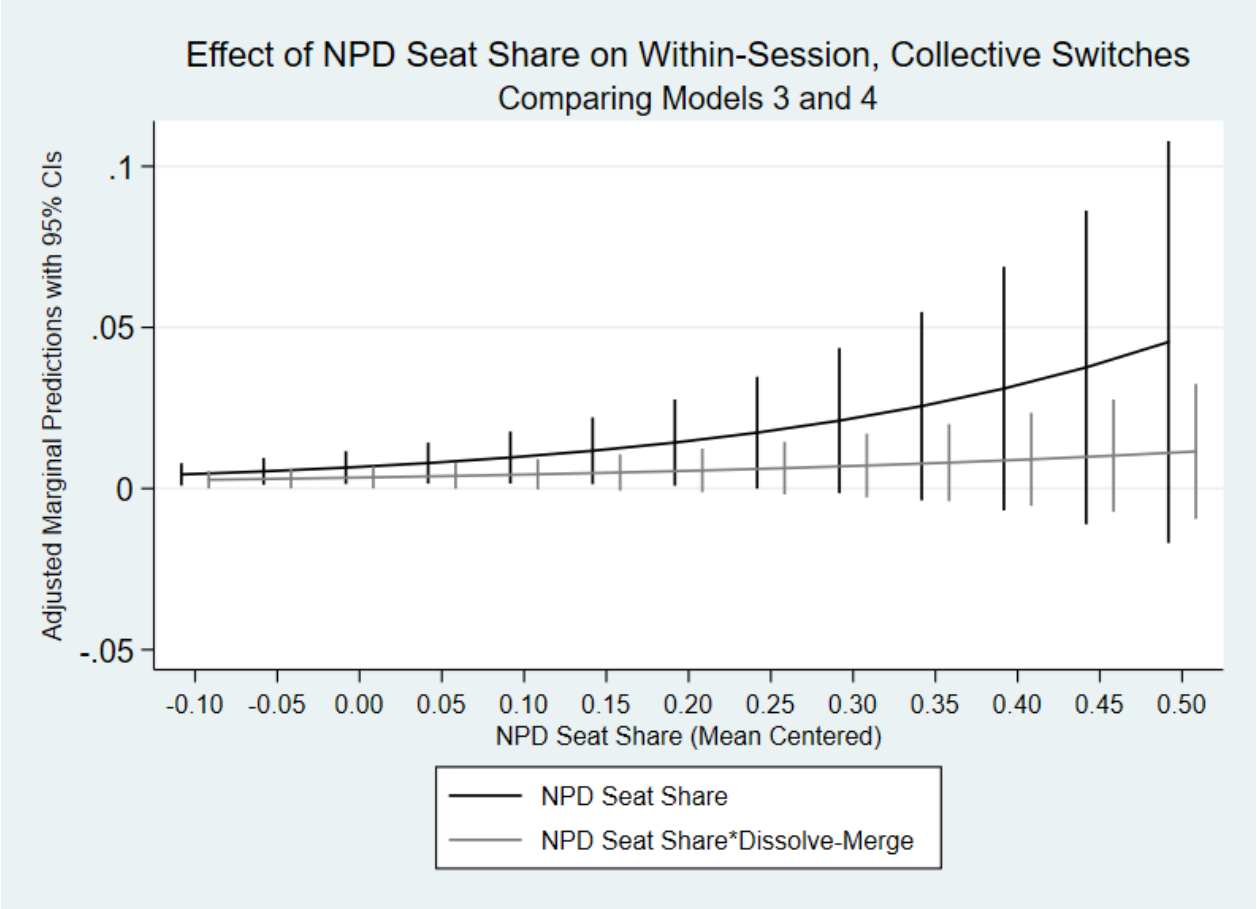
Note: EP1 is the baseline. The appendix contains a full description of the variables and descriptive statistics for all variables. The number of observations is smaller for between-switchers as the samples in models 4,5, and 6 are restricted just to those MEPs who were present in both EP(t) and EP(t-1). Standard errors clustered by national party in parentheses.
* p<0.05, ** p<0.01, ***p<0.001

Figure 3.5 illustrates how the interaction term impacts our interpretation of NPD seat share's effect on switching. I compare the predicted probabilities from Models 3 and 4 in order to illustrate the utility of including the interaction term. The estimates from Model 3 show that, as NPD seat share increases, the predicted probability of switching also increases. From this result, one would conclude that as delegations grow larger, they are more likely to re-affiliate. Model 4, however, estimates the effect of seat share on switching as a function of group collapse, and these results tell a different story. The predicted probability curve for the interaction term shifts down

and flattens out substantially. The margins are only different from zero for delegations of the smallest size, and even among these, the effect of increased size shows no significant effect on increasing the odds of switching. Therefore, after placing it in relation to group collapse, the relationship between an NPD's size and switching during a session proves statistically and substantively insignificant.

The control variables are largely insignificant, especially in Models 3 and 4. The signs on the delegation in government and commissioner variables are negative, as expected, but in many cases the error terms are as big, if not larger than, the coefficients. We also see that older members are less likely to switch, and that members with more tenure have higher odds of switching, but these results are not statistically different from zero.

Figure 3.5 Comparing the Effects of NPD Seat Share on Within-Session Switching for Delegations in Non-Collapsing Groups



Models 5 through 7 analyze individual, within-session switches. Here, both the NPD and EPG seat share variables are negative and significant, indicating that MEPs from larger delegations and groups are less likely to switch during the course of a parliamentary term. This result is consistent across all four models, yet different than what we see for collective switches, where the NPD seat share always takes a positive coefficient. Model 6 introduces the dissolve-merge dummy, and it performs as expected, taking a statistically significant, positive coefficient.

The MEP to EPG distance variables constructed using the DW-Nominate scores, found in Model 7, perform as hypothesized. As a member becomes more distant from their group on either dimension, their odds of switching increase significantly. When compared to the most central MEPs, those farther away from the group's median have higher odds of switching, and this effect is different from zero across all values of ideological distance. The increase in odds, however, is muted when compared to the European dimension, where we see a more pronounced impact. The results of Model 7 support the stated hypotheses: As members become more incongruent with their group, their odds of switching increase, particularly when MEPs hold discordant views on issues associated with European integration.

The results presented in Table 3.4 include seven models analyzing collective (Models 8-11) and individual (12-14) *between-session switches*. As in Models 1-4, the NPD seat share variable is never statistically significant, and takes a positive sign for the first three models, before flipping to negative once the interaction term is introduced. The EPG seat share variable takes a negative coefficient and is always highly significant, demonstrating that delegations from the largest groups have lower odds of switching between sessions.

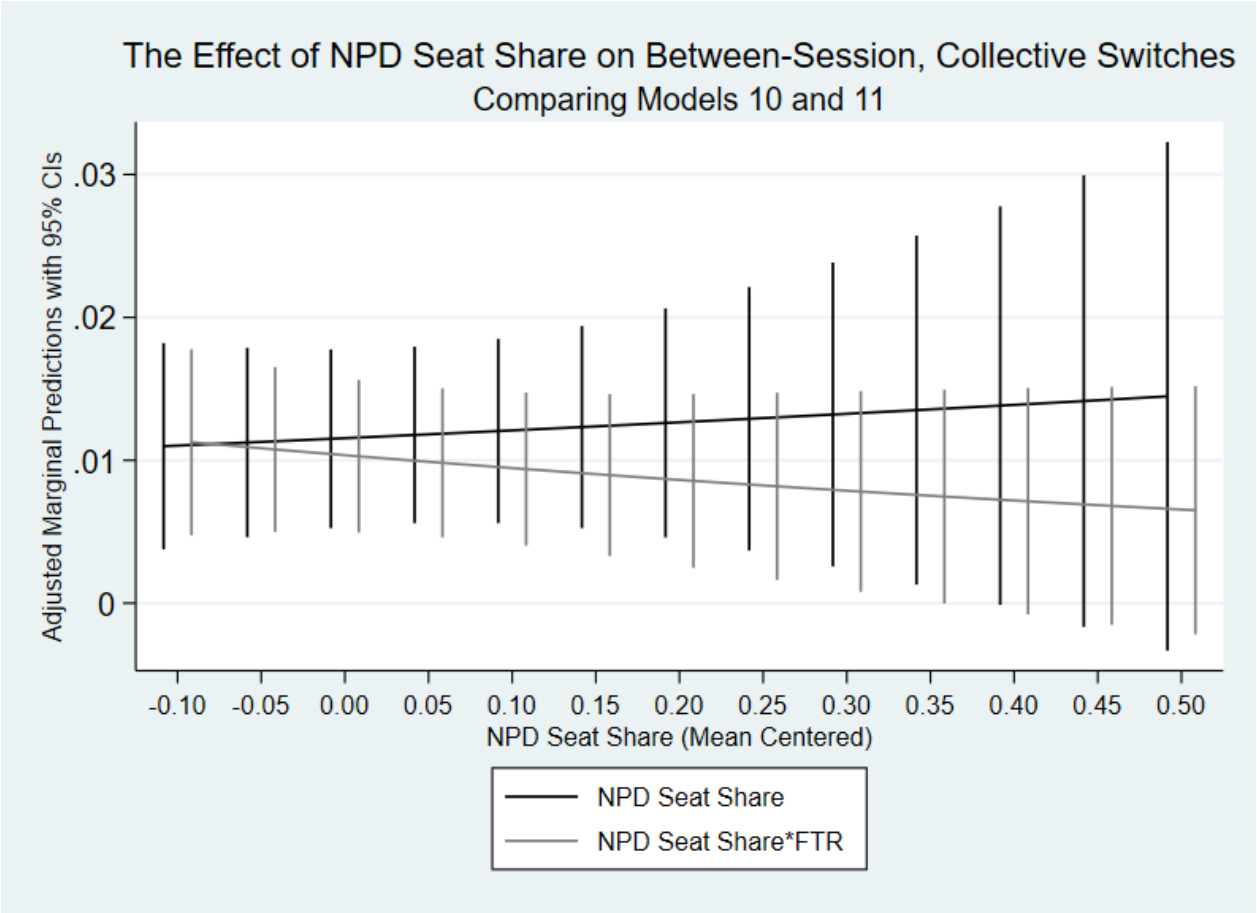
The FTR variable takes a statistically significant, positive coefficient in Models 9 through 11, indicating that group collapse following an electoral shock is a significant predictor of a collective switch. Model 11 tests the conditional effect of NPD seat share on switching given weak institutionalization. The seat share variable takes a negative sign, while both the weak institutionalization variable and interaction term have positive signs. Figure 3.6 illustrates how the interpretation changes after including the FTR variable.

Table 3.4 Results Table for Logistic Regression, Between-Session Switches, Collective and Individual

	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)	(12)	(13)	(14)
	Between-Session, Collective Switches				Between Session, Individual Switches		
NPD Seat Share	0.104	0.061	0.465	-0.923	**-5.341****	**-7.161****	**-7.103***
	(1.123)	(1.213)	(1.300)	(1.273)	**(1.854)**	**(2.753)**	**(2.870)**
EPG Seat Share	**-10.02*****	**-7.219*****	**-6.160****	**-6.283****	**-8.795*****	**-6.946*****	**-6.390*****
	(2.069)	**(2.013)**	**(1.967)**	**(2.043)**	**(1.543)**	**(1.543)**	**(1.585)**
Fail to Reconvene		**4.075*****	**4.138*****	**4.028*****		**2.681*****	**2.687*****
(FTR)		**(0.492)**	**(0.503)**	**(0.640)**		**(0.487)**	**(0.489)**
NPD to EPG			**1.488****	**1.414****			
Ideo. Distance			**(0.496)**	**(0.498)**			
NPD to EPG			0.499	0.362			
Europe Distance			(1.553)	(1.435)			
FTR*				**13.64***			
NPD Seat Share				**(5.993)**			
MEP to EPG							0.436
Ideo. Distance							(0.437)
MEP to EPG							**1.670***
Europe Distance							**(0.831)**
Lag	**0.919****	**1.144****	**1.083****	**1.216****	**0.781***	**0.823***	0.726
Switch	**(0.327)**	**(0.394)**	**(0.388)**	**(0.380)**	**(0.353)**	**(0.369)**	(0.375)
MEP	**0.765*****	**0.490*****	**0.483*****	**0.464*****	**0.568*****	**0.368****	**0.362****
Experience	**(0.133)**	**(0.142)**	**(0.145)**	**(0.139)**	(0.101)	(0.114)	(0.115)
Female	**-0.580***	**-0.697***	**-0.646***	-0.691	0.162	0.233	0.266
	(0.253)	**(0.304)**	**(0.304)**	(0.354)	(0.303)	(0.306)	(0.305)
Age	0.013	0.013	0.011	0.014	**0.029***	**0.030***	**0.029***
	(0.010)	(0.013)	(0.013)	(0.013)	**(0.013)**	**(0.014)**	**(0.014)**
NP in Gov't	-0.721	-0.686	-0.653	-0.715	-0.121	0.044	0.068
	(0.515)	(0.641)	(0.632)	(0.651)	(0.281)	(0.339)	(0.335)
NP has a	0.139	0.652	0.709	0.888	-0.540	-0.414	-0.393
Commissioner	(0.740)	(0.765)	(0.780)	(0.774)	(0.385)	(0.418)	(0.420)
	-5.869***	**-5.359*****	**-4.395*****	**-4.66*****	**-7.342*****	**-7.264*****	**-6.172*****
Constant	**(0.719)**	**(0.829)**	**(1.190)**	**(1.175)**	**(0.834)**	**(0.876)**	**(0.974)**
EP Fixed Effects	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
Observations	3,393	3,393	3,393	3,393	3,393	3,393	3,393
Pseudo R^2	0.247	0.424	0.436	0.461	0.199	0.276	0.283

Note: EP1 is the baseline. The appendix contains a full description of the variables and descriptive statistics for all variables. The number of observations is smaller for between-switchers as the samples in models 4,5, and 6 are restricted just to those MEPs who were present in both EP(t) and EP(t-1). Standard errors clustered by national party in parentheses.
* p<0.05, ** p<0.01, ***p<0.001

Figure 3.6 Comparing the Effects of NPD Seat Share on Between-Session Switching for Delegations in Non-Collapsing Groups



Model 10 shows that the relationship between NPD seat share and switching is significantly different from zero for values less than 0.40, but the curve is relatively flat with large confidence intervals. Alternatively, the predicted probability curve for Model 11 is negatively sloped, indicating that, after controlling for the failure to reconvene, larger delegations have lower odds of re-affiliating between sessions. The confidence intervals exhibit pronounced overlap, so the substantive difference is limited; however, these statistical results accord with the previously hypothesized theoretical relationship between size and switching. In short, based on the results from Models 4 and 11, it seems that large delegations do not switch more frequently than smaller delegations, once we account for group collapse.

The policy distance variables follow the patterns observed in Models 3 and 4—as delegations become ideologically incongruent with their party groups, their odds of re-affiliating increase

significantly. The effect of European policy incongruence on between-session, collective switches, however, is statistically insignificant. Unlike within-session switches, the lagged switch and MEP tenure control variables are both highly significant and positively related to between-session switches. Further, the evidence shows that incumbent women are less likely than men to change groups after an election.

For between-session, individual switches, the FTR variable is positive and statistically significant. Both seat share variables are negative and highly significant, as expected. The results of Model 14 show that the distance between a member and her group on the European dimension is statistically significant and increases the odds of switching. For MEPs, the most important dimension for determining incongruence with the group is Europe, but for NPDs, the primary point of contention is ideology. Interestingly, older members with more tenure are more likely to switch, on average, but the substantive effect is relatively minor. Across these last seven models, none of the national delegation controls are meaningfully related to party group re-affiliation, which is consistent with prior analyses (Hix and Noury, 2018).

Discussion and Conclusion

Several assumptions prevalent in the literature complicate the study of party group switching in the EP. First, the multi-level nature of the EP makes disentangling motivations a difficult task. Second, the research often presumes that policy-, office-, and vote-seeking behavior stimulates parliamentary decision-making, and this leads the literature to undervalue the system-level causes of individual actions. Finally, the scholarship distinguishes between major and minor, as well as core and periphery groups, but it has not expanded on how these differences impact parliamentary behavior. Especially in the study of party group switching, this conventional wisdom can cause observers to overlook certain phenomena, such as party group collapse.

In this paper, I make two major contributions to this emerging field of study. First, I consider how weak institutionalization among EPGs impacts party group switching by identifying three different forms of group collapse. Second, I construct individual and delegation policy distance variables from DW-Nominate estimates for the first 30 years of the EP. Because they address member-, delegation-, and group-level causes of switching, these additions assist the field in

better understanding what factors increase or decrease the odds of collective and individual re-affiliation.

The findings presented here align with much of what is found in the existing literature, but they also push the analysis of parliamentary behavior in the EP forward in several ways. By introducing the concept of weak institutionalization, this study includes a highly relevant variable that has been omitted from all previous analyses of party group switching. The results show that group collapse needs to be accounted for when explaining why collective switches occur; indeed, it seems that the primary reason large delegations change groups is because they are over-represented in weakly institutionalized political groups. This is most obviously the case for within-session switches where some of the largest delegations merged or dissolved during the EP term. In the case of groups failing to reconvene following an election, however, the results show that, after accounting for group collapse, group size has no relationship to between-session, delegation switches. Collective switches, therefore, are strongly associated with the collapse of weakly institutionalized groups.

Policy-seeking behavior plays an important role in the story, as well. This analysis utilizes individual-level measures of policy distance in a multi-session analysis of party group switching for the first time, and the results are promising. The models reveal a clear distinction between delegation- and member-level behavior. In general, the results show that, after controlling for weak institutionalization, ideological incongruence drives collective switches made by delegations while conflict over European integration is most likely to divide individual members from their group.

Scholars interested in studying party group switching in the EP will find various research agendas open to them. For example, we do not yet know what happens to members after they switch. Do they receive offices as rewards for re-affiliating, as Yoshinaka (2015) finds in the US Congress? Or do they change their voting behavior as Nokken and Poole (2004) observe also in the American case? Finally, it remains to be seen what other parliamentary behaviors are conditioned by the weak institutionalization of party groups. If members from these groups switch more, perhaps they also abstain more, make more speeches, or spend more time at home with their

constituencies? Using the analysis presented here as a foundation, future scholarship should find many new research questions worth pursuing.

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Appendix B

Table B1. Summary Statistics

Variable	Obs	Mean	Std. Dev.	Min	Max
Between Session, Group Switch	3,977	0.034	0.182	0.000	1.000
Within-Session, Group Switch	3,977	0.065	0.247	0.000	1.000
Between-Session, Individual Switch	3,977	0.019	0.138	0.000	1.000
Within-Session, Individual Switch	3,977	0.028	0.165	0.000	1.000
All Between-Session Switches	3,977	0.054	0.225	0.000	1.000
All Within-Session Switches	3,977	0.094	0.291	0.000	1.000
MEP to EPG Ideo. Distance with BWS distances lagged (mean centered)	3,977	-0.452	0.183	-0.566	1.310
MEP to EPG Euro. Distance with BWS distances lagged (mean centered)	3,977	-0.483	0.117	-0.566	0.340
NPD to EPG Ideo. Distance with BWS distances lagged (mean centered)	3,977	-0.480	0.164	-0.566	1.310
NPD to EPG Euro. Distance with BWS distances lagged (mean centered)	3,977	-0.506	0.096	-0.566	0.314
MEP to EPG Ideo. Distance (mean centered)	3,977	0.032	0.189	-0.082	1.794
MEP to EPG Euro. Distance (mean centered)	3,977	0.000	0.116	-0.082	0.824
NPD to EPG Ideo. Distance (mean centered)	3,977	0.028	0.172	-0.059	1.817
NPD to EPG Euro. Distance (mean centered)	3,977	0.000	0.094	-0.059	0.847
Merger Indicator	3,977	0.025	0.157	0.000	1.000
Dissolve Indicator	3,977	0.024	0.153	0.000	1.000
Fail to Reconvene Indicator	3,977	0.025	0.157	0.000	1.000
Percent EPG in EP (mean centered)	3,977	0.000	0.125	-0.211	0.164
Percent NPD in EPG (mean centered)	3,850	0.000	0.163	-0.148	0.763
Lagged Switch	3,977	0.050	0.218	0.000	1.000
MEP Tenure	3,977	1.554	0.863	1.000	6.000
Female	3,977	0.244	0.429	0.000	1.000
Age	3,972	50.670	9.886	21.489	85.112
NPD in Gov't	3,977	0.680	0.467	0.000	1.000
NPD has a Commissioner	3,961	0.418	0.488	0.000	1.000

Paper Four

Ambitious Moderates and Unreliable Outliers: Evaluating the Effect of Policy Incongruence on Party Group Switching

Abstract

The literature on party group switching in the European Parliament determines that outliers have the highest odds of re-affiliating; however, changing party group labels implies that such a transition benefits both the parliamentarian as well as the receiving group. In order to better clarify the relationship between policy distance and party group switching, this paper identifies three types of switches, including cascades resulting from group collapse, multi-switchers who re-affiliate more than once per term, and ambitious switchers, members who are not involved in a cascade and only changed group labels once in a session. Using member-to-group policy distance variables constructed from DW-Nominate scores (1979-2009) and multi-level, random intercept, logistic regression models, this paper tests several outlier hypotheses in order to determine whether groups view the most extreme members as reliable partners. After excluding cascades and multi-switchers from the dependent variable, the results show that outliers, relative to the entire parliamentary policy space or to their group, have reduced odds of successfully re-affiliating; however, delegates who are only moderately distant from their group on a single dimension, have the highest odds of switching. These results highlight the effect of system level instability on shaping individual parliamentary behavior and therefore have wide-ranging theoretical and empirical implications for future research.

Introduction

To understand why parliamentarians re-affiliate from one party to another, it is necessary to consider both the switcher's personal motivations as well as the interests of the receiving party. According to Laver and Benoit (2003), successfully changing party labels entails a two-step process: the potential switcher must find an *attractive* target party and then that party must prove *willing* to accept the new member. In certain cases, potential switchers will be rejected by parties unwilling to accept them, or unattractive parties will fail to recruit members between elections. A successful switch, therefore, implies that delegate and party find the new relationship mutually agreeable.

In the European Parliament (EP), research identifies significant differences in EPG's ability to vote cohesively (Klüver and Spoon 2015), variation in their levels of internal organization (Bressanelli 2014), and asymmetry in their abilities to influence policy (Bressanelli et al. 2016), characteristics which may make these groups either more or less attractive to potential switchers. Further, the literature identifies several personal incentives related to switching European Parliamentary Group's (EPG) (Evans and Vink 2012; McElroy and Benoit 2009; McElroy 2008), and determines that members of the European Parliament (MEPs) "who are ideological outliers tend to switch to groups whose policy positions are more congruent with their views" (Hix and Noury 2018, 571). These two literatures combine to present an interesting puzzle: Why would a targeted group be *willing* to accept an MEP who is observably out of sync with her home EPG? In other words, are *policy outliers* really viewed as reliable partners by the target groups they find *attractive*?

This paper clarifies the relationship between policy outlying and party group switching in the EP by utilizing a variety of policy distance variables constructed from DW-Nominate scores for the first six session of the EP (1979-2009). To analyze outliers, however, it is necessary to select the appropriate cases. The literature identifies several types of switches, including individual, collective, between-session, and within-session (Evans and Vink 2012; Hix and Noury 2018). In this study, I consider three more. *Cascade* switches occur after a party group collapses, and *multi-switchers* are MEPs who change labels more than once during a term; indeed, the analysis will show that these two types are highly correlated—once a group collapses, expelled members often transition into and out of several groups before finding a stable home. *Ambitious* switchers are MEPs who switch only once in a term and whose re-affiliation has nothing to do with a group's collapse. These are archetypal, rationally-motivated MEPs who change groups to enhance their political careers.

To understand the relationship between policy outlying and party group switching, we first restrict cascades and multi-switchers from the dependent variable before analyzing the individual correlates of ambitious switchers. This case selection enables us to theoretically discount rational, policy-seeking as a causal explanation for members caught in a group collapsed; furthermore, irrespective of their core or outlier status, every member of a disintegrating group re-affiliates, so including them only serves to obscure the true effect of policy distance on switching.

Consequently, ruling out cascades and multi-switchers makes it possible to properly estimate the impact of policy outlying on ambitious switching.

We operationalize outlying in three ways. First, an intensity variable measures an MEP's outlier status relative to the entire EP policy space; second, MEP to EPG distances on both the ideological and European dimensions, as well as their quadratic transformations, assess whether or not the most extreme EPG-outliers are more likely to re-affiliate; finally, an interaction term between both MEP-to-EPG distances tests whether the most extreme group members, that is, members who are outliers on both dimensions, have increased or decreased odds of switching. These three variables make it is possible to determine whether, and which type of, outliers succeed in switching EPGs.

The results show that, on average, political groups view the most extreme MEPs, either in the parliamentary chamber or relative to their EPGs, as unreliable partners. In short, extreme iconoclasts are less likely to switch groups than moderate outliers. This does not disprove previous findings, which report a positive relationship between policy distance and switching (Hix and Noury 2018); rather, these results provide a more nuanced interpretation that aligns closely with the logic outlined by Laver and Benoit (2003): To be viewed as a reliable group member, "ambitious" switchers must cooperate with their home group and toe the party line on at least one dimension. Conversely, attractive groups rarely reward incongruent outliers and generally prove unwilling to add the most extreme MEPs to their ranks.

I first discuss the two theoretical approaches used to examine party switching. In the next two sections, I discuss group collapse and policy incongruence as potential causes of party group re-affiliation. After presenting my variables and methodology in the fourth section, section five describes cascades and section six presents the random-intercept logistic regression model for ambitious switchers. The findings will then be reviewed in the Discussion and Conclusion section.

Two Schools

In reviewing the party switching literature, Mershon (2014) identifies two dominant approaches. The first, grounded in rational choice institutionalism, assumes that ambitious politicians switch parties in pursuit of votes, offices, or policy. The second focuses on historical institutionalism and examines how party, and party system, consolidation impacts the frequency of switches. The rational choice institutionalist studies use individual-level variables, such as a parliamentarian's seniority, career achievements, or membership in a ruling coalition, to discern which characteristics intensify or dampen the odds of switching (Yoshinaka 2016, McElroy 2008, Desposato 2006). When authors introduce the system-level into these models, they often focus on electoral and governmental institutions as well as candidate selection rules (O'Brien and Shomer 2013, Mershon and Shvetsova 2013a). One enlightening example from this school employs cost-benefit analysis and argues that politicians calculate the distance between their party's and the electorate's ideal points when determining whether or not to switch. Appearing unreliable to the electorate increases the price of switching, and thus, fear of losing re-election limits the advantages of re-affiliation (Mershon and Shvetsova 2013b, 877).

Regarding the historical institutionalist approach, Mershon (2014) notes that high rates of switching are often associated with weakly institutionalized parties, party systems, or legislatures. In emerging democracies, we find a robust relationship between weak institutionalization and member volatility (Mainwaring and Scully 1995; Thames 2007; McMenamin and Gwiazda 2011). Further, party systems with immature political parties and low voter identification produce high rates of re-affiliation (Zielinski et al. 2005; Shabad and Slomczynski 2004; and Kreuzer and Pettai 2003); however, because these systems are still open and unpredictable (Mair 1997: 192), it is difficult for potential switchers to calculate the possible gains to be won, or lost, from re-affiliation. In these cases, system-level institutionalization conditions individual rational behavior. Applying Mershon and Shvetsova's (2013b) cost-benefit model to weakly institutionalized party systems, where neither parties' nor voters' positions have consolidated, would likely prove ineffective. Researchers, therefore, should take care not to ignore the possible influence of the system-level when analyzing individual party switches.

Different types of switches accord with these two schools of thought. On one hand, cascades and multi-switchers follow after the collapse of highly volatile, weakly institutionalized groups. On

the other hand, ambitious switchers are those driven by policy-seeking behavior. Therefore, to determine whether or not policy outliers are more likely to re-affiliate, it is essential to control for weak institutionalization at the system level before focusing on individual, ambitious switchers.

Group Collapse and Cascade Switches

Unlike in the national context where low voter identification and unstable partisan positions animate switching, in the EP, group collapse functions as the causal mechanism linking weak institutionalization to cascades of party group switchers. Here, I use cascade in a non-traditional manner. Heller and Mershon (2009) approach switching from the rational choice institutionalist perspective and describe a cascade switch as an on-going process whereby, "the individual decisions of party leaders and party switchers can affect parties' legislative weights, attractiveness to voters, and policy preferences. To the extent that they do so, they have system-level consequences that can in turn trigger further, potentially system-altering decisions by other individual legislative actors" (290). In this hypothetical scenario, a cascade occurs after a single elite member decides to re-affiliate, and then other members follow suit.

In the EP a cascade occurs after a party group collapses, either because it merges with another group, it dissolves mid-session, or it cannot reform following an election. Members and delegations caught in a collapse have little control over their decision to re-affiliate, and because the dissolution impacts all delegates, these events produce observable cascades of switches. Whereas previous studies define "collective switches" as two or more members from the same national party delegation (NPD) changing group labels, cascades originate at the EPG level, and therefore also include single-member delegations, previously coded as individual switchers, caught in a group collapse.

The collapse of weakly institutionalized groups initiates cascades. Once a group collapses, even its most central members are forced to switch groups; therefore, including cascade switches in a study of individual switching only blurs the estimated effect of policy outlying. Consequently, to determine the influence of outlying on re-affiliation, we must analyze ambitious switchers, who adhere to the well-established logic of policy-seeking, separately from cascade switches. Table 4.1 lists the occurrences of group collapse in the first six EP terms.

EP	Full Name	EPG	Collapse	Total MEPs
2	Group for the Technical Coordination and Defense of Independent Groups and Members	CDI	FTR	7
2	Group of European Progressive Democrats	DEP	FTR	10
2	Group for Technical Coordination and Defence of Independent Groupings and Members	TCDI	Dissolve	10
3	Communist and Allies Group	COM	FTR	17
3	Group for the European United Left	GUE	Dissolve	30
3	European Democrats	ED	Merger	45
4	Left Unity	CG	FTR	16
4	Technical Group of the European Right	DR	FTR	9
4	Rainbow Group	RBW	FTR	7
4	Europe of Nations Group-Coordination Group	EDN	Dissolve	19
4	Forza Europa	FE	Merger	28
4	Group of the European Democratic Alliance	RDE	Merger	28
5	Group of the European Radical Alliance	ARE	FTR	9
5	Group of Independents for a Europe of Nations	I-EDN	FTR	9
5	Union for Europe	UPE	FTR	9
5	Technical Group of Independent Members- Mixed Group	TDI	Dissolve	20
6	Europe of Democracies and Diversities	EDD	FTR	8
6	Identity, Tradition, and Sovereignty Group	ITS	Dissolve	18

Table 4.1 Group Collapse and Cascade Switches
Notes: FTR stands for "Fail to Reconvene" and describes what happens when a group can no longer form itself following an election.

Policy and Outliers

The EP's policy space consists of "a left-right dimensions composed of economic and sociopolitical issues…and an orthogonal dimension of EU integration versus national sovereignty" (McElroy and Benoit 2009, 160), and EPGs hold relatively stable policy positions from session to session (McElroy and Benoit 2007; 2012). Within this policy space, we assume that groups, delegations, or members who are closer to one another have more similar policy interests (Downs 1957). Scholars measure these distances to operationalize policy (in)congruence.

For example, Faas (2003) examines distances constructed using party-level data and determines that "national party delegations that have policy positions deviating from those of others in the same party group are more likely to defect from [vote against] party group lines" (2003, 859). Klüver and Spoon (2015) refine this analysis and conclude that policy distance's effect on voting against the group is conditioned by issue salience. Analyses also show that the "most central policy-leaders" are those most likely to be re-elected in the EP (Wilson et al. 2016). Therefore,

the literature confirms that when members' policy preferences align with the group, they are often rewarded, yet policy incongruence often leads to various forms of dissent.

Studies which use continuous policy distance variables to explain group switching in the EP reach conflicting conclusions. In a study of the Third European Parliament, ideological incongruence between MEP and EPG is not related to re-affiliation (McElroy 2008). Hix and Noury (2018) examine policy distance variables constructed using party-level data in pooled logistic regression models and conclude that ideological outliers, and MEPs at odds with their group over European issues, are most likely to switch groups. The current analysis re-tests this outlier hypothesis with individual-level policy distance variables.

To measure policy distance in this analysis, I use DW-Nominate scores estimated from all roll-call votes of MEPs from the first six EP sessions.[24] Each member is assigned a position within the two-dimensional policy space, and the proximity of members to their groups indicates congruent policy preferences. Conversely, when members are outliers in their own EPG, this reflects a propensity to vote against the group.

Although scholars have criticized ideal point estimates derived from roll-call votes (Hug 2010; Høyland 2010; Carrubba, et al. 2006), the field continues to rely on these estimations (Yordanova 2013; Yoshinaka et al. 2010; McElroy 2008; Rasmussen 2008; Hix et al. 2007). Given that the European electoral system inhibits vote-seeking and that the two largest groups dominate offices (McElroy and Benoit 2009), it is not surprising that policy concerns emerge as highly relevant to most MEPs. Policy distance estimates, therefore, represent the best way to examine these interests, and DW-Nominate scores offer an established method for measuring policy incongruence and outlier status among individual MEPs.

Unlike the Nominate scores used in most single-session EP studies, DW-Nominate ideal points are comparable across EP terms. For example, DW-Nominate estimations make it possible to assign policy distances from time *t-1* to explain a switch at time *t*, when *t* occurs at the start of a new session, as in the case of between-session switches. Lagging variables in this way has been

[24] DW-Nominate scores were produced for me by Keith Poole.

unavailable in previous analyses. I follow this procedure for all between-session switches, or those occurrences where an incumbent changes group labels at the beginning of a new session. This paper tests several hypotheses meant to examine various dimensions of policy incongruence and their effect on ambitious switching.

> *Hypothesis 1: Members who are outliers within the EP's policy space should exhibit a decrease in their odds of switching.*

Being an outlier relative to the entire chamber might indicate that the MEP has limited options when it comes to choosing an alternative group. For example, a member of the Leftist (GUE-NGL) group with DW-Nominate scores farther to the left and more anti-Europe than every other delegate in the parliament will find it very difficult to find an alternative group with whom to affiliate. To test an MEP's outlier position within the two-dimensional policy space, I construct an "intensity" variable, "determined by the extent to which the [MEP] is on one or the other side of the neutral point" (Rabinowitz and Macdonald 1989, 96-100). This variable is equivalent to the simple Euclidean distance between the MEP and the origin of the policy space.

> *Hypothesis 2: Members who are outliers within their EPG should have increased odds of switching.*

Hypothesis 2 directly tests the conclusion drawn by Hix and Noury (2018). Policy incongruence is measured with variables that take the absolute value of the distance between the MEP and the median position of the EPG on both dimensions. Further, I include the quadratic transformation of these distances to determine whether or not the relationship between policy incongruence and switching is linear. If the coefficient on the distance variable is positive while the quadratic term is negative, then the evidence will show that the most extreme outliers are less likely to switch. I standardize all policy distance variables, thus making the interpretation of coefficients, interaction terms, and predicted probabilities easier to interpret.

> *Hypotheses 3: The effect of a member's ideological policy incongruence with the EPG on switching is conditioned by incongruence on the European dimension.*

Hypothesis 3 tests A) whether or not incongruence on one dimension can independently produce a switch, and B) whether extremity on both dimensions increases or decreases the odds of switching. The interaction term represents a second method for testing the effect of a MEP's

outlier status on switching. If ideological outliers have reduced odds of re-affiliation as they become more distant from the group on the European dimension, then this implies that potential target groups view the most incongruent members as unreliable partners.

Methodology and Variables

This paper first examines the relationship between cascades and multi-switchers before transitioning to analyze the cause of ambitious switches. To understand cascades more clearly, I use a descriptive approach to make clear that these collapses have little to do with rational decisions made by individual legislators. To model the covariates which amplify or dampen the odds of switching, this analysis uses unbalanced, longitudinal data and hierarchical models which control for non-independence at the NPD level. Each observation is a "member-session;" therefore, MEPs can be in the data set up to six times. I fit a two-level, random-intercept logistic regression model where MEPs *i* are nested in NPD factions *j*:

$$\pi_{ij} \equiv \Pr(y_{ij}|x_{ij}, \zeta_j)$$

$$\log(\pi_{ij}) = \beta 1 + \text{POLICYDISTANCE}_i + \text{CONTROLS}_{ij} + \zeta_j$$

$$y_{ij} \mid \pi_{ij} \sim \text{Binomial}(1, \pi_{ij})$$

POLICYDISTANCE is a vector including raw distance variables on both dimensions, as well as their quadratic transformations and an interaction term. In the CONTROLS vector, I include six control variables that are widely found in the party group switching literature, including the age, gender, and experience of the MEP as well as the EPG and NPD seat shares, and an indicator for whether or not the MEP's national party was in a ruling coalition during the EP term. This model specification allows me to address non-independence among MEPs from the same delegation. All models are fitted using the same method. First, I estimate the coefficients for each model using logistic regression. Next, I used the results as starting values for the mixed-effects logistic regression, thus bypassing the initial phase of optimization.

This analysis estimates all policy distance variables by constructing DW-Nominate scores from the Hix, Noury, and Roland (2007) MEP, roll call voting, data set.[25] The scaling had a correct classification of 89.45 percent with an APRE of 0.5720 and a geometric mean probability of 0.77.

[25] Thank you to Keith Poole for constructing the DW-Nominate scores for this project.

These standardized "measures of fit" reflect the strength of these ideal point estimations. The national delegation in government variables comes from the Parlgov dataset (Döring and Manow 2016). The seat share variables as well as MEP tenure and age are derived from the Høyland, Sircar and Hix (2010) data from the Automated Database of the European Parliament. I use Daniel (2015) for the sex variable.

Cascades and Multi-Switchers

In the first six sessions, the EP saw 473 of the 3977 members (12 percent) switch groups a total of 615 times. Of the total switchers, 280 are coded as cascades, 166 are coded as ambitious switchers, 27 are coded as non-cascade, multi-switchers.

Cascades originate at the system-level and are separate in kind from individual, ambitious switches. I define the system in broad strokes as the formal and informal rules and patterns of behaviors that constrain European elections and group formation inside the EP. This system consists of both exogenous and endogenous components which influence the creation and durability of EPGs. For example, the second order nature of EP elections ensures that smaller parties with less governing experience receive increased representation in the EP than they do in their national arenas (Reif and Schmitt 1980). Likewise, the EP has revised its Rules of Procedure several times in order to make it difficult for right-wing and technical groups to form after elections (Settembri 2004, 154). These rules are beyond the control of individual MEPs, yet they contribute to the weak institutionalization of groups (Bardi 2002), and weak institutionalization is likewise related to defections within the EP (Raunio 2000).

Table 4.2 offers a description of multi-switchers, i.e. switch frequency per MEP and per MEP-session. Five members switched groups six times during their careers, and six MEPs switched five times. Observers may look at these names, including Emma Bonino, Bruno Golnisch, and Jean-Marie Le Pen, and assume that high frequency switching is related to personal eccentricity. However, upon closer inspection, we see that almost all of these switches resulted from cascades.

Switch Count Total	Freq.	Percent	Switch Count Per Session	Freq.	Percent
0	2,096	83.84	0	3,504	88.11
1	267	10.68	1	350	8.8
2	102	4.08	2	107	2.69
3	12	0.48	3	13	0.33
4	12	0.48	4	3	0.08
5	6	0.24			
6	5	0.2			
Total MEPs	2,500	100	Total MEP-Sessions	3,977	100

Table 4.2 Switch Counts, Total and Per Session

Very clear patterns of re-affiliation emerge. For example, Jean-Marie Le Pen, Bruno Golnisch and Jean-Claude Martinez followed the same series of switches after the European Right (DE) failed to reconvene in the Fourth EP session: first they sat with the Non-Inscrits (NI) for EP4, then in EP5 they switched to the TDI, which dissolved mid-session, at which point they rejoined the NI. In the following term, they repeated the same process with the ITS group, which also dissolved. These three men account for 15 switches, 9 of which were due to cascades and 6 of which were entering and exiting the Non-Inscrits.

Similarly, take Jens-Peter Bonde as a particular instance of a broader series of switches followed by members such as Leen van der Waal, Charles de Gaulle, and Johannes Blokland, Philippe de Villiers, Georges Berthu, Dominique Souchet, and Mario Borghezio. Bonde first affiliated with the CDI in EP1 (FTR), then the Rainbow Group (RBW) in EP2 and EP3 (FTR), after which he joined the EDN (dissolved). Almost all members of the EDN coordinating group transitioned to the NI before re-forming as the I-EDN in EP4, although it failed to reconvene in EP5. After this collapse, Bonde joined the EDD, but the results from the 2004 election made it impossible to reform under the same name, so the rump members formed the Independence/Democracy Group (InDem) group. Therefore, five of Bonde's six switches were related to cascades.

This discussion illustrates how membership in one weakly institutionalized group can lead to affiliation in another unstable group. Given these patterns, cascading takes on a second meaning. Not only does it describe how all members of a group involuntarily switch groups after a collapse, but it also implies that multi-switchers are linked together in a chain reaction of group formation and dissolution. As noted by Settembri (2004), these constant efforts to establish, or re-

establish, a group, has much more to do with acquiring access to EP budgetary funds than it does with policy-seeking behavior.

Viewing multi-switching through the lens of group disintegration provides a valuable perspective. Switchers who re-affiliate multiple times during their career are not necessarily idiosyncratic personalities or agents of disorder. Rather, they are trapped in the churn of cascading party group collapse. Indeed, examining the relationship between members who switched at least twice in a session and group collapse shows that the odds of being a multi-switcher for members of weakly institutionalized EPGs are 29 times higher that of MEPs from stable groups.[26]

Over half of all switches result from the collapse of party groups. A statistical analysis provides evidence that multi-switchers and group collapse are strongly correlated. After detailing the journeys taken by several multi-switchers, we see that these MEPs shuffle between weakly institutionalized groups, frequently transitioning in and out of the NI while waiting to reform a new group. These transitions are not motivated by policy-seeking behavior, so after identifying and describing these cascade switches, we restrict them from the dependent variable in the analysis of ambitious switching.

Ambitious Switchers

In total, 166 out of a total 473 switchers are coded as ambitious. Models 1-4 test the policy outlier hypotheses, and in these models, I fit a two-level hierarchical model with random intercepts where MEPs are nested in NPDs. As a robustness check, and as a means for examining the effect of case selection on interpreting the results, Model 5 reproduces Model 4 using a model with three levels (MEPs, NPDs, and EPGS) and a dependent variable including all switchers. Table 4.3 presents the log odds for the fixed part of the logistic regression, and the random part is found in Table 4.4.

[26] The full results table and an explanation is presented in the Appendix.

Table 4.3 The Effect of Policy Outlying on Ambitious Switching

	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5
			Log Odds		
		Ambitious Switches			All Switches
Intensity		**-0.340***			
		(0.138)			
MEP to EPG Ideology Distance (D1)			**0.959*****	**1.279*****	**1.153*****
			(0.205)	**(0.231)**	**(0.203)**
MEP to EPG European Distance (D2)			**0.818*****	**1.017*****	**1.200*****
			(0.220)	**(0.232)**	**(0.211)**
$D1^2$			**-0.115****	**-0.151*****	**-0.169*****
			(0.035)	**(0.037)**	**(0.035)**
$D2^2$			**-0.125***	**-0.130***	**-0.162****
			(0.055)	**(0.056)**	**(0.051)**
D1*D2				**-0.401*****	**-0.491*****
				(0.118)	**(0.105)**
NPD Seat Share	**-2.832***	-2.589	-2.473	-2.358	-1.789
	(1.425)	(1.426)	(1.487)	(1.576)	(1.600)
EPG Seat Share	**-7.658*****	**-8.624*****	**-6.141*****	**-5.849*****	-9.327
	(1.479)	**(1.548)**	**(1.564)**	**(1.643)**	(4.765)
NPD in Government	0.146	-0.127	0.356	0.401	0.125
	(0.363)	(0.380)	(0.384)	(0.407)	(0.404)
MEP Tenure	0.207	0.213	0.242	0.200	**1.011*****
	(0.136)	(0.137)	(0.143)	(0.148)	**(0.132)**
Age	0.005	0.005	0.006	0.007	-0.0003
	(0.012)	(0.012)	(0.012)	(0.013)	(0.011)
Female	**-0.815****	**-0.801****	**-0.647***	**-0.712***	-0.399
	(0.303)	**(0.303)**	**(0.321)**	**(0.333)**	(0.260)
Constant	**-5.272*****	**-5.112*****	**-5.584*****	**-5.765*****	**-3.311*****
	(0.489)	**(0.483)**	**(0.526)**	**(0.561)**	**(0.982)**
Observations	3,811	3,811	3,811	3,811	3,811
Number of groups	20	20	20	20	20
Number of delegations	732	732	732	732	732
Log-Likelihood	-488.75	-485.52	-454.026	-447.371	-656.8
d.f.	8	9	12	13	14
AIC	993.49	989.05	932.05	920.74	1341.61
BIC	1043.46	1045.26	1006.99	1001.94	1429.05

Notes: Two- and three-level, random-intercept logistic regression model. Standard Errors in parentheses. Dependent Variable takes the value 1 for all successful switchers. Differences between ambitious switchers and all switchers (Models 4 and 5) are highlighted in grey.
*** p<0.001, ** p<0.01, * p<0.05

Table 4.4 The Random Part.

	EPG SD	EPG ρ	NPD SD	NPD ρ
Null, All Switchers (3 Level)	2.932 (0.645)	0.445 (0.106)	2.722 (0.282)	0.830 (0.039)
Null, Ambitious Switchers (3 Level)	0.991 (0.316)	0.100 (0.061)	2.335 (0.344)	0.662 (0.059)
Null Ambitious (2 Level)			2.895 (0.332)	0.718 (0.046)
Model 1			2.353 (0.328)	0.627 (0.065)
Model 2			2.358 (0.325)	0.628 (0.064)
Model 3			2.407 (0.343)	0.638 (0.066)
Model 4			2.580 (0.355)	0.669 (0.061)
Model 5, All Switchers (3 Level)	2.717 (0.686)	0.397 (0.120)	2.812 (0.299)	0.823 (0.041)

Note: Intraclass correlation represented by ρ.

I first run three null models including only the dependent variable and nesting structures. These models justify using a hierarchical model by illustrating how much unexplained variance exists at the different levels, here NPDs and EPGs. In Table 3, the first row models all switchers within a three-level structure, and we observe quite a high level of variance at the EPG ($\rho = 0.445$) as well as the NPD level ($\rho = 0.830$). Based on this information, we could proceed with a three-level model for examining all switches. In the second row of Table 3, we find that changing the dependent variable to only include ambitious switches, excluding cascades and multi-switchers, results in a substantial reduction in unexplained variance at the EPG level ($\rho = 0.10$). This leads me to two conclusions. First, group collapse accounts for a large proportion of unexplained EPG-level variation when analyzing all switchers; and second, it is unnecessary to include the EPG-level in the models focused on ambitious switchers. Indeed, as soon as the group seat share variable is included in Models 1-4, the EPG random intercept parameter drops nearly to zero. In the interest of parsimony, therefore, Models 1-4 are run using only two levels—the MEP and the NPD.

Model 1 presents only control variables for NPD seat share, EPG seat share, MEP tenure, age and sex. Both of the seat share variables accord with previous findings—being affiliated with a large delegation or party group reduces the odds of an ambitious switch (McElroy 2008; Hix and Noury 2018). Neither age, tenure, nor participation in national government have an effect on

switching, but holding all variables constant, women legislators have lower odds of switching than men.

Model 2 includes the intensity variable which tests whether or not parliamentary outliers have reduced odds of switching groups. As hypothesized, as an MEP's Euclidean distance from the origin of the policy space increases, the odds of finding an alternative group decrease. While the NPD seat share loses significance, both the EPG seat share and Female indicator remain stable and significant. We may conclude, therefore, that after holding all other covariates constant, outlying members within the EP policy space have reduced odds of switching groups.

Model 3 introduces four variables. Two measure the MEP's distance from the group median on the left-right ideological dimension and the pro-/anti-European dimension, and two represent the quadratic transformations of these distances. As hypothesized, the distance variables are highly significant and take positive coefficients, indicating that as a member becomes more incongruent with their EPG, the odds of switching increase. Furthermore, both quadratic terms are also significant and take negative terms, suggesting that this relationship is non-linear. In other words, policy incongruence is strongly associated with switching, but only up to a point. As a member displays a marked propensity to vote against their group, and thus becomes observably out of step with their home EPG, the odds of switching begin to fall. Therefore, members who are moderately incongruent with their group have higher odds of switching than the most extreme EPG outliers. The EPG seat share and Female indicator remain significant, although adding the distance variables decrease their substantive effect.

Model 4 includes the full interaction term between the two distance variables, as well as the quadratic terms. As in Model 3, the distance variables take positive coefficients and the quadratic terms take negative coefficients; additionally, the interaction term also takes a negative sign. We find a very strong relationship between all five terms and ambitious switching, and it would be highly unlikely to observe these outcomes by simple chance.

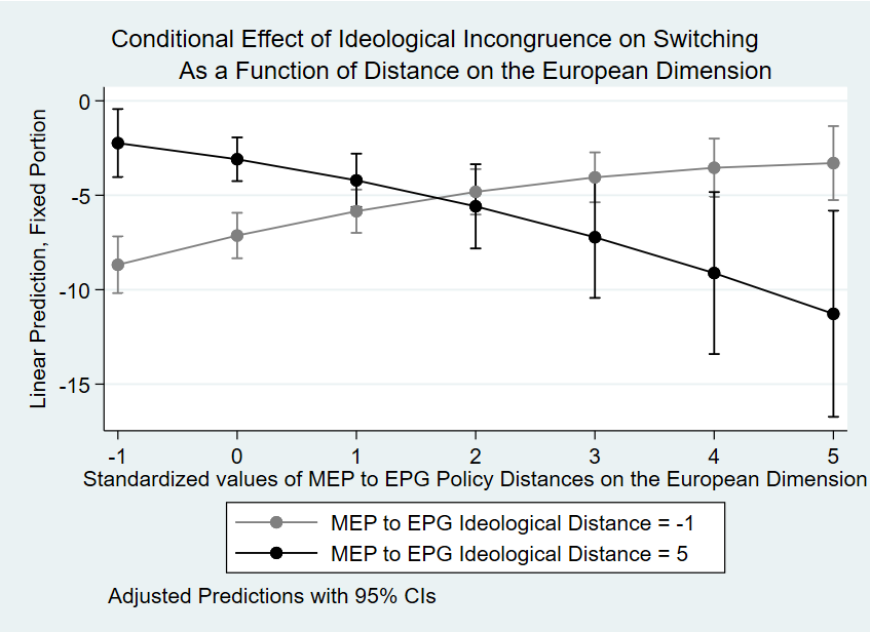

Figure 4.1 Predicted Probabilities for the Conditional Relationship Between Policy Distance on the Ideological and European Dimensions

The negative sign on the interaction term means that as ideological group outliers become more out of sync with the EPG on European issues, their odds of switching decrease significantly. Figure 4.1 visualizes the predicted probabilities derived from the interaction term. The curves illustrate three interesting stories about switching. First, the most core EPG members, those with distance values one standard deviation below the mean on both dimensions, have very low odds of switching. Second, those odds increase significantly as a member becomes more distant from the group on either dimension. Ideologically core members switch more often if they disagree with the group's position on Europe, and members who are central on the European dimension will re-affiliate if they become ideologically incongruent with the EPG. Finally, the MEPs with the lowest odds of switching are those who are group outliers on both dimensions. This is the clearest evidence yet that outliers within political groups are less likely to re-affiliate. Unlike the core members who have low odds of switching because they have no interest in re-affiliating, those outlying members, distant from their group on both dimensions, have the lowest predicted odds of switching groups because attractive groups view them as unsuitable partners.

To summarize the findings of Models 1-4, we have several pieces of evidence that support the idea that ambitious moderates are more likely to switch groups than unreliable outliers. First, the

most extreme MEPs in the chamber, those on the very edges of the policy space, exhibit reduced odds of switching, likely because they have a difficult time finding an attractive target group that suits their preferences better than their home group. Second, policy incongruence is statistically related to switching, but the relationship is quadratic, not linear, indicating that the most incongruent MEPs have lower odds of switching than moderate outliers. I interpret this to mean that MEPs who vote against their group on specific issues, and thus exhibit a reasonable level of dissatisfaction with their EPG's position on certain topics, will be viewed as more reliable than those members who vote against the group on multiple policy dimensions. This explanation is supported by the results of Model 4, where the interaction term illustrates that members who are incongruent with the group on either ideological grounds or European policy, have higher odds of switching, but those MEPs who disagree with the group on both dimensions find it difficult to switch.

I present Model 5 as a robustness check to determine the value-added gained from restricting the dependent variable to only ambitious switchers. In the case of the distance variables, all coefficients take the same sign and level of significance. Although the differences are relatively small, four of the five coefficients are larger in Model 5 than in Model 4. The opposite is true for the control variables where the coefficients are generally smaller in Model 5 than Model 4. The most pronounced change is observable in the EPG set share variable, where both the coefficient and the standard errors become significantly larger. If the analysis focused on all switches, and not just ambitious switchers, we would miss the significant impact of EPG seat share and sex on switching while suffering from a type 1 error in regards to MEP tenure. After selecting out cases of group collapse, the age of MEPs has no relationship to ambitious switching. The measures of fit found in Table 3 indicate that restricting the outcome variable offers measurable advantages to the analysis of party group switching. Finally, since the distance variables in Model 5 corroborate the results from Model 4, this provides further support for our conclusions regarding unreliable outliers and ambitious moderates.

Discussion and Conclusion

According to Laver and Benoit (2003), members interested in re-affiliating groups must first find an attractive target party, and then that party must be willing to accept them as a new member, before a switch is successful. Research into party group switching in the EP determines that

ideological EPG outliers are the most likely to defect. This paper asks whether these two conclusions do not contradict one another and enquires about the circumstances under which an EPG would be willing to accept an MEP who regularly votes against his home group. Do attractive groups really view policy outliers as reliable partners?

To answer this question, I divide switching into three categories, including cascade switches, multi-switchers and ambitious switchers. Group collapse among weakly institutionalized EPGs, in the form of dissolution, merger, or the failure to reconvene, triggers cascade switches. Although it is common to assign strategic motivations to switchers, MEPs who re-affiliate after their group collapses may be theoretically excluded from these types of "seeking" behaviors. Likewise, there is very strong and statistically significant relationship between members who switch multiple times and cascade switches. Therefore, in order to analyze the effect of policy incongruence on party group switching, it is necessary to focus on ambitious switchers, or those MEPs who only switched once and were not involved in a cascade switch. By limiting the dependent variable in this way, we can more accurately estimate the effect of policy distance on increasing or decreasing the odds of switching.

The analysis tests several outlier hypotheses using various policy distance variables constructed from DW-Nominate scores for members of the first six EP sessions. First, members whose voting behavior places them on the fringes of the EP policy space have reduced odds of switching groups. Second, the most outlying members of EPGs are less likely to re-affiliate than more moderate, though still incongruent, MEPs. Third, being incongruent on either the ideological or the European dimension significantly increases the odds of switching, but being distant from the group's median on both dimensions make the MEP appear unreliable to potential target groups, therefore reducing the odds of switching.

These results indicate that ambitious switchers must be moderate if they hope to find a new group with whom to associate. This finding is an original contribution made by this paper, and in terms of political expediency it aligns with the logic laid out by Laver and Benoit (2003): the motivation to switch must be matched by the incentive to receive. Host groups do not necessarily have to accept every request for membership, and if the leadership views the potential switcher as too far beyond the pale in terms of voting behavior or ideological extremity, then they can simply deny the application. Although it would take interviews with MEPs to determine whether or not

they recognize members in other groups as outliers to confirm this interpretation, the results of the model point in this direction.

In summary, this paper provides some new insights into the relationship between policy incongruence and party group switching. Additionally, it offers an explanation for the relationship between group collapse and multi-switchers. Going forward, future research into party group switching may be interested in creating multiple DW-Nominate scores for MEPs, both before and after a switch. This would make it possible to determine if members change their voting behavior after they re-affiliate. It is unclear whether or not all groups hold new MEPs to the same standards as incumbent members. Therefore, it may be possible to use switchers as a test case to evaluate what effect group membership has on voting behavior. Finally, just as this study analyzed policy-seeking, it might be interesting to determine what effect office-holding and office-seeking have on discouraging or encouraging member re-affiliation.

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Appendix C

Table C1. Mixed-Effects Logistic Regression. MEPs nested in NPDs, and NPDs nested in EPGs. DV equals 1 if a member switched more than once in a session.

Outcome: Multi-Switcher (1,0)	Model 1	Model 2
Fail To Reconvene		**10.93*** (2.542)**
Merger		**3.025*** (0.877)**
Dissolve		**4.252* (1.801)**
Group Collapse	**3.381* (1.449)**	
NPD Seat Share	-4.535 (2.899)	-4.409 (2.607)
EPG Seat Share	-8.042 (8.038)	-6.796 (6.300)
NPD in Government	0.133 (0.790)	0.538 (0.745)
MEP Tenure	**1.448*** (0.361)**	**0.886** (0.311)**
Age	-0.002 (0.021)	-0.006 (0.024)
Female	-0.092 (0.515)	-0.321 (0.574)
Constant	**-11.71*** (2.486)**	**-10.02*** (2.000)**
Observations	3,842	3,842
Number of groups	20	20
Number of delegations	732	732
Log-Likelihood	-223.30	-169.51
d.f.	10	12
AIC	466.60	363.02
BIC	529.14	438.06

***** p<0.001, ** p<0.01, * p<0.05**

Table C2. The Random Part

	EPG SD	**EPG ρ**	**NPD SD**	**NPD ρ**
Model 1	2.370 (0.830)	0.221 (0.116)	4.064 (0.998)	0.871 (0.052)
Model 2	1.763 (0.734)	0.187 (0.115)	3.203 (0.903)	0.803 (0.86)