

The Dynamics of Voting Behaviour in the Post-2004 European Parliament

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Siim Trumm

Signature:

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Abstract

The European Parliament offers a unique setting for studying the behaviour of elected representatives and the way they interpret their mandate. In contrast to national legislatures, where legislators face domestic geographical and partisan pressures, Members of the European Parliament (MEPs) must balance both national and supranational loyalties. While existing studies on MEPs' parliamentary behaviour provide useful insight into the voting dynamics in the European Parliament, few scholars address the heterogeneity of the post-2004 parliaments, and how it shapes the approach of contemporary MEPs to representation in the European Parliament.

This dissertation uses the changes in the European Parliament's institutional make-up that occurred over the last decade to explore MEPs' voting behaviour in the Sixth and Seventh Parliaments. In particular, I focus on how the diversity among MEPs and the variety of voting procedures used in the European Parliament affect MEPs' voting behaviour. Combining post-2004 MEPs' individual-level roll call voting data and original MEP survey data, I explore the following questions:

- (i) How likely are post-2004 MEPs to vote with their European Parliament party group, national delegation, and national party delegation?
- (ii) How do individual- and contextual-level characteristics shape the voting behaviour of MEPs?
- (iii) How is MEPs' approach to parliamentary representation influenced by the choice of voting procedure?

The findings indicate that national parties remain post-2004 MEPs' primary principal, and that MEPs continue to hold their secondary loyalty to their supranational party group. I also find that diversity among MEPs shapes how they approach parliamentary representation; individual- and contextual-level characteristics, such as MEPs' role perception and the degrees of ideological diversity within the parliamentary sub-groups, provide incentives for MEPs to alter their voting behaviour. Finally, a noteworthy voting procedure effect is visible within MEPs' self-perceived approach to parliamentary representation. The findings suggest that a univocal interpretation of the European mandate may be misplaced given that significant systematic differences exist, both across MEPs and voting procedures, in post-2004 voting dynamics.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

The European Parliament (EP) has undergone major institutional changes since its establishment; evolving from a consultative body into one of the more powerful institutions within the European Union (EU) (e.g., Crombez and Hix, 2011; Hix et al., 2007; Scully, 2005). The establishment of direct elections to the EP in 1979 gave the institution a strong democratic mandate, and subsequent reforms to the EU Treaties have continued to increase its importance. For example, the Single European Act in 1987 gave the EP the right to two readings on legislation regarding the common market, while the Maastricht Treaty in 1993 established the co-decision procedure which gave the EP a veto on most socio-economic legislation. Moreover, the Amsterdam Treaty in 1999 gave the EP equal legislative power with the Council of the European Union within the co-decision procedure and the veto in the selection of the Commission President. As a result, the EP is now able to enact legislation in a wide range of policy sectors, as well as significantly influence the EU's budgetary process and scrutinize the composition of the European Commission. Given the EP's increasing importance within the EU, it is critical for scholars to understand the decision-making processes that occur within the institution.

The EP also offers a unique setting for studying the parliamentary behaviour of elected representatives and the way they interpret their mandate. In contrast to national legislatures, where legislators face domestic geographical and partisan pressures, Members of the European Parliament (MEPs) are directly-elected representatives who must balance both national and supranational loyalties. In particular, they must weigh the interests of three highly salient principals – their EP party group, national electorate, and national party – each of which can affect their ability to act as vote-maximizing and/or policy-maximizing agents. Studying elected representatives' voting choices in such a complex setting offers a unique opportunity to add another dimension to our understanding of legislative behaviour. Specifically, it allows us to assess how the presence of multiple (and potentially conflicting) loyalties operating on different levels influence the way MEPs approach parliamentary representation, and how their interpretation of the European mandate influences policy-making in Europe.

Directly-elected MEPs are at the heart of policy-making in the EP. Collectively, they exercise a significant degree of influence over the lives of millions of European citizens as well as the EU's foreign partners. Working within a context where loyalties to multiple principals need to be balanced, it is unsurprising that numerous theoretical

and empirical studies attempt to explain how MEPs behave when carrying out their duties in the EP. Although theoretical accounts of representation in the EP highlight the simultaneous presence of three salient principals – EP party groups, national electorates, and national parties – whose interests MEPs need to balance (e.g., Earnshaw and Judge, 2003; Hix and Hoyland, 2011; Hix et al., 2007; Scully, 2005), the empirical literature demonstrates that these loyalties are, in practice, given different priority.¹ Put differently, even though the EP party groups, national electorates, and national parties each can offer MEPs tangible benefits in return for their loyalty, MEPs have a clear preference ranking regarding the loyalties that shape their voting choices.

There is a widespread consensus among scholars that national parties remain MEPs' primary principals; defection from national party delegations' voting positions tend to be the rarest (e.g., Coman, 2009; Hix et al., 2007; Lindstädt et al., 2011; Ringe, 2010; Thiem, 2007, 2009). Of the remaining two principals, transnational party group affiliations are more important than national affiliations for shaping how MEPs behave (e.g., Hix and Noury, 2009; Hix et al., 2007; Roland, 2009). At the same time, scholars have also found that systematic variation exists in MEPs' likelihood of following the voting positions of their principals (e.g., Farrell and Scully, 2007; Hix et al., 2007; Meserve et al., 2009).

Changing Make-Up of the EP

The EP has, however, undergone significant changes over the last decade. In particular, the expansion of the EU has introduced MEPs from 12 new EU member states.² These MEPs, and their electorates, tend to be particularly nationality-oriented. They are new to the EP's supranational set-up and tend to accord nationality greater significance, in terms of their role and self-perceptions, than their counterparts from the pre-2004 EU member states (e.g., European Election Study, 2012a;³ Farrell et al., 2011). For example, MEPs elected from the 2004/2007 accession countries tend to be more right-wing than MEPs elected from the pre-2004 EU member states (e.g., Scully et al., 2012). As shown in Chapter 5, ideological beliefs are systematically related to the way post-2004 MEPs approach parliamentary representation and follow the voting positions of their EP party group. Furthermore, MEPs elected from the 2004/2007

¹ The interests of (i) the EP party groups, (ii) national electorates, and (iii) national parties are first and foremost represented in the EP by (i) the EP party groups, (ii) national delegations, and (iii) national party delegations (e.g., Hix and Hoyland, 2011; Hix et al., 2007).

² The 2004 EU accession countries: the Czech Republic, Cyprus, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Poland, Slovakia, Slovenia; the 2007 EU accession countries: Bulgaria, Romania.

³ For more information on the European Election Study, and its components, see PIREDEU (2012).

accession countries face electorates who tend to display higher levels of patriotism, perceive the EP as a more important institution within the EU, and are economically weaker (European Commission, 2005a, 2005b, 2007, 2008b; International Monetary Fund, 2010). As a result, the post-2004 parliaments are very diverse in their composition, both regards to MEPs' characteristics and the contexts in which they operate (e.g., European Commission, 2003, 2005a, 2007; European Election Study, 2012a; Farrell et al., 2011). Although this does not necessarily mean that post-2004 MEPs approach representation in the EP in a unique manner, the possibility that voting dynamics in the post-2004 parliaments do not follow the previously established patterns should not be ignored.

The increased diversity of MEPs is particularly noteworthy because it likely relates to how MEPs balance the loyalties owed to their various principals. For example, an MEP who sees his/her role perception more closely linked to promoting the interests of his/her national party voters is likely to see his/her national party delegation as his/her natural partner for cooperation in the EP. Therefore, he/she may be less willing to defect from the voting positions of this parliamentary sub-group. Similarly, an MEP who is elected from a country where more people treat the EP as an important institution within the EU should be more sensitive to discarding his/her national affiliation. As a result, it is fair to assume that the recent changes to the EP's make-up may have influenced the voting dynamics in the institution by leading towards a more nationality-driven interpretation of the European mandate among post-2004 MEPs. The diversity among MEPs also has the propensity to promote variation in how post-2004 MEPs approach representation in the EP. Understanding the potential effects of the heterogeneity in the EP is critical for providing a more accurate and comprehensive account of the contemporary voting dynamics in the institution.

Limitations in Understanding the Complexity of Contemporary Voting Dynamics

Existing studies on the voting behaviour of MEPs provide useful insight into the voting dynamics in the EP, but there is room to build on our existing understanding of how MEPs behave when carrying out their duties in the institution. Few scholars have addressed the heterogeneity within the post-2004 parliaments and variation in how contemporary MEPs approach representation in the EP.

First, the analyses of roll call votes taken in the EP focus largely on the pre-2004 period. Few existing empirical studies incorporate data from the post-2004 parliaments (Coman, 2009; Gabel and Hix, 2007; Hix and Noury, 2009; Mühlböck, 2012). Those

that do, either focus on a limited time period and pay little attention to the variation in MEPs' voting behaviour, or are limited to small sub-sections of MEPs. Some aspects of the voting dynamics in the post-2004 parliaments, such as the comparison of MEPs' voting behaviour in the Sixth and Seventh Parliaments have been ignored altogether. As a result, we know little about how contemporary MEPs approach voting in the EP and whether our traditional understanding of it holds in the post-2004 context.

Second, the post-2004 parliaments are very heterogeneous in their composition as a result of the 2004/2007 EU enlargements (e.g., European Commission, 2005a, 2007; European Election Study, 2012a; Farrell et al., 2011). Differences among MEPs, the way they interact with their principals, and the contexts in which they operate may lead MEPs to hold contrasting interpretations of their mandate. As a result, they may approach representation in the EP in a different manner. Thus, it is important that we understand how the diversity among contemporary MEPs shapes their approach to parliamentary representation.

Finally, the traditional understanding of MEPs' voting behaviour relies on analyses of roll call votes, as these are the only parliamentary voting occasions where individual MEPs' voting choices are recorded and publicized (European Parliament, 2012a). Roll call votes have traditionally been perceived to provide an accurate picture of MEPs' overall voting behaviour (e.g., Faas, 2003; Gabel and Hix, 2007; Hix et al., 2007, 2009; Noury et al., 2002). There is, however, increasing evidence to suggest that roll call votes are unrepresentative of the parliamentary voting occasions in general (e.g., Carrubba et al., 2008, 2009; Hoyland, 2010; Hug, 2010, 2012a; Thiem, 2006, 2008). Therefore, roll call votes might not provide accurate accounts of MEPs' voting behaviour during non-roll call voting occasions.

Goals and Approach

My research addresses the limitations of the previous literature by focusing on MEPs' voting behaviour in the post-2004 period. In particular, I concentrate on explaining how it varies in relation to the heterogeneity of the post-2004 parliaments, and in relation to the different voting procedures used in the EP.

Chapter 4 provides a general account of the comparative relevance of different principals in guiding post-2004 MEPs' voting choices. Using descriptive and time series analysis of MEPs' individual-level roll call voting data between September 1979 and December 2010, I explore (i) how likely post-2004 MEPs are to follow the voting positions of their EP party group, national delegation, and national party delegation, and

(ii) how their likelihood of doing so relates to the corresponding voting choices of pre-2004 MEPs.

Chapter 5 looks at how individual-level and contextual characteristics affect how post-2004 MEPs approach parliamentary representation. Here, I explore how post-2004 MEPs' loyalties to their different principals vary in relation to (i) their individual-level characteristics, (ii) the characteristics associated with their interactions with their principals, and (iii) the general contexts in which they make their voting decisions. I use multivariate Ordinary Least Squares (OLS) regression alongside multilevel modelling to analyse MEPs' individual-level roll call voting data from September 2004 to December 2010 in conjuncture with unique combinations of individual-level and contextual characteristics.

Finally, Chapter 6 explores a potential voting procedure effect in how MEPs approach parliamentary representation. Here, I look at (i) whether MEPs' likelihood of defecting from the voting instructions of their EP party group in favour of the voting instructions of their national party depends on whether they are voting by roll call, electronically, or by show hands, and (ii) whether MEPs' likelihood of defecting from the voting instructions of their EP party group in favour of the interests of their national electorate varies depending on the voting procedure used. These questions are answered by using a descriptive analysis of original individual-level MEP survey data.

Studying Voting Behaviour

The focal point of the study – voting behaviour – is treated as an individual-level variable which characterizes an MEP's likelihood of following the voting positions of his/her (i) EP party group, (ii) national delegation, and (iii) national party delegation. It is measured using individual-level roll call voting data from 1979 to 2010, as well as original MEP survey data on current MEPs' voting-perception during both roll call and non-roll call voting occasions. The combination of MEPs' voting behaviour with individual-level and contextual characteristics, and the different voting procedures used in the EP, provides a strong basis for studying how post-2004 MEPs carry out their duties in the EP as well as how their approach to parliamentary representation varies.

MEPs' voting behaviour is operationalized as a relative measurement, where an MEP's likelihood of following the voting positions of his/her EP party group, national delegation, and national party delegation is assessed against the mean parliamentary voting unity in the voting occasions that he/she participated. The measurement in itself offers a methodological contribution to the studies of MEPs' voting choices. Although

the reliance on relative measurements is not new (e.g., Hix et al., 2007; Hix and Noury, 2009), scholars have so far adapted them to group-level measurements of voting cohesion, treating the denominator – parliamentary voting unity – as a constant for all units of analysis within a parliamentary term. However, this approach fails to account for the fact that different MEPs participate in different sets of voting occasions. As will be seen in Chapter 3, the mean parliamentary unity within the sets of voting occasions that post-2004 MEPs participated in is unique for all post-2004 MEPs. Analysing an MEP's voting behaviour as an individual-level measurement that is relative to the mean parliamentary voting unity within those voting occasions that he/she participated in increases the accuracy of how voting behaviour is interpreted.

Summary of Findings

The analyses presented in the subsequent chapters yield several findings that shed further light on decision-making within the EP. First, the aggregate analysis of post-2004 MEPs' voting behaviour (Chapter 4) shows that (i) voting along national party delegation lines has remained the most frequently followed strategy, as MEPs defect from the voting positions of their national party delegation less often than from those of their EP party group and national delegation, (ii) EP party groups continue to provide secondary loyalties for MEPs as voting along EP party group lines remains more frequent than voting along national delegation lines, and (iii) the 2004/2007 EU enlargements have had an effect on the traditionally slow, but gradual, increase in the dominance of ideology-laden voting as the Sixth Parliament witnessed a unique reversal of this trend.

Second, focusing on variation in how post-2004 MEPs approach representation in the EP (Chapter 5), I find that (i) the frequency that MEPs follow the voting positions of their EP party group, national delegation, and national party delegation varies significantly, (ii) this variation is related to characteristics specific to MEPs, their interactions with their parliamentary sub-groups, and the general context in which they make their voting decisions, and (iii) certain characteristics such as an MEP's role perception and frequency by which he/she receives voting instructions are particularly relevant in explaining differences in how MEPs approach parliamentary representation.

Finally, the research provides an important insight into how voting procedures influence MEPs' voting behaviour (Chapter 6). Here, I show that (i) many MEPs change their voting-perception when voting by non-roll call, as opposed to by roll call, (ii) a noteworthy percentage of MEPs consider themselves more likely to defect from

the voting instructions of their EP party group when voting by show of hands or electronically, as opposed to by roll call, when those instructions conflict with the interests of their national electorate or with the voting instructions of their national party, and (iii) although the voting procedure effect is present among both MEPs elected from the pre-2004 EU member states and the 2004/2007 accession countries, it is particularly strong among the latter group.

In total, these findings offer valuable insight into post-2004 MEPs' voting behaviour, contributing to a more comprehensive understanding of how contemporary MEPs approach representation in the EP. Although post-2004 MEPs continue to provide democratic input to the EP by prioritizing ideology-laden voting, I find that a univocal interpretation of the European mandate appears misplaced given that the diversity among MEPs and the voting procedures used in the EP do, in fact, shape how MEPs approach parliamentary representation.

Implications of Findings

The findings of this research have important implications for the understanding of how elected representatives approach representation in the post-2004 parliaments.

First, I show that the 2004/2007 EU enlargements had a significant, but not a fundamentally altering, impact on the voting dynamics in the EP. Whereas post-2004 MEPs continue to provide democratic input to the EP by prioritizing ideology-laden voting over nationality-laden voting, the traditional gradual increase in the dominance of ideology-laden voting has not been present in the post-2004 context. Instead, the Sixth Parliament, which hosted MEPs from the 2004/2007 accession countries for the first time, saw a significant and unprecedented reversal of the trend. Moreover, the current Seventh Parliament is witnessing an unusually sharp increase in the dominance of ideology-laden voting. The recent EU enlargements have added a degree of volatility to the voting dynamics in the EP.

Second, my research highlights the considerable degree of complexity that is present within the EP's decision-making process and MEPs' voting behaviour; a complexity that is easily underestimated. One should be highly cautious when making generalizations about individual MEPs' voting behaviour, as characteristics specific to MEPs, their interactions with their parliamentary sub-groups, and the general contexts in which they make their voting decisions lead to variation in how post-2004 MEPs approach parliamentary representation. Moreover, I demonstrate that the traditional reliance on roll call votes in explaining MEPs' voting behaviour is not necessarily

accurate for describing how MEPs approach parliamentary representation in non-roll call voting occasions. Current MEPs indicate that they follow slightly different voting behaviour when voting by roll call as opposed to when voting by show of hands or electronically. Roll call votes are characterized by a reduction in their likelihood of defecting from the voting instructions of their EP party group, in favour of their national electorate and national party.

Third, these findings also offer a useful suggestion regarding the EP's future development. As the institution is designed to prioritize the interests that cross national boundaries, increasing the scope of votes taken by roll call within the EP could help to achieve this supranational aim. Although the voting procedure effect in MEPs' voting behaviour is by no means overwhelming, it does influence how MEPs behave. Namely, MEPs indicate that they are more likely to defect from the voting instructions of their EP party group when voting by show of hands or electronically, as opposed to by roll call. Using roll call voting more frequently could help the EP to promote a more supranational approach to representation among its members.

Finally, this research also contributes to the broader field of studies that engage with the idea of representation, offering insights that can be used beyond representation in the EP and by MEPs. The principal-agent approach identifies the simultaneous presence of three salient principals who can influence MEPs' ability to act as vote-maximizing and/or policy-maximizing agents. Therefore, studying MEPs' voting behaviour offers valuable insight into the comparative salience of the different motivations that guide the actions of elected representatives. For example, in Chapter 6 I find that in certain conditions the principals associated with promoting elected representatives' policy-maximizing ambitions are better able to command loyalty from their members vis-à-vis actors associated with promoting elected representatives' vote-maximizing ambitions. These insights help to build on our understanding of representation and the parliamentary behaviour of elected representatives.

Thesis Outline

This thesis proceeds in the following manner. Chapter 2 looks at the theoretical background to representation in the EP and describes the standard claims of the existing research on MEPs' voting choices, while also highlighting its limitations. I then operationalize the research design in Chapter 3. Moving on to the empirical analyses, Chapter 4 employs descriptive statistics and time series analysis to study post-2004 MEPs' comparative likelihood of following the voting positions of their EP party group,

national delegation, and national party delegation, while Chapter 5 uses OLS regression, alongside multilevel modelling, to explain how individual-level and contextual characteristics relate to variation in how post-2004 MEPs approach parliamentary representation. Chapter 6 relies on descriptive statistics to assess the presence and direction of a voting procedure effect within post-2009 MEPs' voting-perception. Finally, Chapter 7 revisits the most important findings of this research, and highlights its implications.

Chapter 2: Representation and the European Parliament

Representation is a central concept in politics. It is an idea that has been, and will continue to be, ever-present in studies of political decision-making and legislative behaviour. It is defined as an act on behalf of (and in the interests of) another in relation to a third party, in a manner that is in some way responsive to the party or parties that are being represented and that implicates them in those actions (e.g., Brito Vieira and Runciman, 2008; Pitkin, 1967; Plotke, 1997; Powell, 2004). Virtually all contemporary political decision-making is effectively undertaken by representatives, and is, by its very nature, based on continuous acts of representation. To truly understand the inner workings of political institutions, such as the EP, one cannot ignore the idea of representation. It provides a framework for understanding the motivational backgrounds of elected representatives' actions and allows us to evaluate the implications of their real-life parliamentary behaviour.

Much research focuses on how elected representatives approach parliamentary representation in the EP. The institution's purview has broadened and its powers have strengthened since its conception as the Common Assembly of the European Coal and Steel Community in 1952 (e.g., Crombez and Hix, 2011; Hix et al., 2007; Scully, 2005). The EP has developed from a consultative body into a co-legislator alongside the Council of the European Union. The establishment of direct elections to the EP in 1979 gave the institution a strong democratic mandate, and subsequent reforms to the EU Treaties have continued to increase its importance. As a result, MEPs are now able to enact legislation in a wide range of policy sectors, as well as significantly influence the EU's budgetary process, and scrutinize the composition of the European Commission. The EP's increasing relevance makes it critical for scholars to understand the decision-making processes that occur within the institution, including the ever-important question of how its members approach parliamentary representation.

Studying how MEPs approach parliamentary representation is particularly important given that the development of the EU has been marred by concerns about the organization's perceived democratic deficit and its ability to represent European citizens. Scholars point to the apparent lack of contestation for political leadership (e.g., Follesdal and Hix, 2006), the lack of a truly European public sphere (e.g., Birben, 2005), the lack of accountability of European decision-makers to European electorates (e.g., Antić, 2002), and an excess of delegation in the legislative process (e.g., Crombez, 2003). Because the EP is the only directly-elected supranational institution in the EU, it

is the MEPs who are best placed to represent the interests that cross national boundaries, and to help remedy the democratic deficit. Therefore, accounts of how MEPs approach parliamentary representation are essential to evaluating the degree to which the EP can help mitigate the representation problem and provide democratic input to the organization.

The aim of this chapter is to review existing literature on how MEPs approach parliamentary representation in the EP, and to highlight the limitations of our current understanding of representation in the EP. I start by describing the theoretical underpinnings of representation and its different modes. I then use the principal-agent approach to illustrate how the abstract behavioural concepts link with the presence of multiple loyalties for MEPs to face. Finally, I discuss the standard claims about MEPs' voting behaviour and the limitations in the literature's ability to provide a comprehensive account of the contemporary voting dynamics in the EP.

2.1 Representation and Representatives

Representation is a salient concept when talking about political decision-making and legislative behaviour. Although it is first and foremost associated with democratic governance and liberal democracies, it is just as relevant in non-democratic systems. The concept incorporates multiple aspects, and the interpretation of these aspects manifests in different modes of representation. Thus, it is necessary to look at the theoretical underpinnings that shape how representatives approach representation.

Functions of Representation

The way representatives undertake their responsibilities is important, because it directly affects the degree to which political systems are provided with key functions. Birch (1971a, 1971b) identifies three general functions that systems of political representation may be able to, and should make every effort to, fulfil:

- (i) Leadership: To provide leadership and responsibility in decision-making;
- (ii) Popular control: To provide popular control over the government;
- (iii) System maintenance: To contribute towards the maintenance of the political system.

Birch (1971a, 1971b) also highlights eight specific functions that fall under the three general themes above:

- (i.a) Leadership: To recruit political leaders and mobilize support for them;

- (i.b) Responsibility: To encourage political leaders to pursue long-term interests of the political system and react to immediate pressures;
- (ii.a) Accountability: To enable holding political leaders publicly accountable;
- (ii.b) Peaceful change: To enable peaceful transition of political leadership;
- (ii.c) Responsiveness: To ensure that public's preferences are responded to;
- (iii.a) Consent: To provide channels of communication through which decision-makers can mobilize content to particular policies;
- (iii.b) Legitimacy: To endow decision-makers with a particular legitimacy;
- (iii.c) Relief of pressure: To provide opportunities for aggrieved citizens to voice concerns through constitutional activities.

Despite the seemingly undemanding nature of these functions, not all political systems of representation are able to meet the expectations. Failure on these dimensions is most evident in non-democratic systems, but even fully developed democratic political systems vary in their ability to successfully carry out the different functions of representation (Birch, 1971a; Miller et al., 1999). The way that representation is carried out has significant implications for the political systems and, therefore, it is important to understand how representation is carried out in different contexts and how representatives' actions empower the political systems.

Components of Representation

Breaking down the concept of representation highlights how the choices that representatives make about their approach to representation relate to their ability to carry out the different functions of representation. This is particularly important for framing the following empirical analyses of how post-2004 MEPs approach parliamentary representation, given that the EU and the EP are frequently accused of suffering from a democratic deficit.

The interpretation of representation, and the resulting act of representation, is widely perceived as being a product of the following three core distinctions:

- (i) Aims: Whether representative aims at the good of all or of a part;
- (ii) Source of judgement: Whether representative relies on his/her own judgement or the judgement of a third party;
- (iii) Responsiveness: The degree to which representative is responsive to sanctions (Pitkin, 1967; Rakove, 1996; Rehfeld, 2009).

Several distinctions have been made about how representatives do/should interpret these components. For example, representatives have been described as being either

trustees or delegates (e.g., Pitkin, 1967; Rehfeld, 2005, 2009).⁴ Trustees look out for the good of the whole, using their own judgements about that good, and tend to be less responsive to sanctioning. By contrast, delegates look out for the good of a part, based on the third party's judgements about that good, and are more responsive to sanctioning.

The way representatives interpret the various components of representation affects the kind of representation they provide. The literature identifies several groups whose interests elected representatives may choose to emphasize when they interpret the notion of representation: descriptive groups (e.g., ethnic minorities), functional or interest groups (e.g., employees, political parties), and territorial interests (Pitkin, 1967; Wessels, 2007). Trustees who are less responsive to electoral sanctions are likely to be more inclined to represent ideology-driven rather than geographically-driven interests, while delegates who are more responsive to electoral sanctions might be inclined to react in the opposite manner. The different interpretations of the aspects that surround the abstract concept of representation have the capacity to shift representatives' priorities and loyalties, influencing how they approach parliamentary representation.

The interpretation of the different components of representation is also salient in the EP. It is fair to assume that MEPs who believe that they represent the good of all are more likely to take a supranational approach to representation. At the same time, MEPs who believe that they represent the good of a specific group may be more sensitive to the interests of their national electorate and/or national party. Thus, differences in the ways MEPs interpret the components of representation matter, as they have the propensity to influence how MEPs prioritize different courses of action and loyalties.

2.2 Two Motivations for Representation

I now turn my attention to the main motivations scholars have ascribed to representatives: vote-maximization or policy-maximization. Such a distinction helps us understand why differences might exist in how MEPs approach parliamentary representation, and to develop the basis for the principal-agent approach.

2.2.1 Vote-Maximizing

Vote-maximizing is generally assumed to be one of the more prevalent motivations for guiding elected representatives' actions. According to this motivation,

⁴ Other distinctions include the interpretation of representatives as mandate-seeking or accountability-seeking (e.g., Manin et al., 1999), looking out for procedural or substantive representation (Powell, 2004) etc. One can of course not collapse the three components of representation, but allow representatives to take up any one combination of these (Rehfeld, 2009).

representatives are self-interested actors, whose ultimate goal is to maximize their future votes and chances of getting re-elected (Breton, 1974; Downs, 1957; Elster, 1983; Fenno, 1978; Fiorina, 1974, 1977; Mayhew, 1974; Mixon and Trevino, 2002; Stigler, 1971). In the context of an MEP, this applies to either getting re-elected to the EP or to being elected to a domestic political office, depending on the representative's preferred career path. Either way, however, he/she is perceived as trying to maximize public support and likelihood of future electoral success.

As public support and electoral success are at the very heart of how these elected representatives approach parliamentary representations, it is rational for them to be highly responsive to the interests of their electorate. Having to adapt to the interests and policy preferences of one's electorate, as the electorate is perceived to define these, a vote-maximizing representative is willing to depart from his/her own ideological beliefs if such beliefs are in conflict with the preferences of his/her electorate. That is, he/she is flexible in terms of his/her policy and voting positions, and willing to change his/her behaviour to match the changes in the preferences of his/her electorate. It is the interests of vote-maximizing representative's electorate that guide his/her voting choices, aiming to cast votes such that he/she can maximize the degree of popular support he/she enjoys and his/her likelihood of future electoral success.

The vote-maximizing explanation of how elected representatives approach parliamentary representation implies the following with regards to the three components of representation (i.e., aims, source of judgement, responsiveness):

- (i) Representatives act for the good of their constituents;
- (ii) Representatives rely on the most dominant definition of that good among their constituents;
- (iii) Representatives are highly responsive to electoral sanctioning.

The potential reasons for adopting a vote-maximizing approach to representation are, however, not limited to purely maximizing the public support that one enjoys and one's likelihood of future electoral success. The strategy can also be seen as promoting the integrity and values of democratic governance by providing the most responsive connection between the citizens and their representatives (Hix et al., 2007). As a vote-maximizing representative is interested in supporting the interests of his/her electorate, he/she ought to make constant efforts to understand and prioritize the policy preferences of his/her electorate. As a result, his/her voting choices should coincide well with the preferences of his/her electorate, with other actors' input (e.g., interest groups, parties) being less able to distance him/her from the preferences of his/her electorate. By

allowing for a responsive connection to exist between electorates and their representatives, the vote-maximizing approach to parliamentary behaviour can be seen as conducive to the functions of representation. For example, it can help support responsiveness and accountability of the political system. As such, the vote-maximizing approach to parliamentary representation may be seen to have an intrinsic value of its own; elected representatives may consciously choose the approach to support the responsiveness of political decision-making.

2.2.2 Policy-Maximizing

Policy-maximization is the other prevalent motivation that might guide the actions of elected representatives and how they approach parliamentary representation. The policy-maximizing strand of thought portrays representatives, first and foremost, as being interested in furthering the well-being of everyone they represent in a manner that they perceive to be most useful (Barber, 1984, Dawes and Thaler, 1988; Etzioni, 1988; Fenno, 1973; Milyo, 2001; Mitchell, 2005; Sears and Funk, 1990; Sen, 1977). In the context of the EP, this would apply best to ideology-laden representation of European citizens. In pursuing a policy-driven motivation, representatives may hurt their own electoral prospects, making their behaviour appear, at times, irrational. However, to a policy-maximizing representative, policy concerns dominate, and it is rational to pursue policies that they perceive to bring greater benefits to all. As such, the underlying factors that guide such representative's parliamentary behaviour are his/her own ideologies and beliefs, rather than the policy preferences of his/her electorate as seen by his/her electorate.

An essential feature of furthering citizens' well-being via desired policy-outputs is the need to maximize one's own influence over political decision-making. In the context of the EP, this would apply to the legislative outputs of the EP. Therefore, the policy-maximizing strand tends to take a somewhat wider focus on representatives' actions than the vote-maximizing approach does. Whereas the latter is concerned with representatives' ability to maintain their constituents' support and does not treat non-action as potentially costly, the former requires representatives to be able to also take a more proactive role by raising certain issues and mobilizing support for them in addition to simply voting appropriately. Policy-maximizing representatives also need to strive to be agenda-setters (Levine and Plott, 1977; McKelvey, 1976). Should citizens' perceived well-being be a function of specific policies, representatives can only succeed in their aims of maximizing relevant utilities if the necessary policy issues are voted on and

receive sufficient legislative support. As political parties traditionally control leadership positions, committee assignments, etc. that influence representatives' ability to raise and promote certain issues, staying in parties' good graces and increasing their agenda-setting and policy-shaping capabilities is essential to policy-maximizing.

The policy-maximizing explanation of how representatives approach parliamentary representation suggests the following distinction between the three components of representation (i.e., aims, source of judgement, responsiveness):

- (i) Representatives act for the good of all they are expected to represent;
- (ii) Representatives rely on their own judgements of that good;
- (iii) Representatives are less responsive to electoral sanctioning.

In its most extreme version, policy-maximization can take the form of altruism. Altruism sees elected representatives as being motivated predominantly by furthering their constituents' well-being as they perceive it to be most appropriate, but adds their willingness to accept immediate and significant negative effects in their personal situation in doing so (Downs, 1957; Etzioni, 1988; Sen, 1990). The notion refers to predictable near-future effects that representatives can, with considerable certainty, expect to be subjected to. For example, this can refer to the expected loss of popular support as a result of supporting extremely unpopular policies. As such, the prioritization of constituents' well-being is more extreme for the altruistic understanding than it is for the more common interpretation of policy-maximization. The altruistic interpretation sees representatives as being willing to approach parliamentary representation with the goal of improving their constituents' well-being, even at the risk of a significant loss to their own electoral welfare.

The potential reasons for approaching parliamentary representation in a policy-maximizing manner are, however, not limited to prioritizing one's interpretation of his/her electorate's well-being. The strategy can also be seen to promote efficiency in political decision-making (Hix et al., 2007). This ought to be the case since political parties are extremely useful sources for acquiring political power (e.g., committee memberships, various leadership positions) and raising political support for policies, which are fundamental to representatives' ability to maximize their influence over legislative outcomes. As such, political parties are their natural partners for cooperation. At the same time, political parties also help politicians to reach mutually supported consensus by aggregating policy positions and facilitating intra-party compromises. By encouraging representatives to commit to the partisan way of working, the policy-maximizing approach to parliamentary behaviour can also be seen as supporting certain

functions of representation. For example, it can help provide leadership and system maintenance for the political system. As such, the policy-maximizing approach to parliamentary representation can be seen to have intrinsic value of its own; representatives may consciously choose the approach to support the effectiveness of political decision-making.

2.3 Representation in the EP and MEPs' Principals

Having described some of the more important theoretical underpinnings of the concept of representation, I now move to the specific context of the EP. After describing the particular relevance of how MEPs approach parliamentary representation, I use the principal-agent approach to explore which actors are best placed to influence MEPs' ability to act as vote-maximizing and/or policy-maximizing agents.

2.3.1 Democratic Deficit in the EU

The way elected representatives interpret and implement the different aspects of representation is particularly relevant within the context of the EP, as the development of the EU has been marred by concerns about the organization's ability to represent European citizens.

While the presence of a democratic deficit in the EU is not universally accepted (e.g., Bruter, 2005; Majone, 2002; Moravcsik, 2004, 2008), its presence is widely acknowledged by EU scholars. Scholars highlight a number of issues associated with the perceived deficit: the apparent lack of contestation for political leadership (e.g., Follesdal and Hix, 2006), lack of a truly pan-European public sphere (e.g., Birben, 2005), lack of accountability of European decision-makers to European electorates and transparency in the European legislative process (e.g., Anderson and Eliassen, 1996; Antić, 2002; Crombez, 2003; Hayward, 1995; Lord, 2008), and the presence of a large gap between the attitudes of mass and elite on issues core to European integration (e.g., European Election Study, 2012a, 2012d; Norris, 1997). The democratic deficit was also not really remedied by the recent Treaty of Lisbon, as its impact was largely limited to a marginal extension of the co-decision procedure (e.g., Hug, 2012b; de Reuter and Neuhold, 2012).

The operational shortcomings associated with the democratic deficit are compounded by the fact that elections to the EP are viewed as 'second-order'. Despite the recent rise in EU-related issue voting at the 2009 European elections (e.g., Hobolt and Spoon, 2012; Schuck et al., 2011; de Vries et al., 2011), these are still

predominantly domestic competitions with little attention given to European-level actors and decision-making (e.g., Hix and Marsh, 2011; Hix et al., 2005; Hobolt and Wittrock, 2011). For example, only 2.4% of the news stories during the three-week period immediately preceding the 2009 European elections were linked to the EP, and a mere 0.6% of the news stories mentioned particular MEPs (European Election Study, 2012c). The lack of attention to the EP and MEPs' parliamentary behaviour suggests that the European elections remain unsuccessful in establishing an effective link between European-level decision-making and European citizens. As such, the European elections struggle to fulfil some essential functions of representation, such as accountability and responsiveness. MEPs do not appear to be punished or rewarded on the basis of their parliamentary behaviour, or receive mandates for pan-European policy-making. Thus, the European elections continue to be fought on domestic issues, and provide little popular control over the way representation is carried out in the EP.

The EP is, however, the only directly-elected institution in the EU. Therefore, MEPs remain best placed to carry the flag of supranationalism in the organization. As the European elections offer little support for relieving the democratic deficit in the EU, more emphasis should be placed on understanding MEPs' parliamentary behaviour. Accounts of how they approach parliamentary representation are essential to evaluating the degree to which the EP can provide democratic input to the organization, and help it fulfil the functions of democratic representation.

2.3.2 Principal-Agent Approach

The principal-agent approach is a useful way of exploring how the different motivations for representation, and the different interpretations of its components, might give rise to loyalties to different actors for the agents; MEPs. It allows scholars to identify the principals who are best placed to influence MEPs' ability to act as vote-maximizing and/or policy-maximizing agents.

The principal-agent model has its origins in the new economics of organization, acting initially as a theoretical construct devised to examine relations within a firm when two parties (i.e., shareholders and executives) enter into contractual relationships based on the delegation of responsibility (e.g., Kassim and Menon, 2003; Moe, 1984).⁵

⁵ More specific examples include studies on asset ownership and wage structures (Holmstrom and Milgrom, 1991), friction-solving (Sappington, 1991), executive compensation (Garen, 1994) etc. The approach, however, is finding its way increasingly in the studies of the EU (e.g., Franchino, 2001; Kassim and Menon, 2003; Vaubel, 2006).

The principal-agent approach, however, is highly versatile. It allows scholars, regardless of their topic of interest, to conceptualize thinking about the problems of control. Accounting for aspects such as the control mechanisms that different actors may use to reward and punish agents with, the approach is useful for highlighting the presence of particular principals that these agents need to account for when choosing how to behave. In addition, controlling also for aspects such as the information gap, incomplete control, the presence of alternatives etc., the principal-agent approach is able to help understand in which situations it is possible for a principal to effectively control its agents' behaviour as well as evaluate the expected success that competing principals might enjoy in doing so.

Treating MEPs as the agents, the principal-agent model is useful for establishing which actors should be treated as their main principals – that is, which actors are most influential in helping MEPs to fulfil their aims – and how an MEP's interpretation of representation constrains the amount of influence principals can exercise over him/her.

2.3.3 Three Principals

The principal-agent approach highlights the relevance of three principals – EP party groups, national electorates, and national parties – in influencing MEPs' ability to act as vote-maximizing and/or policy-maximizing agents. Their powers derive from the way the EP is formed as well as the way it operates. These powers are summarized in Table 2.1, and explained in detail in the following sections.

Table 2.1 Points of Impact for the Three Principals

	EP Party Groups	National Electorates	National Parties
<u>Electoral Arena - European Parliament</u>			
Selection of Candidates	No	No	Yes
Election of Representatives	No	Yes	Yes
<u>Electoral Arena - Domestic Political Offices</u>			
Selection of Candidates	No	No	Yes
Election of Representatives	No	Yes	Yes
<u>Legislative Arena</u>			
Legislative Organization	Mixed	No	Mixed
Intra-Institutional Decision-Making	Yes	No	Yes
Inter-Institutional Decision-Making	Yes	No	Mixed

2.3.3.1 EP Party Groups

The EP's supranational set-up expects and supports policy-maximizing approach to parliamentary representation. It is the EP party groups that largely make up the inner structure of the institution, covering the full range of ideological viewpoints and

controlling several means related to MEPs' success within the EP's political framework. MEPs are able to and expected to act as policy-maximizing agents by prioritizing ideology-laden voting behaviour and the voting positions of their EP party group.

EP's Supranational Design

The EP emphasizes the common interests and perspectives that cross national boundaries, being designed as a supranational institution within the EU's framework (Bache et al., 2011; Judge and Earnshaw, 2003; McCormick, 2005). Its rules of procedure require the formation of party groups on the basis of shared political affinity and of sufficiently international composition (European Parliament, 2012a). Should a group be formed that does not meet the requirements it will be rejected as was the case when the Court of Justice declared the Technical Group of Independent Members unlawful in 1999, stating that it had 'totally ruled out working in the legislature towards the expression of common political intentions, ideas or objectives' (Court of Justice of the European Union, 2001; Eur-Lex, 2012). As a result, the EP's institutional set-up is made up of transnational political party groups, incorporating as many as 708 MEPs out of 736 (96.2%) at the start of the Seventh Parliament and representing the full range of ideological perspectives (European Parliament, 2012c; Hix and Hoyland, 2011; Hix et al., 2006, 2009; McElroy and Benoit, 2010; Scully, 2005). Moreover, it is the EP party groups who are most natural ones to treat democratic representation of all European citizens as their main dimension of performance (Gibson and Harmel, 1998). The EP has developed into an institution where the inner workings can be governed by ideological debates and party politics, while the small proportion of Non-Inscrit MEPs shows that MEPs themselves have accepted such an institutional set-up. MEPs face strong moral pressures, once entered in the EP, to follow the institution's supranational ideal and treat the EP party groups as their main principals.

Individuals with shared ideological beliefs are also more likely to agree on political issues and see each other as their natural partners for cooperation by the virtue of having more in common (e.g., Bowler et al., 1999; Cox and McCubbins, 2007), which in itself promotes cooperation among supranational partisans. But this cooperation is also further supported by the passage of time leading to the incorporation of norms of behaviour through repeated expectations and interaction (Archer, 1973). Once MEPs enter the institution, they effectively become subjected to the communal deliberation and institutional socializing (Barber, 1984; Hinich and Ordeshook, 1970; Mansbridge, 1990; Pitkin, 1981). Learning about their new surroundings and adapting

to them, they may very well change, or simply re-affirm, their own value perceptions of what the 'morality' of being a representative in the EP means. The socializing is likely to lead the elected representatives to develop another group-identity and source of loyalty (Brewer, 2001; Stryker, 2000), making it desirable and natural for them to act in a manner that the EP's supranational set-up expects them to.

Incentives to Offer and Punishment Powers

The expectations and moral obligations to take an ideology-laden approach to parliamentary representation and treat the EP party groups as the focal points of the EP's decision-making are also supported by the institution's procedural rules. The EP party groups possess several means to discipline and reward MEPs. For example, the EP party groups determine the composition of leadership positions within the EP (e.g., the presidency and vice-presidency, the committee chairs), set the parliamentary agenda, allocate speaking time, and appoint rapporteurs (Bache and George, 2006; Hix and Hoyland, 2011; Hix et al., 2007; McElroy, 2006, 2008). The ability to benefit from the EP party groups' capabilities can significantly improve an MEP's political career within the EP and increase his/her influence over European policy-making; something that is vital for policy-maximizing agents.

The ability of the EP party groups to promote loyalty among their members is particularly salient because they are able to reward MEPs based on how they act in the institution. The EP party group leaders have a mid-term rewarding capability by being able to re-assign committees and leadership positions halfway through the five-year parliamentary term (Corbett et al., 2007). And MEPs who are more loyal to their EP party group do in fact appear to benefit from this by obtaining more desirable reports than MEPs who show more frequent disloyalty (Hausemer, 2006). Rapporteurships, report and committee allocations are, however, extremely valuable for providing avenues for MEPs to exercise influence over European policy-making (e.g., Benedetto, 2005; Costello and Thomson, 2010; Farrell and Héritier, 2004; Hagemann and Hoyland, 2010; Settembri and Neuhold, 2009). They put MEPs in a position where they can oversee the development of legislative proposals, guide their content, and be seen as the policy experts on particular issues. Therefore, MEPs are likely to be cognizant of the EP party groups' rewarding capabilities throughout the parliamentary terms.

The influence the EP party groups can exercise over MEPs is, however, not limited to controlling their access to positive rewards; it also includes the ability to impose punishments. For example, the EP party groups possess the ultimate sanction of

expelling MEPs from their ranks.⁶ Although the cases of expulsion are rare, even the threat of expulsion can be significant. Taking away an MEP's access to an EP party group's funds and restricting his/her ability to build the expertise and back-up services required for mastering the policy areas of interest would be of significant hindrance; Non-Inscrit MEPs have considerably less means at their disposal to facilitate their actions (Bache et al., 2011; Hix et al., 2007; Nugent, 2006). Moreover, given that the EP party groups do re-assign committee and leadership positions halfway through the parliamentary terms (Corbett et al., 2007), being punished for disloyalty already within the same parliamentary term remains a salient threat. Similarly, the EP party groups can simply limit an MEP's access to leadership positions or his/her influence over the legislative proceedings from the start by not allocating him/her desired rapporteurships etc. As such, disloyalty to the EP party groups can lead to both direct punishments, as well as unattained rewards.

Limits to Punishment and Rewarding Powers

It is clear that the EP party groups must be treated as prominent principals for MEPs; they are able to influence the impact of an MEP can have over the parliamentary decision-making and, effectively, his/her ability to act as a policy-maximizing agent. However, the ability of the EP party groups to do so should also not be overstated.

First, it has been shown that the whipping practices in the EP tend to be relatively weak (e.g., Corbett et al., 2007; Ringe, 2010). Unlike the intra-parliamentary workings of national legislatures, disciplining MEPs is not as commonly or widely accepted. To date, there have only been three high-profile expulsions of MEPs from their EP party group.⁷ Moreover, with only about a third of the parliamentary voting occasions being taken by roll call, where individual MEPs' voting choices can easily be scrutinized (e.g., Carrubba et al., 2006; Gabel and Carrubba, 2003; Hix et al., 2007; Thiem, 2006), the ability of the EP party groups to reward or punish MEPs based on their voting behaviour is limited by the very fact that the majority of MEPs' voting choices remain unknown.

Second, the EP party groups share several means for rewarding MEPs with national parties (e.g., Whitaker, 2001). For example, Kreppel (2002) highlights the competing relevance of national parties and corresponding national party delegations in allocating legislative rapporteurships, while Hoyland (2006a) finds that MEPs whose

⁶ For example, the European People's Party – European Democrats (EPP-ED) expelled Roger Helmer in 2005 and the Party of European Socialists (PES) expelled Hans-Peter Martin in 2004 (Hix et al., 2007).

⁷ These cases of expulsion refer to Roger Helmer, Daniel Hannan, and Hans-Peter Martin.

national parties are in government in their home country are particularly likely to obtain rapporteur appointments. Similarly, MEPs' committee allocations often align with the ideological stances of their national party delegation (Whitaker, 2005). The EP party groups, therefore, are not in sole control over how much influence MEPs can have over parliamentary decision-making.

2.3.3.2 Domestic Electorates

The way the EP is formed provides strong incentives for MEPs to take a vote-maximizing approach to parliamentary representation instead. The European elections continue to focus on national interests and politics. It is the support of his/her national electorate that an MEP needs in the future for getting re-elected to the EP or to be elected to a domestic political office.

Elections to the EP

The EP, despite being designed to operate as a supranational institution, is still formed through direct elections that are held separately in each of the 27 EU member states; it is national electorates, rather than European citizens collectively, who are deciding which candidates get elected to the EP.⁸

What makes the nationally-organized nature of the European elections especially relevant is their focus on national policy concerns and interests. Rather than being about European-level policy-making, as one would expect from elections that choose representatives who are meant to represent European citizens and interests that cross national boundaries, the content of the European elections remains country-specific. Although the European party federations develop their own electoral manifestos, these are largely ignored during the electoral campaigns (Bache et al., 2011; Hix and Hoyland, 2011). Moreover, voters tend to use the European elections to express their views on national interests, rather than on European governance (e.g., Hix and Marsh, 2011; Marsh, 2005; Reif and Schmitt, 1980; Schmitt, 2005). As such, MEPs remain elected by national electorates and via elections that call for the representation of national rather than supranational interests, tying their future likelihood of getting re-elected to the institution to the support of their nationally-driven national electorate.

⁸ I am talking about national electorates rather than constituents since almost all EU member states use a single national constituency for the European elections (European Parliament, 2009b). The exceptions in 2009 were Belgium, France, Ireland, and the United Kingdom. Constituencies also existed in Germany, Italy, the Netherlands, and Poland, but those were of just administrative interests of distributive relevance within the party lists.

The ability of national electorates to link MEPs' likelihood of getting re-elected to the EP with their parliamentary behaviour, however, is seriously hampered by the institution remaining very distant from European citizens. On one hand, there has been a slight increase in the importance of European-level politics and EU-related issues at the European elections over the last decade (e.g., Ferrara and Weishaupt, 2004; Hobolt et al., 2009; Hooghe and Marks, 2009); EU issue voting was noticeable in 2004 in countries where the domestic institutional environment provided clear lines of responsibility between the EU and the national institution (de Vries et al., 2011), and where concerns over European integration were important for voting and party competition in the 2009 European elections (Hobolt and Spoon, 2012; Schuck et al., 2011). At the same time, the recent rise in EU issue voting has not altered the nature of the European elections, which are still dominated by voters who base their choices primarily on domestic preferences (e.g., Hobolt and Wittrock, 2011; Marsh, 2005; Schmitt, 2005), possess little knowledge on the European-level policy-making (e.g., European Election Study, 2012c; Hix et al., 2007), and use evaluations of domestic issues, parties, politicians and government performance, rather than issues on the EU agenda or the performance of individual MEPs, as the guiding factors for voting (Hix and Marsh, 2011). Although domestic policy preferences and national interests continue to dominate the European elections, voters remain largely ignorant of how MEPs approach parliamentary representation in the EP. This, in turn, significantly hampers MEPs' ability to aid their vote-maximizing ambitions through parliamentary behaviour.

Elections to Domestic Political Offices

The relevance of national electorates in shaping MEPs' future electoral success is of course not limited to the European elections. It is widely noted that MEPs often choose to pursue a political career in their home country once their European mandate expires (e.g., Hix, 2004; Lindstädt et al., 2011; Scarrow, 1997; Stolz, 2001). An MEP who chooses such a career-path might also require the support of his/her national electorate. The vote-maximizing approach to parliamentary representation encourages loyalty to one's national electorate, even when an MEP does not intend to challenge for re-election to the EP. Thus, MEPs need to be cautious when deciding on how to vote in the EP, as discarding the interests of their national electorate can potentially harm not only their chances of getting re-elected to the EP, but also their ability to successfully pursue a future domestic political career.

2.3.3.3 National Parties

The way the EP is formed and operates provides also strong incentives for MEPs to show loyalty to their national party as national parties can aid MEPs' ability to act as both vote-maximizing and policy-maximizing agents.

Elections to the EP

Whereas national electorates vote at the European elections, national parties can influence MEPs' likelihood of getting re-elected in the build-up to these elections. It is the national parties who decide whether MEPs are allowed to stand as party candidates and who draw up the list rankings of their candidates (e.g., Hix and Hoyland, 2011; Hix et al., 2007; Kreppel, 2002; Thiem, 2009). For example, German Green Party MEP Angelika Beer was not put back on the party list in the 2009 European elections in part for failing to demonstrate adequate support for the policy stances of her national party (Lindstädt et al., 2011). A national party's ability to control the placement of its candidates on the party list is especially important in the European elections as these rely largely on closed, or at least ordered, lists (European Parliament, 2009b). National electorates are unable to change the rank order of party candidates within these lists and, therefore, politicians who are positioned higher on the party lists are more likely to be elected to the EP. National parties retain significant control over the electoral chances of their candidates through drawing up party lists and their members' placements on those.

National parties can also offer their candidates significant support during the campaign. Being identified as a party candidate enables an MEP to increase his/her political visibility, as he/she is more likely to be perceived as a 'meaningful' candidate. Access to the administrative, technical, and financial resources (e.g., backroom staff, money for campaign advertisements) of his/her national party, however, further contributes to an MEP's ability to run a successful re-election campaign. To emphasize this point, the candidates who were successful at the 2004 and 2009 European elections obtained, on average, almost 50% of their campaign expenditure from their national party (Comparative Candidates Survey, 2012; European Election Study, 2012a). With national parties being able to offer their candidates significant campaigning support, it is beneficial for MEPs to stay in the good graces of their national party.

It is important to note that support from national parties is not a prerequisite for electoral success at the European elections. Indrek Tarand, for example, who ran as an independent candidate in Estonia at the 2009 European elections, was elected to the EP by receiving 26% of the popular vote in the country (European Parliament, 2009a).

Therefore, it is possible for independent candidates to stage successful electoral campaigns at the European elections. This should be particularly relevant for MEPs as they are aiming for re-election rather than first-time electoral success. These politicians have already held elective offices and should, therefore, expect to be better able to rely on their personal appeal and campaign skills to gain re-election, as opposed to requiring the support of their national party (e.g., Hobolt and Hoyland, 2011; Squire, 1995). That said, the possibility for conducting successful campaigns to the EP without support from a national party should not be overstated. Less than 1% of MEPs who entered the EP in 2009 were elected to the institution as independent candidates (European Parliament, 2009a). Although not a prerequisite, a national party's support is still beneficial to the candidates standing at the European elections.

Elections to Domestic Political Offices

Just as the relevance of national electorates in shaping MEPs' future electoral success is not limited to the European elections, neither is the importance of national party support. It is widely noted that many MEPs choose not to stand for re-election to the EP when their mandates expire, instead aiming to return to higher offices in their home country (e.g., Hix, 2004; Lindstädt et al., 2011; Scarrow, 1997; Stolz, 2001). National parties can facilitate this career change. National parties remain the key principals for MEPs who want to enter domestic elected offices, as parties draw up their candidate lists, rank candidates on these lists, and offer financial and administrative campaign support also for elections to national legislatures etc. National parties also play a role in filling many political offices that are not publicly elected; they can choose who to nominate for political offices such as the cabinet positions and leadership positions within themselves. Therefore, staying in the good graces of one's national party is likely to be beneficial not just for an MEP who aims for re-election to the institution, but also for an MEP who aims to pursue a future domestic political career.

Influence within the EP's Political Framework

National parties are, however, in a unique position because they can also act as meaningful principals for MEPs with a policy-maximizing approach to representation. Despite being influential in shaping MEPs' likelihood of attaining future electoral success, national parties and their corresponding national party delegations also hold considerable power within the EP's framework (e.g., Hoyland, 2006a; Kreppel, 2002; Whitaker, 2005). Although they are not the sole influences over an MEP's political

career within the EP, they can facilitate an MEP's ability to exercise influence over the parliamentary decision-making. For example, committee memberships that national parties can help their members attain allow MEPs to be directly involved with drafting policy positions and legislative proposals. This would raise their profile in the EP and help establish themselves as policy experts on an issue. As such, a national party's support aids both vote-maximizing and policy-maximizing ambitions.

2.3.4 Three Principals and the Sub-Groups of the EP

The three salient principals who can affect an MEP's ability to act as a vote-maximizing and/or policy-maximizing agent are linked to specific sub-groups of the EP.

The EP party groups are the only supranational principals MEPs face. Capturing the effect of the EP party groups is straightforward, because they are the parliamentary sub-groups that MEPs belong to once they enter the EP. Incorporating MEPs across different national parties and EU member states, the EP party groups are designed to bring together MEPs on the basis of ideological beliefs, and to support interests that cross national boundaries. For an MEP, his/her EP party group is, therefore, both a principal who can aid his/her policy-maximizing ambitions, and the parliamentary sub-group that he/she enters once elected to the EP.

National electorates and national parties, however, are principals who are not oriented around supranational sentiments. As such, the link between those principals and their corresponding parliamentary sub-groups is not as straightforward as it is for the EP party groups. For the purposes of this dissertation, the interests of an MEP's national electorate are represented by his/her national delegation (i.e., MEPs who have been elected to the EP from the same EU member state), while the interests of his/her national party are represented in the EP by the corresponding national party delegation (i.e., those MEPs who share the same domestic party affiliation). While national delegations share national allegiances, but hold a variety of different ideological beliefs, national party delegations share national allegiances as well as hold similar ideological beliefs. Therefore, these parliamentary sub-groups offer very close links to the principals whose interests they are representing.

This manner of linking MEPs' principals with the corresponding parliamentary sub-groups is well-established in the existing empirical literature on MEPs' voting behaviour.⁹ For example, in the context of the different pre-2004 parliaments, this

⁹ Note that not all following examples look at MEPs' comparative loyalty to each of their three principals and parliamentary sub-groups.

approach is used by Hix et al. (2005, 2007, 2009), while Coman (2009) and Hix and Noury (2009) use this approach to study voting dynamics in the post-2004 era. Moreover, the votewatch.eu (2012), which is among the better-known interactive tools to observe MEPs' parliamentary behaviour, uses a similar approach to present MEPs' voting choices. Therefore, there is a consensus that the EP party groups, national delegations, and national party delegations represent the interests of the corresponding principals. As such, they offer the opportunity to use the degree of loyalty that MEPs show to those parliamentary sub-groups through their voting choices to measure the degree of loyalty MEPs show to their principals.

2.4 Empirical Understanding of MEPs' Roll Call Voting Behaviour

The EP offers a unique setting for studying the parliamentary behaviour of elected representatives. Most MEPs have to balance the loyalties to three principals who operate on both the national and supranational levels.¹⁰ Therefore, it is unsurprising that the voting dynamics in the EP have been the subject of numerous scholarly efforts. In this section, I will provide an overview of the existing empirical literature on the voting dynamics in the EP with the view of explaining how MEPs are traditionally seen to approach parliamentary representation.

2.4.1 Comparative Relevance of MEPs' Principals

The existing empirical literature makes several claims about the comparative relevance of MEPs' principals in guiding their voting choices. It finds that (i) national parties remain as MEPs' primary principal (e.g., Coman, 2009; Hix et al., 2007), while (ii) transnational party group affiliations are more important than national affiliations for determining how MEPs behave (e.g., Gabel and Hix, 2007; Hix et al., 2007), and (iii) that the dominance of ideology-laden voting has been increasing over time (e.g., Hix and Noury, 2009; Hix et al., 2007).

Initial empirical efforts to assess MEPs' voting behaviour focus on the 1979-1999 period, and concentrate on roll call analyses of MEPs' likelihood of voting along their EP party group lines. These studies find unanimously that within the parliamentary

¹⁰ Although all MEPs who enter the EP must have stood at the European elections (i.e., they are either entering the EP as candidates who were successful at the preceding European elections or as replacement MEPs who were unsuccessful at the preceding European elections but enter the EP mid-term), an MEP may not belong to an ideology-driven EP party group (i.e., he/she may be a Non-Inscrit), and an MEP may also not belong to a national party. The vast majority of MEPs, however, do face all those three previously-discussed principals. For example, the presence of all those three principals applies to over 95% of MEPs at the beginning of the Seventh Parliament (European Parliament, 2012c).

term of interest – Attina (1990) focusing on 1979-1989, Brzinski (1995) on 1989-1994, Raunio (1997) on 1989-1994, and Carubba and Gabel (1999) on 1994-1999 – EP party groups were highly cohesive, with average intra-group majorities of approximately 90% within the first four parliamentary terms. However, because these studies focus exclusively on voting along EP party group lines, they say little about the comparative relevance of the different principals in guiding MEPs' voting choices.

National Parties as MEPs' Main Parliamentary Principals

The early empirical studies are useful for identifying high levels of unity within the EP party groups, but the more recent roll call analyses shed light on the comparative likelihood of MEPs' to follow the voting positions of their three principals.

The existing empirical studies on roll call voting choices suggest that national parties are MEPs' primary principal. Comparing how frequently MEPs defect from their EP party group, national delegation, and national party delegation indicates that national party delegations enjoy the highest levels of intra-group unity and lowest defection rates (e.g., Coman, 2009; Hix, 2002; Hix et al., 2007; Kreppel, 2002; Lindstädt et al., 2011; Ringe, 2010; Thiem, 2007, 2009). For example, Hix et al. (2007) find that only on 2% of voting occasions did MEPs go against the voting positions of their national party delegation and supported those of their EP party group at the same time, whereas on 7% of voting occasions did they go against the voting positions of their EP party group and supported those of their national party delegation at the same time. MEPs' tendency to most frequently follow the voting positions of their national party delegation, as opposed to those of their EP party group and national delegation, has been widely acknowledged by empirical studies that focus on voting dynamics both within and across parliamentary terms.

Supranational Partisanship over National Allegiances

MEPs' secondary loyalty is to their EP party group. Comparing the degrees of loyalty that MEPs show to their EP party group and national delegation, it is the former that tend to be considerably more united and better able to promote intra-group cohesion (e.g., Hix, 2004; Hix and Noury, 2009; Hix et al., 2005, 2007; Noury, 2002; Noury et al., 2002; Roland, 2009). For example, when looking at unities of the EP party groups and national delegations in the Fifth Parliament and in the first year-and-a-half of the Sixth Parliament, Hix and Noury (2009) find their mean relative cohesions to be 1.10 and 0.87 during the former time period, whereas 1.09 and 0.89 during the latter. MEPs have

been shown to generally be more loyal to the voting positions of their ideology-laden EP party group than to the voting positions of their nationality-laden national delegation.

These findings also have significant implications for our understanding of the democratic deficit in the EU. With the EP party groups incorporating MEPs with shared ideological beliefs but various national allegiances, and national delegations consisting of MEPs with shared national allegiances but various ideological beliefs, the dominance of ideology-laden voting over nationality-laden voting in the EP allows the institution to provide a degree of democratic input to the EU via the approach that MEPs take to parliamentary representation.

It must be noted, however, that not all national delegations have always been found to be less united than the EP party groups. Hix and Noury (2009) study of the EP party groups' and national delegations' internal cohesiveness between 2004 and 2006 finds that the Slovenian and Estonian national delegations were more united than the average EP party group. Similarly, Tajalli (2007) finds that the French delegation voted as a highly united group on the Services Directive, with its members defecting from the voting instructions of their respective EP party group very frequently, while Scully et al. (2012) find based on 2010 MEP survey data that which member state an MEP is elected from is a better predictor of his/her attitudes towards the EU policies than his/her EP party group affiliation. Although these exceptions are occasional, MEPs have sometimes been more likely to follow the voting positions of their national delegation as opposed to those of their EP party group.

Increasing Dominance of Ideology-Laden Voting

The extent to which MEPs have more frequently shown voting loyalty to their EP party group as opposed to their national delegation has also been shown to have gradually increased over time. Comparing the change in the comparative degree of loyalty that MEPs show to the voting positions of their EP party group and national delegation, a clear shift in favour of the former has taken place between 1979 and 2004 (e.g., Hix et al., 2007; Noury, 2002; Noury et al., 2002). Whereas the difference in the EP party groups' and national electorate delegations' mean relative cohesion scores was under 0.20 during the First Parliament, it was over 0.30 during the Fifth Parliament (Hix et al., 2007). Thus, MEPs are perceived to increasingly prioritize the voting positions of their EP party group over those of their national delegation.

There is, however, also some evidence to suggest that the increasing dominance of ideology-laden voting is not as clear-cut in the post-2004 era as it has traditionally

perceived to be. Hix and Noury (2009) find a decline in the dominance of ideology-laden voting when they compare the mean relative unity of the EP party groups and national delegations in the Fifth Parliament and in the first year-and-a-half of the Sixth Parliament. Their study indicates that the changes in the EP's make-up that occurred as a result of the 2004 EU enlargement may have had an impact on the development of the voting dynamics in the EP.

2.4.2 MEPs and Their Principals in the Post-2004 Era

The EP has undergone significant changes to its make-up as a result of the 2004 and 2007 EU enlargements. Therefore, it is necessary to give special attention to determining whether our traditional understanding of the comparative relevance of MEPs' principals in guiding their voting choices also holds in the post-2004 context.

The division between pre-2004 and post-2004 contexts is highly relevant as there is sufficient evidence that the introduction of MEPs from the 12 new member states has influenced the inner composition of the EP. Noteworthy individual-level differences exist between MEPs elected from the 2004/2007 accession countries and MEPs elected from the pre-2004 EU member states. For example, MEPs elected from the 2004/2007 accession countries tend to be more right-wing than MEPs elected from the pre-2004 EU member states (e.g., Scully et al., 2012). Moreover, they also tend to be more nationality-oriented in their self-determination. The recent MEP surveys by Farrell et al. (2011) and the European Election Study (2012a)¹¹ show that 23% of MEPs elected from the pre-2004 EU member states prioritized the European identity over their national identity, compared with 16% of MEPs from the 2004/2007 accession countries. Although the magnitude of the difference is not overwhelming, national identities do play a greater role in how MEPs elected from the 2004/2007 accession countries see themselves.

What makes this more nationality-oriented nature of MEPs elected from the 2004/2007 accession countries particularly relevant, however, is their corresponding tendency to prioritize the representation of national interests to greater extent than their counterparts elected from the pre-2004 EU member states. The recent MEP surveys by Farrell et al. (2011) and the European Election Study (2012a) show that MEPs elected from the 2004/2007 accession countries assign greater importance to representing national interests than MEPs elected from the pre-2004 EU member states; the

¹¹ Only those respondents (i.e., candidates at the 2009 European elections) who were elected to the EP are used. Same also applies for the following uses of the 2009 European Election Study Candidate Survey data to describe MEPs in the Seventh Parliament.

respective mean values being 4.5 and 4.1 on a scale from 1 ‘little importance’ to 5 ‘great importance’. Whereas 67.1% of MEPs elected from the 2004/2007 accession countries perceived the representation of national interests to be of ‘great importance’, only 44.3% of MEPs elected from the pre-2004 EU member states did so (European Election Study, 2012a; Farrell et al., 2011) In fact, when comparing the degree of importance MEPs assigned to representing the interests of their (i) national electorate, (ii) EP party group, and (iii) national party voters, MEPs elected from the 2004/2007 accession countries prioritized the interests of their national electorate, whereas MEPs elected from the pre-2004 EU member states prioritized the interests of their national party voters; the respective mean scores being (i) 3.8, (ii) 4.5, (iii) 4.1 and (i) 3.6, (ii) 4.1, (iii) 4.2 (European Election Study, 2012a; Farrell et al., 2011). Thus, nationality-driven role perception does tend to be more dominant among MEPs elected from the 2004/2007 accession countries.

Moreover, the 2004/2007 accession countries offer slightly different contexts in which MEPs need to evaluate the costs and benefits associated with showing loyalty to their different principals. Among else, MEPs elected from the 2004/2007 accession countries tend to face re-election to the EP (or elections to domestic political offices) in countries where the EP is seen to be a more important institution within the EU and which are economically weaker with more to gain from the EP’s budgetary powers, as well as belong to national parties with more centralized nomination rules than their counterparts elected from the pre-2004 EU member states (e.g., European Commission, 2007, 2008a, 2008b; European Parliament, 2009b; Farrell et al., 2011; International Monetary Fund, 2010). For example, Eurobarometer surveys conducted in 2007 and 2008 showed that, on average, 81% and 75% of people treated the EP as important within the EU when looking at the 2004/2007 accession countries and the pre-2004 EU member states, respectively (e.g., European Commission, 2007, 2008a). Although the difference of 6% might appear rather small, it constitutes as much as 20% of the difference between the lowest and highest percentage of people who treat the EP as important. Bearing this in mind, MEPs elected from the 2004/2007 accession countries should be more sensitive to the punishment powers of their national electorate.

Empirical Accounts of Post-2004 MEPs’ Voting Behaviour

In line with the EP’s changing make-up, it is unsurprising that there is an emerging literature that explores how MEPs approach parliamentary representation in

the post-2004 parliaments. They provide useful early indications about the comparative relevance of the different principals in guiding MEPs' voting choices.

First, these studies provide some evidence that supports aspects of the standard claims about how MEPs approach parliamentary representation in the EP. Coman (2009) compares how frequently MEPs defected from their EP party group and national party delegation within the first 16 months of the Sixth Parliament, and finds that MEPs have remained more loyal to their national party delegation. At the same time, Hix and Noury (2009) look at the degree of intra-group cohesion among the EP party groups and national delegations from July 2004 to December 2006, and find that – despite MEPs elected from the 2004 accession countries being slightly more likely to vote with their national delegation than MEPs elected from the pre-2004 EU members states – MEPs, on average, have remained more loyal to their ideology-driven EP party group than their nationality-driven national delegation. Thus, there is evidence that national parties remain as MEPs' primary principal in the post-2004 era, whereas MEPs continue to hold their secondary loyalty to their EP party group rather than their national electorate.

Second, the relevance of different principals in guiding MEPs' voting choices is also highlighted by few existing empirical studies without an explicitly comparative account of their significance. For example, Gabel and Hix (2007) explore MEPs' self-reported policy preferences and roll call voting choices from July 2004 to December 2005. Their findings indicate that ideological partisan influences continue to constrain MEPs' political behaviour in the Sixth Parliament, as both the European party groups and national parties continue to exert systematic influence on MEPs' parliamentary behaviour.

Although most of the few studies conducted on the voting dynamics in the post-2004 parliaments tend to support the standard claims about how MEPs approach parliamentary representation, some exceptions are also found. When Hix and Noury (2009) compare the mean relative unities of the EP party groups and national delegations in the Fifth Parliament and in the first year-and-a-half of the Sixth Parliament, they find that this difference marginally decreases. Whereas no national delegation was more cohesive than the EP party groups were on average in the Fifth Parliament, Estonian and Slovenian delegations were so at the start of the Sixth Parliament. Their study indicates that the changes in the EP's make-up may have had an impact on the voting dynamics in the EP. Moreover, Scully et al. (2012) find that, when looking at 2010 MEP survey data, which member state an MEP is elected from is a

better predictor of his/her attitudes towards the EU policies than his/her EP party group affiliation.

A very recent study by Mühlböck (2012) is also worth noting. Using a unique research design, she provides an analysis of MEPs' relative likelihood of siding with their EP party group in the EP, or national party's ministers in the Council of the European Union. Interestingly, she finds, within the very restricted sample of MEPs she relies on, that MEPs were more likely to follow the voting positions of their EP party group rather than those of their ministers. While she only looks at voting results on co-decision legislation for governmental parties of the EU-15 member states (664 cases of individual voting decisions of MEPs from 1999 to 2009), her work offers an interesting insight into MEPs' voting choices in the post-2004 era. It suggests that national parties may not always be MEPs' primary principal after all.

2.4.3 Variation in how MEPs Approach Representation

The EP is also a highly diverse institution, particularly so in the post-2004 era. MEPs are now elected from 27 countries, and differ in their role and self-perceptions as well as the contexts that they operate in etc. (e.g., Comparative Candidates Survey, 2012; European Commission, 2007; European Election Study, 2012a; Farrell et al., 2011). It is fair to expect that different MEPs may assign their principals' punishment and rewarding powers varying degrees of relevance, and, as a result, also approach parliamentary representation in the EP different ways.

Relevance of Individual-Level Characteristics

Various individual-level characteristics specific to MEPs themselves have been used by past research to explain variation in the relevance of the different principals in guiding MEPs' parliamentary behaviour.

First, MEPs' political experience and future ambitions have been shown to relate to how they approach parliamentary representation. On one hand, MEPs with longer histories of serving in the EP are more likely to vote along their EP party group lines and less likely to follow the voting positions of their national party delegation (e.g., Hix, 2004; Loewenberg and Mans, 1988; Searing, 1991). These politicians have held elective offices for longer by the time they campaign for re-election, and exhibited personal appeal and campaign skills by virtue of their previous election(s) to the EP (e.g., Hobolt and Hoyland, 2011; Squire, 1995). As such, they have better-established political appeals, making them less sensitive to the influence of their national party over their

future electoral success, and better able to turn to their EP party group instead. On the other hand, MEPs who aim for future domestic political careers have been shown to be particularly willing to defect from the voting instructions of their EP party group in favour of empowering national actors (Meserve et al., 2009). These MEPs are simply not reliant on the support of their EP party group to further their political career.

Second, there is evidence that MEPs' ideological beliefs matter. Left-wing MEPs exhibit more loyalty to the voting positions of their EP party group than their right-wing counterparts; leftist MEPs rely on more clearly articulated and cohesive ideologies that support supranational cooperation (Brzinski, 1995; Hix and Lord, 1997; Kreppel and Tsebelis, 1999). However, the effect of ideology is not universal. Looking at MEPs' voting behaviour between 1979 and 2004, Hix et al. (2007) conclude that ideology is not related to variation in how MEPs approach parliamentary representation in a statistically significant manner.

Finally, the individual-level characteristics that affect MEPs' voting choices are not limited to ones that define MEPs themselves, but also include those that describe how they interact with the parliamentary sub-groups they belong to. For example, when looking at MEPs' roll call voting choices from 1979 to 2004, Hix et al. (2007) find that (i) ideological distance between an MEP and his/her EP party group is negatively correlated with his/her likelihood of following the voting positions of his/her EP party group, whereas (ii) ideological distance between an MEP and his/her national party delegation is positively correlated with his/her likelihood of following the voting positions of his/her EP party group. Such empirical tendencies are hardly surprising as an MEP should (i) find it more difficult to overcome the ideological differences and adhere to the voting positions of his/her EP party group, and (ii) be less likely to have better alternatives to turn to instead of following the voting positions of his/her EP party group. This has also been supported by the more recent study by Coman (2009), who shows that the ideological distance between MEPs and their EP party group, as well as the distance between MEPs and their national party delegation is negatively correlated, with the degree of loyalty MEPs show to the voting positions of their respective parliamentary sub-group. Therefore, greater ideological similarity between an MEP and his/her parliamentary sub-group seems to promote greater voting loyalty.

Relevance of Contextual Characteristics

In addition to individual-level characteristics, various contextual characteristics also affect MEPs' parliamentary behaviour.

First, the size of an EP party group relates to the degree of internal cohesiveness it is able to command. Scholars find that larger EP party groups are more successful in promoting loyalty among their members (e.g., Brzinski, 1995; Hix et al., 2007). For example, Hix et al. (2007) show that a 5% increase in an EP party group's share of seats corresponded to a 0.2% increase in its internal unity between 1979 and 2004. The EP's rules of procedure allocate larger EP party groups more means to influence the ability of their members to act as policy-maximizing agents (Benedetto, 2005; European Parliament, 2012a). Thus, there is simply more to gain from loyalty to the voting positions of these EP party groups. Moreover, larger EP party groups ought to have greater influence over their members by virtue of their ability to offer greater voting support on issues that matter to their members by providing the power of numbers.

Second, the degree of fractionalization within the parliamentary sub-groups also constrains their ability to promote intra-group cohesion. Looking at the likelihood that MEPs aligned with the voting positions of their EP party group between 1979 and 2004, Hix et al. (2007) show that a 10% increase in an EP party group's fractionalization along national lines corresponded to a 1.9% decrease in its internal unity. Referring to the internal collective action problem, higher levels of fractionalization hinder the EP party groups' ability to promote voting unity by requiring for more diversity to be mitigated. With more national actors being present to try to influence European policy-making through MEPs, there is a greater propensity for intra-group disagreements to rise within the EP party groups that are more fractionalized along national lines.

Third, electoral systems used for the European elections, and the reliance on open or closed lists in particular, has been shown to offer useful explanations as to why MEPs are holding varying senses of loyalties to their principals. For example, Farrell and Scully (2007, 2010) find that MEPs elected under open list electoral systems are more likely to focus their activities on maintaining and building their presence among voters. This is very much in line with the finding of Hix (2004) that MEPs chosen via electoral institutions that offered them relative independence from their national party leadership are 30% less likely to defect from the voting instructions of their EP party groups. Candidate-centred electoral systems increase candidates' incentives to cultivate a personal vote and allow them to be less reliant on the support of their national party for re-election (e.g., Ames, 1995; Carey, 2007; Carey and Shugart, 1995; Farrell and Scully, 2007; Faas, 2003; Golden and Chang, 2001). Such candidates have less to gain by showing loyalty to their national party and less to lose through disloyalty.

Finally, there is preliminary evidence that MEPs elected from the 2004/2007 accession countries do in fact behave slightly differently than MEPs elected from the pre-2004 EU member states. Hix and Noury (2009) show that, in the context of the first year-and-a-half of the Sixth Parliament, the mean relative cohesions for the 2004 accession countries' national delegations and the pre-2004 EU member states' national delegations were 1.0 and 0.9, respectively. This fits well with the tendency of MEPs elected from the 2004/2007 accession countries to be more nationality-oriented in their role and self-perceptions, as well as facing electorates who give rise to their greater sensitivity to national interests.

2.5 Beyond Roll Call Voting Occasions

The EP's rules of procedure set out the formal framework for voting in the institution. They specify that voting in the EP can take place either by roll call, show of hands, electronically, or by secret ballot, with roll call votes being the only ones where all participating MEPs' individual voting choices – yes, no, or abstain – are recorded and publicized as part of the institution's plenary proceedings (European Parliament, 2012a). As such, roll call votes are the only voting occasions where MEPs' individual-level voting behaviour can be observed and scrutinized.¹² What this means is that there are clear differences between the various voting procedures used in the EP.

Roll call votes are also not the standard options for voting in the EP. Although the relevance of roll call voting has increased over time, they are still used for a minority of the parliamentary voting occasions, and few draft proposals automatically need to be voted on by roll call.¹³ While roll call voting was estimated to have been used for around 15% of the total votes prior to 1999 (Carrubba and Gabel, 1999), this proportion has risen, such that roll calls now constitute roughly a third of all votes taken in the EP (e.g., Carrubba et al., 2006; Hug, 2012b; Thiem, 2006). Roll call votes are not just different from the rest of the voting procedures used in the EP by their very nature, but they are also used for a minority of the parliamentary voting occasions.

2.5.1 Traditional Assumption

The public nature of roll call voting offers scholars a unique opportunity to study MEPs' actual voting choices. Relying on roll call analyses to document how MEPs

¹² Although voting by show of hands does produce observable manifestations of MEPs' voting choices – i.e., their hand signals – as well, one would have to physically observe this behaviour.

¹³ The increase in the importance of the relevance of roll call voting is partly a function of the Lisbon Treaty, which requires all final passage votes on legislative proposals to be voted on by roll call (e.g., Hug, 2012b).

approach representation in the EP is, however, highly dependent on the assumption that roll call voting occasions are representative of the parliamentary voting occasions more generally, or at the very least, that MEPs' voting behaviour is consistent across roll call and non-roll call voting occasions.

Traditionally, the assumption that roll call votes are representative of all the parliamentary voting occasions has been widely accepted. Despite the fact that roll call votes constitute only a minority of the parliamentary voting occasions and are unique by virtue of their public nature, they have been presented as representative samples of all votes taken in the EP (e.g., Faas, 2003; Hix et al., 2007, 2009; Noury et al., 2002; Raunio, 1997). Roll call voting occasions have been characterized as random selections of votes taken in the EP (Faas, 2003; Hix, 2005), including the more important decisions that the EP takes (Hix et al., 2005, 2007), and covering a broad range of issues (Hix, 2001, 2002; Hix et al., 2005, 2007). As such, the reliance on roll call votes to study how MEPs approach parliamentary representation is traditionally seen as both practical – given that they are the only votes where MEPs' individual voting choices are recorded and publicized – and appropriate.

2.5.2 Roll Call Vote Requests

The representative nature of roll call votes, however, is not immediately visible. In fact, there is a growing body of empirical literature that highlights the presence of discrepancies between samples of roll call and non-roll call votes.

The empirical studies that have analysed roll call requests to see how roll call votes are situated within the broader set of all votes taken in the EP have not confirmed the assumption of roll call votes' random and representative nature. Based on novel datasets of all proposals voted on in the EP within specific time periods, scholars have shown that roll call voting occasions tend to under-represent legislative proposals that have greater consequences in terms of their effect on the EU than the non-legislative proposals do, are unequally called for by the different EP party groups, originate in just a few committees, and are requested by the EP party group leaders disproportionately more often when national delegations are expected to hold less vocal views and be less likely to promote vote defection among its members (e.g., Carrubba et al., 2008, 2009; Hoyland, 2006b, 2010; Hug, 2010, 2012a; Ringe, 2005; Thiem, 2006, 2008).¹⁴

¹⁴ The questionable representativeness of roll call samples has also been recently identified by scholars looking at different national legislatures (e.g., Crisp and Driscoll, 2012).

For example, Carrubba et al. (2006) find that between July 1999 and June 2000 it was the European People's Party – European Democrats (EPP-ED) group who requested roll call votes on final votes disproportionately more often than other EP party groups and that the vast majority of roll call vote request originated from four committees,¹⁵ whereas Thiem (2006) shows that roll call votes are likelier in split-votes than in non-split votes and attributed this to the EP party group leaders initiating roll call voting to signal specific policy positions to third parties. Further, Hoyland (2010) finds the presence of vote-specific party inducements in a large proportion of roll call votes when looking at voting in the Fifth Parliament. Although these studies are based on novel datasets from limited time periods – covering mostly a legislative year – their findings should be taken seriously, as all studies of roll call vote requests have found some discrepancies between samples of roll call and non-roll call votes.

Roll call votes are unique in their recorded and public nature. Thus, they do not appear to be representative of the parliamentary voting occasions. Although this does not necessarily mean that MEPs approach parliamentary representation differently when voting by roll call and when not, this is a possibility that needs to be addressed.

2.6 Limitations of the Existing Literature

Existing studies on MEPs' voting behaviour provide useful insight into the voting dynamics in the EP, but the literature has yet to address the recent changes to the EP's make-up and several aspects of complexity in the institution in sufficient depth. Namely, few scholars have addressed the heterogeneity in the post-2004 parliaments and variation in how contemporary MEPs approach representation in the EP.

It is necessary to build on the existing academic tradition, focusing on post-2004 MEPs' voting behaviour and explaining how it varies in relation to the heterogeneity in the post-2004 parliaments and the variety of voting procedures used in the institution.

2.6.1 Focusing on the Post-2004 Era

The EP has undergone significant changes over the last decade. In particular, the EU enlargements in 2004 and 2007 introduced MEPs from 12 new member states to the institution. The academic community needs to respond to these developments by providing a truly up-to-date understanding of how contemporary post-2004 MEPs approach parliamentary representation.

¹⁵ The four committees being: Citizens' Freedoms and Rights, Home Affairs, Constitutional Affairs, and Economic and Monetary Affairs. Together they accounted for 64% of roll call votes, but just 28% of all votes taken in the EP (Carrubba et al., 2006).

As highlighted earlier (pages 39-40), MEPs elected from the 2004/2007 accession countries appear to introduce a degree of peculiarity to the institution. Comparing these MEPs with their counterparts elected from the pre-2004 EU member states, noteworthy individual-level and contextual differences are present. For example, nationality appears to be more prevalent in the role and self-perceptions of MEPs elected from the 2004/2007 accession countries (European Election Study, 2012a; Farrell et al., 2011). This is very much in line with Hix and Noury's (2009) finding that 2004/2007 accession countries' national delegations were, on average, more cohesive than pre-2004 EU member states' national delegations between 2004 and 2006. Moreover, MEPs elected from the 2004/2007 accession countries tend to face electoral contexts – e.g., electorates who perceive the EP to be more important, more centralized nomination for becoming their national party candidate at the European elections (e.g., Comparative Candidates Survey, 2012; European Commission, 2007, 2008a; European Election Study, 2012b; European Parliament, 2009b) – that promote greater sensitivity to the interests of their national electorate and national party.

There is evidence to suggest that MEPs elected from the 2004/2007 accession countries, and the electoral contexts they face, do not follow the pattern set by MEPs elected from the pre-2004 EU member states. Although this does not necessarily mean that the introduction of MEPs elected from the 2004/2007 accession countries has necessarily altered the voting dynamics in the institution, it does highlight the need to focus our attention on how MEPs approach parliamentary representation in the post-2004 era.

Limitations in Existing Empirical Accounts

As also highlighted earlier (pages 40-42), few empirical studies have already been conducted on post-2004 MEPs' roll call voting choices. Although these provide useful insight into contemporary MEPs' voting behaviour, limitations remain in their collective ability to account for the comparative relevance of MEPs' principals in the post-2004 parliaments.

First, the existing empirical studies focus on limited periods of the post-2004 era in their analyses. Whereas Hix and Noury (2009) look at MEPs' roll call voting choices from July 2004 to December 2006, Gabel and Hix (2007) focus on roll call voting occasions between July 2004 and December 2005, and Coman (2009) looks at the first 16 months of the Sixth Parliament. Restricting empirical analyses to the pre-2007 period effectively means that existing studies on MEPs' voting behaviour are unable to account

for and analyse the voting choices of Bulgarian and Romanian MEPs – entering the EP in 2007 for the first time – and how they have approach parliamentary representation. Although Bulgarian and Romanian MEPs constitute just a minority of post-2007 MEPs, they need to be accounted for in order to provide a truly contemporary account of the voting dynamics in the EP.

Second, the limited timeframes of the existing empirical analyses also constrain their ability to account for potential differences in how MEPs approach parliamentary representation in the Sixth and Seventh Parliaments. The post-2004 EP has already finished its Sixth term, with a new set of MEPs entering the institution in 2009.¹⁶ For example, it would not be unreasonable to claim that MEPs elected from the 2004/2007 accession countries, as a whole, may be more inclined to approach parliamentary representation in the Seventh Parliament in a slightly more supranational manner than they did in the previous Sixth Parliament because of the socializing effect of political institutions (e.g., Brewer, 2001; Stryker, 2000). Whereas no MEP elected to the Sixth Parliament from the 2004/2007 accession countries had been elected to the institution before, close to 50% of MEPs elected to the Seventh Parliament from the 2004/2007 accession countries had served in the Sixth Parliament (European Parliament, 2012c). Incorporating more ‘returning MEPs’ with a proven success record at the European elections and who had been exposed to the transnational set-up of the EP, supranational decision-making might be more prominent among MEPs who have been elected from the 2004/2007 accession countries in the Seventh rather than the Sixth Parliament.

Third, there is also a lack of empirical studies that compare MEPs’ simultaneous loyalties to their three principals in the post-2004 era. While Hix and Noury (2009) focus on the EP party groups and national delegations, Gabel and Hix (2007) and Coman (2009) look at the EP party groups and national party delegations, a cohesive approach that assesses the relevance of all three principals is missing, yet necessary. This would add technical accuracy by assessing the relevance of all three principals in a consistent manner – i.e., focusing on same sets of MEPs, time periods, and voting occasions – to the understanding of how post-2004 MEPs approach representation.

¹⁶ Although the Seventh parliamentary term has not yet finished, it is already possible to study post-2009 MEPs’ voting behaviour within a sufficiently long period of time to obtain reliable observations. The time period between September 2009 and December 2010 that is used in this research to estimate the voting dynamics in the Seventh Parliament is of a comparable length to those that several existing studies on post-2004 MEPs’ voting behaviour utilize. For example, Coman (2009) studied MEPs’ voting choices in the Sixth Parliament by looking at the first 16 months of the parliamentary term, whereas Gabel and Hix (2007) looked at voting occasions between July 2004 and December 2005 to do so.

There is room to build on the existing empirical studies on how post-2004 MEPs approach representation. Looking at how MEPs from both post-2004 parliaments vote, and the comparative loyalty they show to their different principals in doing so, would contribute to our understanding of contemporary voting dynamics in the EP.

2.6.2 Variation in how MEPs Approach Representation

The post-2004 EP is also extremely diverse. It incorporates MEPs who differ in terms of individual-level characteristics such as their role and self-perceptions, the way they interact with the parliamentary sub-groups they belong to, and who make their voting choices in different contexts. These differences should be accounted for, and in a multivariate manner, to explain how heterogeneity that is present within the post-2004 parliaments shapes the way MEPs approach representation in the EP.

As discussed earlier (pages 39-40), the introduction of MEPs from the 2004/2007 accession countries to the EP added peculiarity to the institution. These MEPs tend to be more nationality-driven than their counterparts elected from the pre-2004 EU member states etc. (European Election Study, 2012a; Farrell et al., 2011). This in itself already indicates that whether MEPs have been elected from the 2004/2007 accession states or from the pre-2004 EU member states might very well be a source of variation in how they approach representation in the EP.

There is in fact also some empirical evidence that this might indeed be the case. Whereas no national delegation was more cohesive than the average EP party group in the Fifth Parliament, Estonian and Slovenian delegations were so in the first year-and-a-half of the Sixth Parliament; while the mean relative cohesions for the 2004/2007 accession countries exceeded the respective measurement for the pre-2004 EU member states by 0.1 (corresponding to a 9.2% difference) (Hix and Noury, 2009). This does indicate that differences exist between the voting behaviour of MEPs elected from the 2004/2007 accession countries and from the pre-2004 EU member states.

Need for a Multivariate Explanation

There are of course other aspects about MEPs and the contexts in which they make their voting choices that might shape how they approach representation in the EP. Three different kinds of characteristics stand out in particular:

- (i) Individual-level characteristics that describe MEPs themselves (e.g., his/her role and self-perception);

- (ii) Individual-level characteristics that describe an MEP's interactions with the parliamentary sub-groups he/she belong to (e.g., frequency by which he/she receives voting instructions from the parliamentary sub-groups);
- (iii) Contextual characteristics that describe the situations in which an MEP needs to make his/her voting choices (e.g., financial dependency on his/her national party's campaign support).

Existing studies on MEPs' parliamentary behaviour, however, remain limited in their ability to account for the simultaneous relevance of multiple characteristics which fall under all of these three distinct types. Despite the heterogeneity in the contemporary post-2004 parliaments, the existing literature struggles to provide a multivariate explanation for the variation in how MEPs approach parliamentary representation. Because existing interpretations predominantly focus on just a few characteristics (e.g., Brzinski, 1995; Hix, 2001; Hix and Noury, 2009; Noury et al., 2002; Raunio, 1997, 2007), the relationships they reveal may not hold in a more complex setting.

For example, the recent studies by Hix et al. (2007) and Coman (2009) improved our insight into how diversity shapes MEPs' voting behaviour. However, even these have limitations. Whereas the former relies largely on group-level explanatory variables to study the differences in group-level cohesion scores, and how often MEPs defected from their parliamentary sub-groups between 1979 and 2004, the latter makes use of one individual-level explanatory variable about MEPs, and no explanatory variables that describe MEPs' interactions with their parliamentary sub-groups. In this sense, the study by Meserve et al. (2009) has been very useful. It incorporates all three types of characteristics, but did so only to explain MEPs' voting defections from their EP party group from 1999 to 2004, and used only three individual-level explanatory variables (i.e., age, ideology, and ideological distance) in the analysis.

There is an opportunity to build on the existing literature on how diversity shapes the way MEPs approach parliamentary representation. This can be done through a multivariate study that simultaneously incorporates and controls for the relevance of the different types of potentially variation-inducing characteristics – individual-level characteristics that define who MEPs are as people and politicians as well as describe the way they interact with and relate to their parliamentary sub-groups, and contextual characteristics that highlight the situations in which MEPs need to make their voting choices – in shaping how post-2004 MEPs approach parliamentary representation. And in doing so, one should not restrict the analysis to one or two principals, but look at MEPs' likelihood of being loyal to each of their three principals in a coherent manner.

Additional Potentially Relevant Characteristics

Collectively, the existing studies examine the relevance of numerous characteristics in shaping MEPs' parliamentary behaviour. However, some potentially important individual-level and contextual aspects have been ignored.

For example, the relevance of individual-level characteristics, such as the frequency by which an MEP receives voting instructions from his/her parliamentary sub-groups, or the degree of importance an MEP assigns to the representation of his/her principals' interests may shape his/her likelihood of being loyal to each of his/her three principals. It is plausible to assume that the frequency of voting instructions relates to the degree of pressure an MEP is under to follow the voting positions of a particular parliamentary sub-group, as well as to the relative ease of doing so. At the same time, an MEP who sees his/her role in more supranational terms should also be more inclined to follow the voting positions of his/her supranational EP party group.

Moreover, contextual characteristics, such as an MEP's financial dependency on his/her national party's campaign support, or how important the EP is perceived in his/her home country, might help us better understand why he/she behaves in a manner he/she does. It is not unreasonable to expect that greater financial dependency makes an MEP more sensitive to the punishment powers of his/her national party, whereas greater perceived importance of the EP is likely to lead to heightened interests in its affairs and greater sensitivity to the punishment powers of his/her national electorate.

Thus, there are opportunities to build on our existing understanding of how diversity shapes how MEPs approach representation in the EP. By adding potentially relevant characteristics to the analysis, it is possible to build multivariate models that account for multiple characteristics of all three types as well as characteristics so far ignored.

2.6.3 Voting Procedure Effect

With the combination of the EP party groups requesting the majority of roll call votes and non-roll call votes being disproportionately more likely to give rise to salient national and national party interests (e.g., Carrubba et al., 2008, 2009; Hoyland, 2010; Hug, 2010, 2012a; Thiem, 2006, 2008), MEPs are likely to be under particularly strong pressure to be loyal to their EP party group when voting by roll call, as opposed to when voting by show of hands or electronically.

The conventional wisdom on how MEPs approach representation in the EP, however, provides little insight into the nature of the potential voting procedure effect.

Because the analyses derive predominantly from analyses of roll call votes, an explicit link has not yet been established to show whether MEPs change their voting-perception when different voting procedures are used.

Theoretical Reasons for the Voting Procedure Effect

Roll call votes, despite constituting only a minority of the parliamentary voting occasions and being the only ones where individual MEPs' voting choices are recorded and publicized (e.g., European Parliament, 2012a; Thiem, 2006), have traditionally been perceived as representative of all voting occasions in the EP (e.g., Faas, 2003; Hix et al., 2007, 2009; Noury et al., 2002). However, the unique nature of roll call voting does raise concerns about whether this is indeed the case.

First, the very rhetoric that the EP uses in its rules of procedure sets roll call voting occasions out to be unique. Treating voting by show of hands as the default voting procedure and electronic voting as the necessary alternative when the vote is visually too close to call, with the exceptions of votes of confidence and final passage votes on legislative proposals where roll call voting needs to be used, roll call votes need to be called for by any group of 40 or more MEPs (European Parliament, 2012a). This rhetoric in itself carries indications of heightened interest as roll call voting is to be used on occasions that are for some reason deemed 'special', rather than as a standard procedure. The very narrative that the EP presents about roll call votes describes them as being different from the other voting procedures that are used in the EP.

Second, the particular uniqueness that surrounds roll call voting occasions – i.e., their public nature – differentiates these from the rest of the parliamentary voting occasions also in a systematic manner. It effectively contributes to the increasing ability of an MEP's principals – his/her EP party group, national electorate, and national party – to scrutinize his/her voting choices. These voting records are easy to access as part of the EP's plenary proceedings (European Parliament, 2012b), but also through websites such as votewatch.eu (VoteWatch, 2012). In contrast, it is unrealistic to observe how MEPs vote when doing so by show of hands as one would physically have to observe it, and it is impossible to do so when the vote is taken electronically as the manifestations of MEPs' voting choices are not observable at the time they are cast nor are they made public afterwards. Roll call votes are unique in a sense that they do allow interested actors to scrutinize individual MEPs' actual voting choices.

The ability of MEPs' principals to better scrutinize their representatives' roll call voting choices is particularly relevant though. It allows these voting choices to be linked

to the distribution of incentives that the principals have at their disposal to reward or punish MEPs with. From an MEP's point of view, this means that loyalty (or disloyalty) is more likely to be rewarded (or punished) when voting by roll call. As such, there are reasons to believe that the different nature of the voting procedures might influence MEPs' assessments of costs and benefits associated with their voting choices, and, as a result, motivate them to behave differently when voting by roll call and when not.

Empirical Reasons for the Voting Procedure Effect

There is also a growing body of empirical literature showing that roll call votes do not just differ from non-roll call votes, but do so in ways that are potentially relevant for MEPs' voting behaviour.

Roll call voting occasions tend to under-represent legislative proposals, unequally called for across the EP party groups and committees, and requested disproportionately more often by the EP party group leaders when national delegations hold less vocal views (e.g., Carrubba et al., 2008, 2009; Hoyland, 2006b, 2010; Hug, 2010, 2012a; Thiem, 2006, 2008).¹⁷ Although those studies are based on novel datasets from limited time periods – covering mostly a legislative year – all studies of roll call vote requests have found discrepancies between samples of roll call and non-roll call votes. The traditional assumption that roll call vote samples are representative of all the parliamentary voting occasions simply does not appear to be the case.

The kind of selection bias that the reliance on roll call votes only has been shown to introduce, however, raises further doubts about the lack of voting procedure effect in MEPs' voting behaviour.¹⁸ For example, there is indirect evidence that roll call vote samples might reveal artificially high levels of supranational partisan voting in the EP. This is likely to be the case since (i) voting on legislative issues, which are under-represented in roll call samples, is usually characterized by MEPs' greater likelihood to defect from the voting positions of their EP party group, and (ii) it is the EP party groups and their leaders who initiate the vast majority of roll call processes and show their desire to obtain observable records of MEPs' voting choices (e.g., Carrubba et al., 2009; Epstein and O'Halloran, 1999; Hix et al., 2007; Hoyland, 2006b; Thiem, 2006). Although several possible reasons have been cited for the latter – e.g., EP party groups' desire to make statements on their policy positions, demonstrate intra-group unity,

¹⁷ The questionable representativeness of roll call samples has also been recently identified by scholars looking at different national legislatures (e.g., Crisp and Driscoll, 2012).

¹⁸ In the context of the Swiss Parliament, Hug finds a clear voting procedure effect when comparing MPs' voting patterns in roll call and electronic votes, whereas Roberts shows roll call voting to influence the behaviour of Congressmen in the US Congress (Hug, 2010; Roberts, 2007).

monitor their members' voting choices (Carrubba et al., 2008; Hix et al., 2007; Kreppel, 2002; Raunio, 1997; Thiem, 2006) – all of these reasons imply that the EP party groups expect low levels of defection from their voting positions and are interested in their members' loyalty when calling for a vote to be taken by roll call. There is indirect evidence that roll call vote samples are not just unrepresentative of the parliamentary voting occasions in general, but are so also in a manner that might introduce systematic bias into the analyses of how MEPs approach parliamentary representation.

Problems with Linking Voting Procedure and Voting Behaviour

Empirical accounts of roll call requests do tend to disprove the assumption that roll call samples are random and representative of all parliamentary voting occasions. In doing so, however, they merely establish the unrepresentative nature of roll call vote requests without analysing the substantial implications that the choice of the voting procedure has on how MEPs approach parliamentary representation. Although they offer reasons for roll call votes to reveal lower levels of loyalty to the EP party groups, these are based on the different contents of roll call and non-roll call voting occasions rather than directly tapping into the voting procedure effect. It is one thing to say that roll call votes tend to show lower levels of defection from the EP party groups because it is the EP party groups who request the bulk of these votes, but it is another thing to say that MEPs are less likely to defect from the voting instructions of their EP party group when voting by roll call, as opposed to when voting by non-roll call, other things being equal except the voting procedure. Only by establishing an explicit link between how a particular MEP perceives to approach parliamentary representation when voting by different voting procedures, and controlling for the other aspects that surround the voting choice such as what is being voted on, is it truly possible to show how the choice of the voting procedure affects MEPs' parliamentary behaviour.

Although there is evidence that voting procedures matter when talking about the voting dynamics in the EP, one should make further efforts to really show how voting procedures influence MEPs' approach to parliamentary representation. It is necessary to build on the literature by showing how the very choice of the voting procedure and not the content of the voting occasion or who requested the roll call vote relates to MEPs' parliamentary behaviour. Other things constant are MEPs more likely to defect from the voting instructions of their EP party group when voting by roll call or not?

2.7 Summary

Representation is a fundamental concept of politics. Defined as an act on behalf and in the interests of another in relation to a third party, in a manner that is in some way responsive to the party or parties that are being represented and that implicates them in those actions (e.g., Brito Vieira and Runciman, 2008; Pitkin, 1967; Plotke, 1997; Powell, 2004), virtually all contemporary political decision-making is effectively undertaken by representatives of one type or another.

Looking at how elected representatives approach parliamentary representation in the EP is particularly relevant as it allows one to assess the extent to which MEPs' parliamentary behaviour can help remedy the perceived democratic deficit in the EU (e.g., Crombez, 2003; Follesdal and Hix, 2006; Hix and Marsh, 2011). Because the EP is the only directly-elected institution in the EU, MEPs still remain best placed to satisfy the crucial functions of responsiveness and accountability associated with democratic representation. As the European elections remain 'second-order', with limited ability to establish a meaningful electoral connection between national electorates and European-level policy-making (e.g., Hix and Marsh, 2011; Marsh, 2005; Schmitt, 2005), the EP must rely on MEPs' parliamentary behaviour to do so. Therefore, accounts of how MEPs approach representation in the EP are essential to evaluating the degree to which the institution can provide democratic input to the EU and help it fulfil the functions of democratic representation.

This is further compounded by the institutional developments the EP has lived through ever since its establishment. The establishment of direct elections to the EP in 1979 gave the institution a strong democratic mandate and subsequent reforms to the EU Treaties have continued to increase its importance. Collectively, MEPs are now able to enact legislation in a wide range of policy sectors as well as significantly influence the EU's budgetary process and scrutinize the composition of the European Commission. The EP's increasing importance within the EU makes it critical for scholars to understand the decision-making processes that occur within the institution.

Two Motivations for Representation and the EP

Representatives are largely shown to have two broad motivations for their acts of representation. On one hand, vote-maximizing behaviour describes them as self-interested actors whose main objective is to maximize their future votes and likelihood of electoral success (e.g., Breton, 1974; Downs, 1957; Fiorina, 1974, 1977; Mayhew, 1974; Stigler, 1971). It is the public's support that is perceived to be such

representatives' first and foremost concern, rather than their own ideological beliefs. As such, vote-maximizing agents are seen as highly flexible in their policy and voting positions, with the perceived preferences of their constituents dictating their own parliamentary behaviour. On the other hand, representatives have also been described as policy-maximizing agents who are first and foremost motivated by citizens' well-being and strive to maximize their influence on the policy-making process (e.g., Barber, 1984, Etzioni, 1988; Milyo, 2001; Mitchell, 2005; Sen, 1977). It is their own ideological beliefs that are the underlying factors that guide such representatives' behaviour by highlighting the courses of action that they perceive to yield the greatest possible benefits for the people they are supposed to represent. The policy preferences, as electorates see these, remain of secondary relevance.

Using these two motivations for representation as the theoretical guidance, and the principal-agent approach to explore which loyalties these might give rise to in the context of the EP (e.g., Franchina, 2001; Kassim and Menon, 2003; Vaubel, 2006), MEPs can be seen to have three more salient principals. It is the EP party groups who are able to influence MEPs' ability to further their political career in the EP and their policy-maximizing ambitions, while national electorates can influence MEPs' future electoral success and their vote-maximizing ambitions, and national parties' support is relevant for both vote-maximizing and policy-maximizing MEPs as national parties can help their representatives towards future electoral success as well as to have greater influence over the parliamentary decision-making process.

Empirical Interpretation of MEPs' Parliamentary Behaviour

Despite MEPs working within a rather unique political framework, having to balance multiple loyalties that operate on both national and supranational levels, empirical studies of MEPs' roll call voting data have reached on widespread consensus about the comparative relevance of MEPs' principals in guiding their voting behaviour.

National parties have been found to remain MEPs' primary principal as MEPs defect from the voting positions of their national party delegation less often than from the voting positions of their EP party group and national delegation (e.g., Coman, 2009; Hix et al., 2007; Lindstädt et al., 2011; Ringe, 2010; Thiem, 2007, 2009). At the same time, transnational party group affiliations have been shown to provide a secondary loyalty for MEPs by being more important than national affiliations for determining their behaviour (e.g., Hix and Noury, 2009; Hix et al., 2007; Roland, 2009). Moreover, scholars have found that the dominance of ideology-laden voting over nationality-laden

voting has been increasing over time (e.g., Hix and Noury, 2009; Hix et al., 2007), and that systematic variation linked to individual-level and contextual characteristics does exist in the extents of loyalty that different MEPs show to the voting positions of their parliamentary sub-groups (e.g., Farrell and Scully, 2007; Hix et al., 2007; Meserve et al., 2009).

Building on Existing Literature

Existing studies on how MEPs approach representation in the EP provide useful insight into the voting dynamics in the institution. However, there are opportunities to build on the existing literature and its understanding of MEPs' parliamentary behaviour by further addressing the recent changes to the EP's make-up and various aspects of complexity related to the institution. This can be done by focusing on post-2004 MEPs' voting behaviour and explaining how it varies in relation to the heterogeneity in the post-2004 parliaments and the variety of voting procedures used in the institution.

First, the existing empirical studies provide limited insight into whether our conventional wisdom on the comparative relevance of MEPs' three principals holds also in the aftermath of the recent changes to the EP's make-up. There is evidence that the addition of MEPs from the 2004/2007 accession countries adds considerable peculiarity to the institution; on the whole, these MEPs are more nationality-driven than MEPs elected from the pre-2004 EU member states (e.g., European Commission, 2007; European Election Study, 2012a; Farrell et al., 2011). Empirical analyses of MEPs' voting choices, however, focus predominantly on the pre-2004 era. The few existing studies that do incorporate data from the post-2004 parliaments are limited in that they focus on narrow time periods, tend to focus MEPs' loyalties to one or two principals, or are limited to small sub-sections of MEPs (Coman, 2009; Gabel and Hix, 2007; Hix and Noury, 2009; Mühlböck, 2012). Some aspects of the voting dynamics in the post-2004 parliaments, such as the voting behaviour of Bulgarian and Romanian MEPs or the potential differences in MEPs' voting behaviour in the Sixth and Seventh Parliaments, we know particularly little about. As a result, we need to improve our knowledge of how contemporary MEPs approach parliamentary representation in the EP, and whether the conventional wisdom of it holds in the post-2004 context.

Second, the post-2004 parliaments are also extremely heterogeneous in their make-up, both in terms of their individual members, as well as the principals these members face (e.g., European Commission, 2007, 2009; Farrell et al., 2011). It is vital to address how this diversity shapes how contemporary MEPs approach parliamentary

representation. Although scholars have addressed this topic (e.g., Farrell and Scully, 2007; Hix et al., 2005, 2007; Noury et al., 2002), existing studies remain largely restricted to assessing the relevance of a few characteristics at a time and have been almost universally conducted on MEPs' voting behaviour prior to the 2004/2007 EU enlargements. Consequently, there is an opportunity to add complexity to our understanding of the contemporary voting dynamics in the EP through multivariate accounts that control for the simultaneous relevance of the different types of potentially variation-inducing characteristics – individual-level characteristics that define who MEPs are as people and politicians as well as describe the way they interact with and relate to their parliamentary sub-groups, and contextual characteristics that highlight the situations in which MEPs need to make their voting choices – in shaping how post-2004 MEPs approach parliamentary representation. In doing so, the potential relevance of further characteristics such as the degree of importance an MEP assigns to the representation of his/her principals' interests and how much financial support his/her national party offers to its candidates' electoral campaigns.

Finally, the presence and extent of the voting procedure effect in the way MEPs approach parliamentary representation in the EP can be explored in further detail. Our existing empirical understanding of MEPs' voting behaviour relies predominantly on analyses of roll call voting (e.g., Coman, 2009; Hix and Noury, 2009; Hix et al., 2007). However, there is increasing evidence to suggest that the reliance on roll call voting occasions might reveal only a partial picture of MEPs' voting behaviour. Roll call votes offer a unique opportunity for interested actors to scrutinize individual MEPs' voting choices by virtue of the fact that they are the only occasions where MEPs' voting choices are recorded and publicized (European Parliament, 2012a). At the same time, roll call votes have been shown to systematically differ from non-roll call samples (e.g., Carrubba et al., 2008, 2009; Hoyland, 2010; Hug, 2010, 2012a; Thiem, 2006, 2008). Although there is evidence that voting procedures might matter, it is necessary now to really show how MEPs approach parliamentary representation is influenced by the voting procedure used by establishing explicit individual-level links between MEPs' voting-perception and the voting procedures used. One needs to show how the very choice of the voting procedure, and not the content of the voting occasion or who requested the vote to be taken by roll call, relates to MEP's parliamentary behaviour.

Chapter 3: Post-2004 Parliaments and Diversity

Existing studies on MEPs' voting behaviour offer useful insights into the voting dynamics in the EP. However, the literature has yet to deal with the recent changes to the EP's make-up in a comprehensive manner. My research addresses these limitations by looking at MEPs' voting behaviour in the post-2004 period. In particular, I focus on how variation in MEPs' voting behaviour may be explained by the heterogeneity of the post-2004 parliaments and the different voting procedures used in the EP.

This chapter highlights the broad objectives and approaches that guide the empirical analyses of the subsequent chapters. I start by setting out the general aim and guiding themes of this research. I then highlight the key research questions. Finally, I outline the operationalization of the core concepts in my study, as well as the methods and tools used to analyse the relationships in question.¹⁹

3.1 General Aim

The EP has undergone significant compositional changes in the last decade, namely the introduction of MEPs from 12 new EU member states as a result of the 2004/2007 EU enlargements. My research reflects on these developments and attempts to address the limitations in our understanding of the post-2004 voting dynamics in the EP. As a result, it provides a more comprehensive account of how contemporary MEPs approach parliamentary representation. To do so, I focus on MEPs' voting behaviour in the post-2004 era, while giving particular attention to how the heterogeneity in the composition of the post-2004 parliaments – both regards to its members and the contexts that they operate in – and the diversity of voting procedures used in the EP shape the way contemporary MEPs approach parliamentary representation.

Studying post-2004 MEPs' parliamentary behaviour, however, also provides a unique insight into how elected representatives approach parliamentary representation. While MPs in national legislatures face domestic geographical and partisan influences, the EP is the only legislature where directly-elected representatives need to balance both supranational and national loyalties, as well as the interests of three highly salient principals – their EP party group, national electorate, and national party – all of whom can affect their vote-maximizing and/or policy-maximizing ambitions. Studying voting choices in such a complex setting offers a unique opportunity to add another dimension

¹⁹ Detailed accounts of the research questions and methods are provided in respective empirical chapters.

to our understanding of elected representatives' behaviour; it allows us to assess how the presence of multiple loyalties operating on different levels influence the approach elected representatives take to parliamentary representation.

3.2 Guiding Themes

Before moving on to discuss the research questions and the operationalization of key concepts, it is necessary to highlight a couple of key themes that guide the empirical analyses associated with this project.

First, individual MEPs are the units of analysis throughout this thesis. Although pre-2004 MEPs' voting choices are also examined in Chapter 4 to provide context for interpreting voting dynamics in the post-2004 parliaments, MEPs who served in the EP between September 2004 and December 2010 are the central units of analysis in this research. Treating individual MEPs as the units of analysis is fundamental to the study of voting dynamics in the EP. The parliamentary sub-groups, although highly important within the institution, are still collections of individual MEPs and, as such, should not be treated as the primary focus of research into voting dynamics in the EP. Not only is it unnecessary given the availability of individual-level voting data, but also insufficient because there is considerable intra-group variation in how their members approach parliamentary representation as shown in Chapter 5. MEPs cast votes in the EP and their collective voting choices shape the institution's policy positions and legislation. As such, individual MEPs are the appropriate focal points for this research. Moreover, only by relying on MEPs as the units of analysis is it possible to isolate how individual-level diversity shapes their voting behaviour.

Second, the empirical analyses focus on MEPs' voting behaviour in the post-2004 era, which allows this research to address the limitations in our understanding of how contemporary MEPs approach parliamentary representation. Very few existing studies incorporate data from the post-2004 parliaments. Those that do focus only on a limited time period and pay little attention to the variation in different MEPs' voting choices, or are limited to small sub-sections of MEPs (Coman, 2009; Gabel and Hix, 2007; Hix and Noury, 2009; Mühlböck, 2012). As a result, we know little about how contemporary MEPs approach parliamentary representation and whether our traditional understanding of it holds in the post-2004 context. It is the post-2004 voting dynamics in the EP that are the ultimate focus of this research.

Finally, the concept of variation plays a particularly salient role in this thesis. Chapter 4 touches on over-time changes in MEPs' voting behaviour, while Chapter 5

looks at how diversity among post-2004 MEPs shapes their approach to parliamentary representation, and Chapter 6 focuses on how MEPs' voting choices are influenced by the voting procedures used in the EP. These analyses build well on the existing academic tradition that has shown MEPs' voting behaviour to systematically vary when voting by roll call (e.g., Bowler and Farrell, 1993; Farrell and Scully, 2007; Hix et al., 2007), while also indicating that a voting procedure effect might be present in their voting choices (e.g., Carrubba et al., 2008; Hoyland, 2010; Thiem, 2006). Moreover, treating variation as the central concept is particularly relevant as the post-2004 parliaments are very heterogeneous in their composition (e.g., European Commission, 2007; European Election Study, 2012a; Farrell et al., 2011). This approach allows me to respond to the recent changes in the EP's make-up and provide a comprehensive account of contemporary MEPs' parliamentary behaviour.

3.3 Research Questions

In order to provide a comprehensive understanding of how contemporary MEPs interpret their mandate, the following empirical chapters address several aspects of the voting dynamics in the post-2004 parliaments.

Chapter 4

Chapter 4 provides a general account of how relevant the different parliamentary sub-groups – EP party groups, national delegations, and national party delegations – are in guiding post-2004 MEPs' approach to parliamentary representation. Specifically, it focuses on the relative propensity of post-2004 MEPs to follow the voting positions of each of these three parliamentary sub-groups, and explores how this compares to that of pre-2004 MEPs. Therefore, Chapter 4 provides an empirical account of the overall voting dynamics in the EP and offers a useful framework which subsequent chapters' analyses of variation can build on. The major research questions explored in Chapter 4 are as follows:

RQ4.1: How likely are post-2004 MEPs to follow the voting positions of their EP party group, national delegation, and national party delegation?

RQ4.2: How does post-2004 MEPs' likelihood of following the voting positions of their EP party group, national delegation, and national party delegation fare in comparison with the corresponding voting behaviour of pre-2004 MEPs?

Chapter 5

Chapter 5 focuses on the heterogeneity in the EP, in an effort to explain how diversity shapes post-2004 MEPs' approach to representation in the EP. Specifically, the chapter looks at how post-2004 MEPs' relative propensity for following the voting positions of their EP party group, national delegation, and national party delegation is linked to (i) individual-level characteristics specific to MEPs, (ii) characteristics that describe their interactions with their parliamentary sub-groups, and (iii) contextual characteristics that describe the environments in which MEPs make their voting choices. Thus, Chapter 5 builds on the previous chapter's more general analysis and provides a more nuanced assessment of how diversity relates to post-2004 MEPs' parliamentary behaviour. The major research questions explored in Chapter 5 are as follows:

RQ5.1: How do the characteristics of post-2004 MEPs affect their likelihood of following the voting positions of their (i) EP party group, (ii) national delegation, and (iii) national party delegation?

RQ5.2: How do the characteristics associated with the interactions between post-2004 MEPs and their parliamentary sub-groups affect their likelihood of following the voting positions of their (i) EP party group, (ii) national delegation, and (iii) national party delegation?

RQ5.3: How does the context in which post-2004 MEPs make their voting decisions affect their likelihood of following the voting positions of their (i) EP party group, (ii) national delegation, and (iii) national party delegation?

Chapter 6

Finally, in Chapter 6, I explore another potential source of variation in the way MEPs carry out their duties in the EP: voting procedures. It looks at the potential presence and direction of a voting procedure effect within MEPs' voting-perception, assessing whether and how the approach that MEPs take to parliamentary representation varies in relation to whether they vote by roll call, show of hands, or electronically. Thus, Chapter 6 goes beyond the previous empirical chapters and their analyses of MEPs' roll call voting behaviour to establish an explicit empirical link between MEPs' voting behaviour and the voting procedure used. It looks at:

RQ6.1: Do voting procedures (voting by roll call, show of hands, electronically) affect MEPs' likelihood of defecting from the voting instructions of their EP party

group when these instructions are perceived not to be in the best interests of their national electorate?

RQ6.2: Do voting procedures (voting by roll call, show of hands, electronically) affect MEPs' likelihood of defecting from the voting instructions of their EP party group when these instructions conflict with the voting instructions of their national party?

3.4 Core Concepts and Their Measurements

The following empirical chapters make use of a variety of concepts to capture different aspects of post-2004 MEPs' parliamentary behaviour. While MEPs' voting behaviour serves as the dependent variable throughout this thesis, the explanatory variables vary across the different empirical chapters. They focus on time in Chapter 4, three distinct sets of individual-level and contextual characteristics in Chapter 5, and voting procedures in Chapter 6. The following sections highlight the core concepts used in this thesis.²⁰

3.4.1 Dependent Variable

The focal point of this study, and the dependent variable throughout this thesis, is an MEP's voting behaviour. In order to acknowledge the simultaneous presence of three salient principals whose loyalties MEPs need to balance and whose interests are represented in the EP by specific parliamentary sub-groups (e.g., British Broadcasting Corporation, 2010; Hix and Hoyland, 2011; Hix et al., 2007), the dependent variable also adopts three parallel forms. It is treated as an individual-level variable that characterizes an MEP's likelihood of following the voting positions of his/her (i) EP party group, (ii) national delegation, and (iii) national party delegation.

Chapters 4 and 5

For the purpose of Chapters 4 and 5, an MEP's voting behaviour is measured as the percentage of roll call voting occasions in the parliamentary term where he/she cast the modal voting choice within his/her (i) EP party group, (ii) national delegation, (iii) national party delegation, divided by the mean parliamentary voting unity in the voting occasions that he/she participated in.

²⁰ More detailed discussions of all dependent and explanatory variables are provided in the respective chapters.

$$\text{Voting Behaviour}_i = \left(\frac{\text{'No. Times Loyal to the Parliamentary Sub-Group'}_i}{\text{'No. Voting Occasions Participated In'}_i} \right) \times 100\% \div \text{'Mean Parliamentary Majority'}_i$$

The reliance on relative measures, rather than absolute percentages, is vital to account for the relative degrees of agreement that are present across the different voting occasions.²¹ It is widely noted that voting occasions with lower levels of parliamentary disagreement show MEPs to align with the voting positions of their parliamentary sub-groups to greater extents (e.g., Hix and Noury, 2009; Hix et al., 2007). As such, it is necessary to account for the fact that different MEPs may find it easier (or more difficult) to follow the voting positions of their parliamentary sub-groups by the virtue of the fact that they participate in voting occasions with higher (lower) levels of intra-parliamentary voting unity.²² The use of a relative measurement, therefore, allows me to make meaningful comparisons between MEPs' voting behaviour both within and across the parliamentary terms. The roll call voting records are obtained from the EP (2012b). An MEP's voting behaviour ranges from 0 to (but not including) 3, with higher values corresponding to his/her greater loyalty to his/her (i) EP party group, (ii) national delegation, and (iii) national party delegation.

Chapter 6

In Chapter 6, an MEP's voting behaviour is measured as his/her self-perceived likelihood of defecting from the voting instructions of his/her EP party group if the instructions are (i) not perceived to be in the best interests of his/her national electorate, (ii) conflict with the voting instructions received from his/her national party. These measurements are obtained from an original survey of MEPs who served in the EP as of 01/01/2011.²³ Measurements range from 1-4, with higher values indicating an MEP's greater likelihood of defecting from the voting instructions of his/her EP party group when facing either of the two voting dilemmas.

The reliance on survey data is necessary because individual MEPs' voting choices are recorded and publicized only for roll call votes. Therefore, it is impossible to compare MEPs' actual voting choices across the different voting procedures. An MEP survey, tailored to assess the potential presence and direction of the voting

²¹ Refer to pages 82-86 for further information on how MEPs' voting behaviour is measured, including a step-by-step overview.

²² The relative measurement rewards an MEP for showing loyalty to his/her (i) EP party group, (ii) national delegation, (iii) national party delegation in voting occasions that are more divisive.

²³ Refer to Chapter 6 for a detailed overview of the MEP survey.

procedure effect in how MEPs approach parliamentary representation, however, offers an ideal way of assessing how voting procedures influence MEPs' voting-perception.²⁴ It also allows me to control for the substance of the voting dilemma and the response options available for MEPs, leaving the voting procedure to vary. Moreover, it allows me to collect individual-level data. Therefore, the original MEP survey offers a useful addition to studies of voting dynamics in the EP, establishing an explicit link that shows how MEPs change their voting-perception as different voting procedures are used.

3.4.2. Explanatory Variables

The following empirical analyses make use of a number of different kinds of explanatory variables to explain post-2004 MEPs' parliamentary behaviour. These derive partly from the existing literature's insight into the voting dynamics in the EP, but also include other factors whose relevance has not yet been addressed.

Chapter 4

The main explanatory variable in Chapter 4 is time. Focusing on MEPs' overall voting behaviour across all roll call voting occasions in the post-2004 era and how these fare with their predecessors' voting choices, no other explanatory variable is required to differentiate between MEPs or the voting occasions. At the same time, the time series component of Chapter 4 – MEPs' voting behaviour during the different parliamentary terms from 1979 to 2010 – requires specifying time periods as explanatory variables. It is the European elections that lead to major changes to the EP's composition and to turnover in its membership.²⁵ As such, they provide natural cut-off points for looking at particular sets of MEPs' collective voting behaviour. Therefore, time is operationalized in Chapter 4 as a parliamentary term and it is a categorical measurement.

Chapter 5

In Chapter 5, three sets of characteristics are used as explanatory variables. The different sets of characteristics, which focus on how diversity shapes the way that post-2004 MEPs approach parliamentary representation, are chosen to collectively capture the salient individual-level and contextual differences among post-2004 MEPs and the contexts in which they operate.

²⁴ Given that survey data is obtained through self-reporting, robustness checks are carried out (refer to Chapter 6) to ensure the reliability of the findings.

²⁵ Changes to the EP membership also occur mid-term, but are limited to a few MEPs. For example, the current Seventh Parliament has incorporated 72 MEPs, as of September 2012, who served part of the parliamentary term (European Parliament, 2012c).

The three sets of explanatory characteristics describe (i) MEPs themselves, (ii) the way MEPs interact with and relate to their parliamentary sub-groups, and (iii) the contexts in which MEPs make their voting choices. For example, these explanatory characteristics include (i) MEPs' ideological beliefs, role and self-perceptions, (ii) frequencies by which MEPs receive voting instructions from their parliamentary sub-groups, and (iii) ideological diversity within the parliamentary sub-groups that MEPs belong to. The identified characteristics are relevant for understanding why different MEPs might approach parliamentary representation in different ways. They are linked to MEPs' evaluations of costs and benefits associated with following the preferences of their principal(s), potentially situating MEPs differently in the degrees of loyalty they show to the voting positions of their parliamentary sub-group(s).

The explanatory characteristics in Chapter 5 include factors identified by previous work as explanations for variation in MEPs' voting choices, as well as characteristics that have not yet been addressed in the literature. For example, scholars have shown that MEPs' political ambitions and career experience can be used to explain variation in how they approach parliamentary representation (e.g., Bowler and Farrell, 1993; Gherghina and Chiru, 2010; Meserve et al., 2009). Similarly, electoral rules – in particular, the reliance on open or closed party lists – have been shown to influence how sensitive MEPs are to rewarding and punishment powers of their national party and national electorate (e.g., Farrell and Scully, 2007, 2010; Hix, 2004; Messmer, 2004; Raunio, 2007). At the same time, the analysis also includes a number of additional characteristics that have not been previously addressed in the literature, such as the percentage of people in an MEP's home country that consider the EP to be an important institution or how much financial support his/her national party offers to its candidates.

Several data sources are employed to capture the explanatory characteristics used in Chapter 5. Whereas the measurements for the individual-level characteristics are obtained by combining data from recent MEP surveys and the 2009 European Election Study Candidate Survey (European Election Study, 2012a; Farrell et al., 2011), measurements for the contextual characteristics are obtained from Eurobarometer surveys, national electoral commissions, and the EP's own records (e.g., European Commission, 2003, 2005a, 2010; European Parliament, 2009b). Combining information from various sources is vital to comprehensively studying variation in post-2004 MEPs' approach to parliamentary representation.

Chapter 6

The key explanatory variable in Chapter 6 is the voting procedure. The EP uses four distinct voting procedures: voting by roll call, show of hands, electronically, and secret ballot (European Parliament, 2012a). Dichotomous variables for the first three types of procedures are included in the analysis, but voting by secret ballot is omitted.

The use of the secret ballot is extremely rare in the EP and it is of virtually identical nature to voting electronically. Neither voting procedure produces observable manifestations of MEPs' voting choices. While voting choices made by show of hands are essentially unobservable for scholars, they are visible to EP party groups' whips present in the plenary sessions. In contrast, voting choices made by secret ballot or electronic voting cannot be witnessed by others. As such, their secretive nature gives rise to similar considerations for MEPs when choosing how to act.

At the same time, the inclusion of the roll call voting procedure in the MEP survey is vital to assess the voting procedure effect despite MEPs' actual roll call voting choices being available for empirical analyses. Incorporating roll call and non-roll call voting into the MEP survey allows me to avoid problems with internal validity as measurements for MEPs' parliamentary behaviour across the different voting procedures, which are compared to assess for the presence and extent of the voting procedure effect, are obtained through identical means.

3.5 Addressing the Research Questions

Given that this thesis focuses on multiple aspects of post-2004 MEPs' parliamentary behaviour, the research design also makes use of a variety of research methods. The combination of research methods provides complementary evidence and strengthens the findings by allowing for robustness checks (e.g., Agresti and Finlay, 1986; Bryman, 2004; Burnham et al., 2004; Frankfort-Nachmias and Nachmias, 2007; McQueen and Knussen, 2002; Treiman, 2009). This section offers a summary of the research methods used in the empirical chapters to follow.

Chapter 4

Chapter 4 uses descriptive statistics and time series analysis on individual-level roll call voting data from 1979 to 2010 to provide an insight into post-2004 MEPs' comparative likelihood of following the voting positions of their EP party group, national delegation, and national party delegation, and how their voting behaviour fares with that of their predecessors.

First, to capture MEPs' overall voting behaviour, I calculate the mean values for MEPs' voting behaviour – their relative likelihood of following the voting positions of their (i) EP party group, (ii) national delegation, and (iii) national party delegation – within a parliamentary term from 1979 to 2010. The comparison of these mean values among post-2004 MEPs provides an initial test of how salient the three parliamentary sub-groups' voting positions are in post-2004 MEPs' own voting choices.

Second, a time series analysis of MEPs' mean likelihood of following the voting positions of their (i) EP party group, (ii) national delegation, and (iii) national party delegation is also possible through the comparison of these mean scores. This is the case since the mean values for MEPs' voting behaviour are specific to parliamentary terms. The comparison of MEPs' loyalties to their three parliamentary sub-groups across the different parliamentary terms, therefore, allows me to assess the changes that have happened both across the two post-2004 parliamentary terms as well as since 1979.

The reliance on the comparison of means test as the core method in Chapter 4 is highly useful. It makes use of rather simple measurements for MEPs' voting behaviour, allowing one to easily grasp the substantive meanings of the comparisons. The simplicity of the statistical test avoids unnecessarily complicating the analysis.

Chapter 5

Chapter 5 utilizes multivariate OLS regression analysis together with multilevel modelling on individual-level roll call voting data from 2004 to 2010 to analyse how the heterogeneity in the post-2004 parliaments shapes MEPs' voting behaviour.

The analytical interpretation of the findings in Chapter 5 derives from the multivariate OLS regression analysis where standard errors are clustered by the EP party groups and national delegations.²⁶ Given that variation in post-2004 MEPs likelihood of following the voting positions of their (i) EP party group, (ii) national delegation, and (iii) national party delegation is the subject of the chapter, three parallel multivariate OLS regression analyses are also conducted. This method is appropriate, because it fits the specific data well, addresses its hierarchical nature, and mitigates the sensitivity of the OLS regression towards the violations of assumptions regarding the data-generating process through the use of robust standard errors.²⁷ At the same time, it provides results that are relatively easy to interpret.

²⁶ Multilevel modelling is employed to check for the robustness of multivariate OLS regression findings.

²⁷ Refer to Chapter 5 and Appendix B for an in-depth overview of the robustness checks.

Chapter 6

Focusing on how MEPs' parliamentary behaviour is influenced by the choice of the voting procedure, Chapter 6 employs descriptive statistics on original individual-level MEP survey data on post-2009 MEPs' voting-perception when voting by roll call, show of hands, and electronically.

A combination of descriptive tests is used to obtain evidence about the potential presence and direction of the voting procedure effect. First, t-tests are employed to establish whether the differences in the way that MEPs approach parliamentary behaviour differ in statistically significant manner across the voting procedures.²⁸ In line with the inclusion of three distinct types of voting procedures that are focused on, t-tests are also used on the three possible combinations of these voting procedures. Finally, proportions of MEPs who identified no voting procedure effect and those who identified particular voting procedure effects in their voting-perception are compared to provide an individual-level indication of the nature and scope of the phenomena.

3.6 Methodological Contribution

The key methodological contribution of this research is the operationalization of an MEP's voting behaviour. Namely, in this research, an MEP's voting behaviour is treated as a relative measurement, where an MEP's likelihood of following the voting positions of his/her (i) EP party group, (ii) national delegation, and (iii) national party delegation is assessed against the mean parliamentary voting unity in the particular voting occasions that he/she participated in.²⁹ There are two important components to this particular operationalization of the dependent variable: the reliance on relative measurements and the way the denominators are calculated.

The reliance on relative measures to capture the degrees of loyalty that MEPs show to their parliamentary sub-groups is crucial to pooling together multiple MEPs into one study. Scholars have correctly highlighted that any group of MEPs will appear more cohesive and loyal to their parliamentary sub-groups in lopsided votes due to the fact that these have a greater propensity to give rise to weak intra-group disagreements than the more evenly split and divisive votes do (e.g., Hix and Noury, 2009; Hix et al., 2005). MEPs who participate in voting occasions where greater consensus is present across the EP are naturally more likely to appear loyal also to their parliamentary sub-groups, not because they inherently choose to be more loyal, but because they happen to

²⁸ For in-depth information on t-statistics, see for example Hanushek and Jackson (1977).

²⁹ Refer to pages 82-86 for the formula and step-by-step guide for calculating an MEP's voting behaviour.

participate in voting occasions where disloyalty and competing voting choices are less likely to be meaningful and desirable options. Therefore, one should reward MEPs for being loyal to their parliamentary sub-groups when taking part in more divisive and contested parliamentary voting occasions. Using relative, rather than absolute voting behaviour, allows one to do exactly that. Thus, it is unsurprising the more recent roll call analyses already do employ relative measures to estimate MEPs' voting behaviour (e.g., Hix and Noury, 2009; Hix et al., 2005).

Although the reliance on relative measurements is not new, scholars have adapted them in a manner that treats the denominator – i.e., mean parliamentary voting unity – as a constant for all units of analysis within a parliamentary term. However, this approach fails to account for the fact that voting occasions do not just differ across the parliamentary terms, they also differ *within* the parliamentary terms. Moreover, MEPs themselves choose to participate in different sets of voting occasions. In fact, the mean parliamentary voting unity within the sets of voting occasions that post-2004 MEPs included in this research participated in was unique for all post-2004 MEPs, with the standard deviation in the mean parliamentary voting unity within the voting occasions they took part in being 1%, and the difference between the lowest and highest mean parliamentary voting unity being as high as 27.5%.³⁰ Applying same denominator for MEPs' absolute voting behaviour when calculating their relative voting scores would provide a distorted picture of their parliamentary behaviour. Analysing an MEP's voting behaviour as an individual-level measurement that is relative to the mean parliamentary voting unity in the particular voting occasions that he/she participated in increases the accuracy of this study's interpretation of his/her voting behaviour.

To illustrate the benefits of using mean parliamentary voting unity in the voting occasions that an MEP actually participated in as the denominator, rather than the mean parliamentary unity across all parliamentary voting occasions in the parliamentary term, the following examples are useful. Looking at post-2009 MEPs' likelihood of following the voting positions of their national delegation, standard deviation in the differences of their relative voting behaviour – obtained by dividing the percentage of times they were loyal to their national delegation by (i) the mean parliamentary voting unity in the voting occasions that they participated, or (ii) the mean parliamentary voting unity across all voting occasions between September 2009 and December 2010 – is 0.02.³¹ In fact, there are 6 MEPs for whom approach (ii) shows relative voting behaviour of over 1

³⁰ The highest and lowest mean parliamentary unities were respectively 87.8% and 60.3%.

³¹ MEPs' mean likelihood of following the voting positions of their national delegation in the Seventh Parliament is 1.04, meaning that a standard deviation of 0.02 is noteworthy.

when approach (i) shows it to actually be under 1, while 8 MEPs for whom approach (ii) shows relative voting behaviour of under 1 when approach (i) shows it to actually be over 1. For example, the voting behaviour of Philippe Lamberts³² would be 0.99 – i.e., he would be treated as being less likely to follow the modal voting positions of his national delegation than MEPs are to follow the modal voting positions of the EP – when relying on the mean parliamentary majority between September 2009 and December 2010 as the denominator, but it would be 1.02 – i.e., he would be treated as being more likely to follow the modal voting positions of his national delegation than MEPs are to follow the modal voting positions of the EP – when the mean parliamentary majority only in voting occasions which he actually participated in is used as the denominator. These discrepancies highlight the need to update how an MEP’s voting behaviour is measured, particularly when using it in an individual-level analysis as this one where aggregation cannot mitigate it.

3.7 Alternative Approaches

The approach presented above is not the only way of studying the voting dynamics in the EP. For the purposes of this thesis, it is, however, more appropriate than the alternative approaches that are available and that have been used in the past.

Group-Level Measurements of Voting Behaviour

An important feature of this research is the commitment to studying individual-level voting dynamics in the post-2004 parliaments. With MEPs forming parliamentary sub-groups when entering the institution, a lot of existing literature, however, focuses on group-level interpretations of decision-making in the EP instead.

Group-level cohesion scores have frequently been used by roll call studies to deduct MEPs’ parliamentary behaviour from. Scholars have developed different ways of extracting the group-level measures, such as using Rice’s Index of Voting Likelihood, Attina’s Index of Agreement, and the Agreement Index by Hix et al. (e.g., Attina, 1990; Brzinski, 1995; Hix and Noury, 2009; Hix et al., 2005, 2007; Raunio, 1997; Rice, 1928). This approach, while useful to assess how united parliamentary sub-groups are, does not allow me to address voting dynamics in post-2004 parliaments in the desired depth.

³² Philippe Lamberts is an MEP who belongs to the Greens – European Free Alliance (G-EFA) group and was elected to the EP in 2009 from Belgium.

First, there is a theoretical problem associated with focusing on group-level measurements of voting behaviour in the EP. The parliamentary sub-groups, although highly important actors, are still collections of individual MEPs and, as such, should not be treated as the primary focus of research into the voting dynamics in the EP. MEPs cast votes in the EP and collectively shape the institution's decisions. As such, they are also the more appropriate focal points of any research into how elected representatives approach parliamentary representation in the EP.

Second, the reliance on group-level measurements for explaining voting dynamics in the EP does not account for intra-group differences in MEPs' voting behaviour. As shown in greater detail in Chapter 5, variation in how MEPs approach representation in the EP does exist and it is related to individual-level characteristics such as their identity. Only by relying on MEPs as the units of analysis, and using individual-level voting behaviour as the dependent variable, it is possible to assess how differences among MEPs shape the way they approach parliamentary representation.

NOMINATE Scaling Technique

Another common approach to studying MEPs' voting choices and parliamentary behaviour is the use of scaling methods (e.g., Hix and Noury, 2009; Hix et al., 2006, 2009).³³ One of the most popular scaling methods, originally developed by Keith Poole and Howard Rosenthal for studying voting behaviour in the US Congress, is known as NOMINATE Three-Step Estimation (NOMINATE).³⁴

NOMINATE is not used here since the method is largely a graphical representation of how MEPs' voting choices cluster together on a two-dimensional policy space. As a result, it is better suited for descriptive approaches and analyses of dimensionality in the parliamentary voting dynamics. Extracting the individual-level measures that characterize the relationships between MEPs and their parliamentary sub-groups in a manner that captures how diversity – individual-level and contextual – shapes the way MEPs approach parliamentary representation from such a display of voting behaviour is extremely challenging methodologically, while the NOMINATE procedure does not typically provide uncertainty estimates (such as standard errors and confidence intervals) that are required to assess the precision of its scores (e.g.,

³³ Scaling methods have also successfully been used for studying voting in the United Nations as well as in national parliaments (e.g., Rosenthal and Voeten, 2004; Schonhardt-Bailey, 2003; Voeten, 2000).

³⁴ See for example Poole and Rosenthal (1985, 1997). NOMINATE scaling method also has other specifications such as W-NOMINATE which is the non-dynamic version of it.

McElroy, 2007).³⁵ Moreover, the substantive meaning of these estimates is less clear because the interpretation of the two-dimensional policy space, and MEPs' voting choices on it, is largely subjective. This problem is exacerbated by the fact that this research incorporates MEPs and their voting choices over multiple parliamentary terms. Given that there are other statistical tests that (i) are appropriate to answer the research questions of interest, and (ii) provide findings that are considerably easier to interpret, the use of NOMINATE is not necessary or desirable.

It is of course not impossible to employ NOMINATE for analyses that focus on the degrees of loyalty MEPs show to their parliamentary sub-groups. One possible way of doing so would be to treat the dependent variable as the distance between an MEP's ideal point estimate and the average score of his/her parliamentary sub-group on a particular dimension. Such an approach, however, would be methodologically challenging, and its findings very difficult to interpret. Particularly so for the purpose of modelling variation in MEPs' voting behaviour.

Surveys and Interviews

Surveys have also been used to study how MEPs approach parliamentary representation (e.g., Bardi, 1987, 1989; Bowler and Farrell, 1993, 1999; Herman and van Schindelen, 1979), with the more recent efforts also providing data for this research (Comparative Candidates Survey, 2012; European Election Study, 2012a; Farrell et al., 2011). MEP survey data provides researchers with avenues for research on matters that could not be empirically tackled by relying on roll call votes alone. For example, it is invaluable to address the voting procedure effect in Chapter 6 and provide individual-level information for studying how diversity shapes MEPs' voting choices in Chapter 5.

Survey and interview data, however, also have their limitations, which limit their usage. First and foremost, their reliance on self-reporting and limited sample size, both of which are inherent features of any data collection exercise via elite surveys or interviews, is simply less suited to observing and analysing MEPs' voting behaviour during roll call voting occasions. Roll call votes are the only voting occasions where individual MEPs' voting choices are recorded and publicized (European Parliament, 2012a). Their availability allows one to study MEPs' actual objective voting choices across all roll call voting occasions. Within the context of roll call voting occasions, the reliance on MEPs' roll call voting choices to describe how they approach parliamentary

³⁵ Add-ons to the NOMINATE procedure are able to predict confidence intervals (Lewis and Poole, 2004). However, the precision of these estimates still remains inferior to those of standard errors and confidence intervals that can be produced for OLS regression and multilevel models.

representation ensures that no selection bias is introduced to the analysis. Therefore, combining roll call voting data and survey data offers the best basis for this research.

3.8 Summary

This research addresses various aspects of the parliamentary behaviour of post-2004 MEPs. It provides a more contemporary account of MEPs' voting behaviour by looking at the comparative loyalty that they show to the voting positions of their EP party group, national delegation, and national party delegation in the post-2004 era. It also looks at how diversity amongst MEPs, the contexts they operate in, and the voting procedures used in the EP, shapes MEPs' approach parliamentary representation. Specifically, the focus in this research is on explaining the individual-level voting behaviour of post-2004 MEPs, measured as an MEP's likelihood to follow the voting positions of his/her (i) EP party group, (ii) national delegation, and (iii) national party delegation for the purposes of Chapters 4 and 5, and as an MEP's likelihood to defect from the voting instructions of his/her EP party group in favour of his/her (i) national electorate or (ii) national party for the purposes of Chapter 6.

To explore these aspects of post-2004 MEPs' voting behaviour, the research design makes use of a variety of research methods. It uses descriptive statistics and time series analysis on MEPs' individual-level roll call voting data from 1979 to 2010, multivariate OLS regression alongside multilevel modelling on MEPs' individual-level roll call voting data from 2004 to 2010, and descriptive statistics on original individual-level MEP survey data from the Seventh Parliament. The reliance on a combination of data sources and research methods allows me to provide a dynamic addition to the studies of representation and voting behaviour in the EP, by tackling limitations in our current understanding of post-2004 MEPs' parliamentary behaviour. In doing so, this research adds further insight into the voting dynamics in the post-2004 parliaments.

Chapter 4: Comparative Relevance of MEPs' Principals

4.1 Introduction

The EP has undergone significant changes to its make-up over the last decade. In particular, the 2004/2007 EU enlargements have introduced MEPs from 12 new member states to the institution. These MEPs tend to be more nationality-driven in their role and self-perceptions than their counterparts from the pre-2004 EU member states (European Election Study, 2012a; Hix, Farrell and Scully, 2011), and they tend to face electorates who display higher levels of patriotism and assign the EP greater importance within the EU (European Commission, 2005a, 2005b, 2007). Although this does not necessarily mean that our traditional understanding of the voting dynamics in the EP does not hold in the post-2004 era, the changes do need to be accounted for. Only then can one assess contemporary MEPs' comparative loyalties to their principals and the degree of democratic input that the post-2004 EP instils into the EU through its members' approach to parliamentary representation.

In this chapter, I provide a general account of how post-2004 MEPs approach representation in the EP. Using descriptive statistics and time series analysis on MEPs' individual-level roll call voting data from September 1979 to December 2010, I explore (i) how likely post-2004 MEPs are to follow the voting positions of their EP party group, national delegation, and national party delegation, and (ii) how their likelihood of doing so relates to the corresponding voting choices of pre-2004 MEPs. In doing so, this chapter also acts as a useful framework for the subsequent chapters' analyses to build upon.

The findings suggest that (i) MEPs continue to follow the voting positions of their national party delegation more frequently than those of their EP party group and national delegation, and (ii) that voting along EP party group lines is still more frequent than voting along national delegation lines. However, the findings also show that (iii) the traditionally slow, yet gradual, increase in the dominance of ideology-laden voting over nationality-laden voting has not been present in the post-2004 era. Whereas MEPs continue to provide democratic input to the EU through their ideology-driven approach to parliamentary representation, the introduction of MEPs from the 2004/2007 accession countries to the EP has added volatility to the voting dynamics in the institution.

The chapter proceeds in the following manner. I start by highlighting the research questions tackled. I then set out my expectations and the operationalization of the research design. Finally, I employ descriptive statistics and time series analysis on

MEPs' roll call voting choices to assess how post-2004 MEPs approach representation in the EP, and how their voting behaviour corresponds to that of their predecessors.

4.2 Research Questions

Employing descriptive statistics and time series analysis on MEPs' individual-level roll call voting data from September 1979 to December 2010, I address the following more specific research questions in this chapter:

RQ4.1: How likely are post-2004 MEPs to follow the voting positions of their EP party group, national delegation, and national party delegation?

RQ4.2: How does post-2004 MEPs' likelihood of following the voting positions of their EP party group, national delegation, and national party delegation fare in comparison with the corresponding voting behaviour of pre-2004 MEPs?

4.3 Hypotheses

As shown in Chapter 2, the principal-agent approach highlights the simultaneous presence of three salient loyalties that MEPs face. EP party groups, national electorates, and national parties – represented by the parliamentary sub-groups of EP party groups, national delegations, and national party delegations (e.g., Hix and Hoyland, 2011; Hix et al., 2007) – have means to aid MEPs' vote-maximizing and/or policy-maximizing ambitions.

There are, however, clear discrepancies in the extent to which these principals, and the corresponding parliamentary sub-groups, are likely to succeed in promoting loyalty from their members in the post-2004 era.

Dominance of National Party Delegations' Voting Positions

First, national parties, and their corresponding national party delegations, remain least internally divisive. The EP party groups represent broad ideological viewpoints, but are required to be of a sufficiently transnational composition by the EP's rules of procedure (European Parliament, 2012a). At the same time, MEPs who belong to the same national party delegation share similar ideological beliefs, as well as allegiances and geographical ties to the very same national electorate. Moreover, the ideological homogeneity within national party delegations is likely to be greater than that within the EP party groups as the former are more narrowly defined in their ideological foundations (e.g., Bache et al., 2011; Bale, 2005; Earnshaw and Judge, 2003). National delegations, which incorporate MEPs with same national allegiance, are, however,

highly heterogeneous on ideological lines instead (e.g., European Parliament, 2012c). As a result, it is fair to expect that there will be a greater propensity for intra-group unity present within the least internally diverse national party delegations, with consensus being most natural and readily present in the EP among fellow national partisans.

The tendency of national party delegations to be the least internally divisive sub-groups in the EP is clearly visible in the Seventh Parliament. For example, the 2009 European elections in one of the smallest EU member states, Estonia, was contested by nine national parties and 32 independent candidates (Vabariigi Valimiskomisjon, 2012). In comparison, the full range of ideological beliefs in the EP is currently represented by only seven supranational party groups, with the least divisive group (as measured by the total number of member states represented), the European Conservatives and Reformists Group (ECR), incorporating MEPs from nine EU member states (European Parliament, 2012c). In addition to the EP's party system being ideologically less fragmented than the national party systems, the EP party groups are also more diverse than the national party delegations along national lines. At the same time, national delegations that do incorporate MEPs with the same national allegiance are very diverse ideologically. Even the smallest national delegation from Malta currently includes MEPs from both the left-wing social-democratic Partit Laburista and the centre-right Partit Nazzjonalista, whereas Luxembourg's national delegation covers an even wider spectrum by also including the green ideology in Les Versts and the liberal Parti Democratique. These examples highlight the highest internal cohesiveness that national parties, and national party delegations, enjoy among MEPs' principals and parliamentary sub-groups.

Further emphasising the tendency, national party delegations are also perceived to be the least ideologically diverse parliamentary sub-groups by MEPs themselves. The cumulated perceived distance between the self-placements of post-2004 MEPs and the mean positions of their supranational partisans, countrymen and women, and national partisans on the left-right and pro-anti integration spectrums are 3.1, 3.9, and 1.6, respectively (European Election Study, 2012a; Farrell et al., 2011).³⁶ Consequently, the ideological distance is roughly half for national partisans, compared to the other groups. Similarly, the cumulated standard deviation on the same spectrums within the EP party groups, national delegations, and national party delegations is also smallest for national party delegations; the standard deviations being 2.0, 3.3, and 1.6, respectively (European Election Study, 2012a; Farrell et al., 2011). Therefore, it is the national party delegations that are perceived to be the least diverse parliamentary sub-groups by post-

³⁶ Ideological positions on both spectrums are measured on scales from 1 to 10.

2004 MEPs, supporting the notion that consensus should be easiest to reach in the EP among national partisans.

Second, national party delegations should also be better able to reach intra-group agreements because they are smaller in size than the other parliamentary sub-groups. Whereas the EP party groups and national delegations included 101 and 27 MEPs on average at the start of the Seventh Parliament, the corresponding measurement for national party delegations was only 12 MEPs. Even if excluding MEPs who belonged to national party delegations with fewer than five members – since their likelihood of following the voting positions of their national party delegation are not calculated – their average size would still remain as low as 17 MEPs. Including only sub-sets of the EP party groups and national delegations, national party delegations have fewer opinions to mitigate when trying to reach a consensus. Moreover, MEPs may have formed ties with fellow national partisans prior to entering the EP, perhaps by working together within the national party organizations or domestic political spheres; such ties are less likely among fellow supranational partisans and members of national delegation who belong to different national parties. The absence of language barriers and the existence of personal connections should make interactions within national party delegations easier and more frequent, further facilitating cooperation that can result in their members' common voting behaviour.³⁷

Finally, it is the national parties who are the only principals able to significantly influence both MEPs' vote-maximizing and policy-maximizing ambitions. The detailed mechanisms behind this were highlighted in Chapter 2.

Given the expected ease of reaching intra-group unity, and the greater incentives that are present for MEPs to show loyalty to their national party, I expect the following:

H4.1.1: Post-2004 MEPs will follow the voting positions of their national party delegation more frequently than those of their EP party group and national delegation.

Supranational Partisanship over National Allegiances

Looking at post-2004 MEPs' characteristics, there is an underlying tendency for MEPs to engage in nationality-laden voting. By MEPs' own admission, it is the support of their national electorate rather than their EP party group that more MEPs require to

³⁷ MEPs are in fact in more frequent contacts with their fellow national partisans than they are with their fellow supranational partisans and MEPs from the same national delegation; respective mean scores being 1.5 / 1.7 / 1.6 on a scale from 1 'at least once a week' to 6 'no contact' (European Election Study, 2012a; Farrell et al., 2011).

fulfil their future aspirations and obtain desired political offices. Whereas 41.6% of post-2004 MEPs need the support of their national electorate to do so, only 11.5% of them require the support of their EP party group (European Election Study, 2012a; Farrell et al., 2011). Moreover, national allegiances appear to be more natural given post-2004 MEPs' self-perceived role and self-perceptions. When asked about their sense of identity, MEPs were considerably more likely to prioritize their national identity over the European identity; the proportions of MEPs who prioritize their national or European identity are 75.1% and 24.9%, respectively (European Election Study, 2012a; Farrell et al., 2011). As a result, it is unsurprising that MEPs perceived the representation of their constituents to be more important than the representation of European-wide interests; the mean scores being 4.3 and 3.7, respectively (European Election Study, 2012a; Farrell et al., 2011).³⁸ As national, rather than supranational, sentiments are more salient in post-2004 MEPs' role and self-perceptions as well as more useful to fulfil their future political aspirations, voting along national delegation lines appears more natural for these MEPs.

The underlying tendency towards nationality-laden voting among post-2004 MEPs is, however, hampered by the weak manifestations of costs and benefits that rise from following or discarding the preferences of one's national electorate and the voting positions of one's national delegation. In order for a national electorate to penalize or reward an MEP's voting behaviour, people must be aware of his/her voting choices. Only then can an MEP's future electoral success be linked with his/her actions in the EP. Although scholars have correctly pointed out that European-level politics has become more important at the European elections over the last decade (e.g., Ferrara and Weishaupt, 2004; Hobolt et al., 2009; Hooghe and Marks, 2009), these elections still remain dominated by voters who base their choices primarily on domestic preferences, and possess very little knowledge of how MEPs approach representation in the EP (e.g., Hix and Marsh, 2011; Marsh, 2005; Schmitt, 2005). For example, only 0.6% of the news stories in the EU during the three-week period preceding the 2009 European elections mentioned particular MEPs (European Election Study, 2012c).³⁹ With MEPs' parliamentary behaviour remaining virtually a non-issue at the European elections, it seems unlikely that they will be punished or rewarded for their voting choices. Thus, the

³⁸ Scale ranges from 1 'of little importance' to 5 'of great importance'.

³⁹ It is, therefore, unsurprising that European citizens also know very little about the EP and its members. For example, recent Eurobarometer surveys show that more than 10% of respondents had not heard of the EP, while most claim not to understand how the EU works, and a mere 24% consider to be informed of the parliamentary activities (European Commission, 2009, 2010).

vote-maximizing incentives for MEPs to prioritize nationality-driven voting and the voting positions of their national delegation remain weak.

At the same time, the policy-maximizing incentives that encourage MEPs to prioritize the voting positions of their EP party group are linked to clear manifestations of costs and benefits.⁴⁰ EP party groups have strong whips to check on their members' actions and, therefore, they have the necessary ability to reward/punish MEPs for their loyalty/disloyalty (e.g., Corbett et al., 2007; Hix et al., 2003, 2007). For example, MEPs have been shown to be rewarded by the EP party groups for their loyalty with desired rapporteurships (e.g., Hausemer, 2006), but also punished for disloyalty (e.g., Hix et al., 2007). This effectively means that an MEP's decision to follow or discard the voting instructions and preferences of his/her EP party group when voting by roll call is likely to be noticed and more likely to have real consequences.

There is also empirical evidence to support the tendency of post-2004 MEPs to be more sensitive to the punishment and reward powers of their EP party group. When asked about the frequency by which post-2004 MEPs received voting instructions from their EP party group and national delegation, the average scores were respectively 4.1 and 3.7; 54% of MEPs surveyed claimed to receive voting instructions from their EP party group on almost all voting occasions (European Election Study, 2012a; Farrell et al., 2011).⁴¹ As the frequency by which the EP party groups instruct their members how to vote is higher than the respective measure for national delegations, the EP party groups show a stronger vested interest in guiding their members' voting behaviour.

In summary, although there is strong pressure to push post-2004 MEPs towards nationality-laden voting, the electoral incentives for acting as vote-maximizing agents and supporting one's national electorate remain weak. At the same time, MEPs face meaningful incentives for adopting a policy-maximizing approach to representation and to prioritize the preferences of their EP party group. As a result, I expect the following:

H4.1.2: Post-2004 MEPs will be more likely to follow the voting positions of their EP party group than those of their national delegation.

Declining Dominance of Ideology-Laden Voting

As highlighted in Chapter 2, there is evidence to suggest that MEPs elected from the 2004/2007 accession countries are more likely to approach representation in the EP

⁴⁰ A more detailed account of the EP party groups' ability to use the incentives available for them to promote loyalty to their voting positions and policy preferences was presented in Chapter 2.

⁴¹ Scale ranges from 1 'never' to 5 'almost every vote'.

in a nationality-oriented manner. These MEPs tend to assign their national identity greater relevance in their self-determination and they tend to assign greater importance to the representation of their national electorate than MEPs elected from the pre-2004 EU member states (European Election Study, 2012a; Farrell et al., 2011). Moreover, MEPs elected from the 2004/2007 accession countries tend to face re-election to the EP (or elections to domestic political offices) in countries where the EP is seen to be more important and that have more to gain from the EP's budgetary powers as they are economically weaker, as well as belong to national parties with more centralized nomination rules than their counterparts elected from the pre-2004 EU member states (e.g., Comparative Candidates Survey, 2012; European Commission, 2007, 2008a, 2008b; European Parliament, 2009b; Farrell et al., 2011; International Monetary Fund, 2010). As such, it is reasonable to assume that MEPs elected from the 2004/2007 accession countries are more sensitive to the punishment powers of their national electorate than MEPs elected from the pre-2004 EU member states. The introduction of these MEPs to the EP is likely to mean that the post-2004 parliaments have higher levels of nationality-mindedness in their make-up than the pre-2004 parliaments did.

Although the 2004/2007 EU enlargements have led to an influx of more nationality-driven MEPs to the EP, it is important not to overstate the potential effect of the new MEPs on the overall voting dynamics in the institution. MEPs elected from the 2004/2007 accession countries constitute a minority of the EP's make-up, accounting for just 27% of mandates in the current Seventh Parliament (European Parliament, 2012c). Moreover, I expect ideology-laden voting to continue to dominate nationality-laden voting (H4.1.2). As a result, I expect the following:

H4.2: The degree to which post-2004 MEPs follow the voting positions of their EP party group more frequently than those of their national delegation will be smaller than it was for pre-2004 MEPs.

4.4 Variable Operationalization

4.4.1 Dependent Variable

The dependent variable in this chapter is an MEP's voting behaviour. Because MEPs face three salient principals when approaching representation in the EP, the dependent variable adopts three parallel forms. It is an MEP's likelihood of following the voting positions of his/her (i) EP party group, (ii) national delegation, or (iii)

national party delegation within a parliamentary term relative to the mean parliamentary voting unity in the voting occasions that he/she participated.

The dependent variable ranges from 0 to (but not including) 3. The higher the value, the more frequently an MEP follows the voting positions of his/her parliamentary sub-group in relation to the mean parliamentary voting unity in the voting occasions that he/she participated. Given that this is a relative measurement, a value of 1 occurs when the proportion of voting occasions that an MEP followed the voting positions of his/her parliamentary sub-group is exactly the same as the proportion of MEPs constituting the mean parliamentary voting unity in the voting occasions that he/she participated. Values greater than 1 occur when the proportion of voting occasions that an MEP follows the voting positions of his/her parliamentary sub-group is greater than the proportion of MEPs constituting the mean parliamentary voting unity in the voting occasions that he/she participates, and values lower than 1 indicate that an MEP is loyal to the modal voting positions within his/her parliamentary sub-group less frequently than what the mean parliamentary voting unity in the voting occasions that he/she participates is.

The values of the dependent variable are calculated using the following process:

- (i) MEPs and their roll call voting choices for each parliamentary term between 1979 and 2010 are entered into three identical datasets;
- (ii) EP party groups', national delegations', and national party delegations' voting positions are identified for all voting occasions as their members' modal voting choices;
- (iii) Dummy variables are created for every voting occasion – coded 1 if an MEP cast the same voting choice as his/her EP party group, national delegation, national party delegation, and 0 if an MEP cast a different voting choice than his/her EP party group, national delegation, national party delegation;
- (iv) The number of times an MEP was loyal to his/her EP party group, national delegation, national party delegation in a parliamentary term is multiplied by 100%, and divided by the number of voting occasions he/she took part in;
- (v) Parliamentary voting unities are calculated for all voting occasions as the percentages of MEPs that cast the modal voting choices in the EP;
- (vi) The mean parliamentary majorities are calculated for all MEPs as the mean parliamentary voting unities in the voting occasions that an MEP took part in;

- (vii) MEP's voting behaviour is obtained by dividing values from step (iv) by values from step (vi).

The final measure can be represented by the following equation:

$$\text{Voting Behaviour}_i = \left(\frac{\text{'No.Times Loyal to the Parliamentary Sub-Group'}_i}{\text{'No.Voting Occasions Participated In'}_i} \right) \times 100\% \div \text{'Mean Parliamentary Majority'}_i$$

This process results in a relative score – i.e., relative voting behaviour – that describe how likely an MEP is to follow the voting positions of his/her EP party group, national delegation, or national party delegation within a parliamentary term in relation to the mean parliamentary voting unity in the voting occasions he/she participated in.

As a useful by-product, if the calculation is stopped after step (iv), the resulting measure – i.e., absolute voting behaviour – is the absolute percentage score of how frequently an MEP is loyal to his/her EP party group, national delegation, or national party delegation.

Examples of Calculating an MEP's Voting Behaviour

To illustrate how MEPs' voting behaviour is calculated and highlight the utility of relying on a relative measurement, I provide examples of two hypothetical MEPs. First, imagine MEP 'A' participated in a total of 1000 voting occasions during a parliamentary term, and who was loyal to his/her EP party group on 750 of those voting occasions. If the mean parliamentary majority within the 1000 voting occasions that he/she participated in was 60%, we can substitute the abstract components of the equation with the specific numbers. The resulting value for the voting behaviour of that particular MEP would be calculated as follows:

$$\text{Relative Voting Behaviour}_A = \left(\frac{750}{1000} \right) \times 100\% \div 60\% = 1.25$$

Given that the resulting value is greater than 1, we would say that MEP 'A' exhibits more loyalty to his/her EP party group than what the mean parliamentary voting unity in the voting occasions that he/she participates in is.

Now, imagine that MEP 'B' also participated in a total of 1000 voting occasions during the parliamentary term, while being loyal to his/her EP party group on 750 of those voting occasions. However, the voting occasions that he/she participated in were less divisive with higher degrees of agreement across the EP and, therefore, the mean

parliamentary majority within those 1000 voting occasions was as high as 70% instead. In that case, the calculation of his/her voting behaviour provides a different outcome:

$$\text{Relative Voting Behaviour}_B = \left(\frac{750}{1000} \right) \times 100\% \div 70\% = 1.07$$

Given that the voting behaviour of 1.07 is above the value of 1 but less than 1.25, we would say that MEP ‘B’ also exhibits more loyalty to his/her EP party group than what the mean parliamentary voting unity in the voting occasions that he/she participates in is, but that he/she exhibits less loyalty to his/her EP party group than MEP ‘A’.

As highlighted above, it is also very easy to obtain absolute measurements for the two hypothetical MEPs on the basis of the same equation. One would simply not take into account the mean parliamentary majority within the voting occasions that an MEP participated in. In that case, what matters is only that both these MEPs participated in a total of 1000 voting occasions during a parliamentary term and were loyal to their EP party group on 750 of those voting occasions. Their absolute voting behaviour would be equal and calculated as follows:

$$\text{Absolute Voting Behaviour}_A = \left(\frac{750}{1000} \right) \times 100\% = 75\%$$

$$\text{Absolute Voting Behaviour}_B = \left(\frac{750}{1000} \right) \times 100\% = 75\%$$

These examples above illustrate that the updated way of measuring an MEP’s relative voting behaviour – i.e., allowing the denominator to vary not just across parliamentary terms, but also across MEPs within the same parliamentary term – offers a more responsive interpretation of the degree of loyalty that he/she shows to his/her parliamentary sub-group. It allows me to differentiate between the sets of voting occasions that MEPs participate in and to reward MEPs for showing loyalty in the voting occasions that are more contested and where intra-parliamentary consensus is weaker. Scholars highlight that taking part in ‘lopsided’ votes shows greater loyalty to parliamentary sub-groups than more evenly split and divisive votes (e.g., Hix and Noury, 2009; Hix et al., 2005). Therefore, it is important that an individual-level analysis of the voting dynamics in the EP incorporates differences in how easy MEPs find it to follow the voting positions of their parliamentary sub-groups by virtue of which voting occasions they participate in. The added flexibility – i.e., denominator in the equation being MEP-specific – allows accounting for the voting context that MEPs face, providing more dynamic and accurate measurements of their relative voting behaviour.

That being said, the dynamic nature of the also makes it more difficult to understand, and to compare the substantive meanings of MEPs’ relative voting

behaviour. As the relative equations have many moving parts specific to individual MEPs, it can be difficult to grasp the meaning of the difference of 0.18 (1.25-1.07) in voting behaviour. One has to be aware of the comparative mean parliamentary majority that is present in the voting occasions that the different MEPs participate in to assess the percentage frequency that MEPs follow the voting positions of their parliamentary sub-groups. In this sense, the added accuracy of how MEPs' relative voting behaviour is calculated comes at the expense of the measurement's substantive meaning being more difficult to grasp on its face-value.

Therefore, for ease of interpretation, I present both the relative and absolute measures in Chapter 4 and Chapter 5. The added accuracy of calculating MEPs' relative voting behaviour in the suggested manner highlights the utility of relying on relative measurements for the following analytical analyses. Yet, the added complexity for interpreting MEPs' relative voting behaviour in a comparative manner highlights the usefulness of providing absolute measurements for MEPs' voting behaviour as well. Although these are less accurate estimates for studies of MEPs' voting behaviour, they provide interpretations of how loyal MEPs are to their parliamentary sub-groups that are easy to understand and compare. As such, they provide useful complementary evidence for describing MEPs' comparative voting behaviour and how diversity shapes MEPs' loyalty to their parliamentary sub-groups.

Additional Considerations

First, an MEP's voting behaviour is calculated specific to a parliamentary term – i.e., if an MEP served in the EP between 2004 and 2010, his/her voting behaviour would be calculated separately for the Sixth and Seventh Parliaments. This allows for a more accurate interpretation of how an MEP approaches parliamentary representation. It is possible that noteworthy differences exist between MEPs in the different parliaments. For example, MEPs are likely to be less integrated to the EP's supranational ideals during their first term to the institution (e.g., Barber, 1984; Pitkin, 1981), and they often change their ideological beliefs as well as role and self-perceptions over time (e.g., Farrell et al., 2011). These changes need to be accounted for to better link MEPs' voting behaviour with potential changes in their personal circumstances. Moreover, the contextual environment can shape the situations in which an MEP makes his/her voting decisions. For example, some MEPs change their EP party groups. This was the case with the British Conservatives who left the European People's Party (EPP) and spearheaded the formation of the European Conservatives and Reformists (ECR) in

2009. At the same time, the level of importance that national electorates assign to the EP varies over time (e.g., European Commission, 2004, 2007, 2008a). By treating MEPs who have served in the EP during different parliamentary terms as separate cases, it is possible to control for such changes in various individual-level and contextual characteristics. The resulting measurements may be better able to explain differences among MEPs' voting behaviour within and across parliamentary terms.

Second, MEPs' voting behaviour is calculated on the basis of all their roll call voting choices within a parliamentary term. Sometimes, scholars limit the number of roll call voting occasions included in the analysis; Brzinski (1995) used random sampling and Attina (1990) used stratified sampling to limit their roll call samples. Yet, discarding some voting occasions is not ideal, because a full dataset allows researchers to study the empirical patterns with greatest accuracy. Omitting roll call votes is also unnecessary as all roll call votes taken in the EP are made available for public scrutiny. Therefore, the present analysis makes full use of all the available data; all roll call voting occasions and roll call voting choices are included in the analysis.

Finally, while all roll call votes are included in the analysis, some restrictions are made to the pool of MEPs used in this research. Voting behaviour is not calculated for MEPs who did not belong to parliamentary sub-groups with sufficiently clear group-like structures.⁴² For example, this relates to Non-Inscrit MEPs who are technically clustered together by the EP's rules of procedure, but who cannot be treated as an ideology-oriented group (European Parliament, 2012a). Also, MEPs who belonged to a national party delegation with fewer than five members are excluded as modal voting positions are not insightful in very small groups (e.g., Hix et al., 2007). Similarly, MEPs who participated in fewer than 20 voting occasions during a parliamentary term are omitted to avoid giving them equal weights to MEPs who participated in considerably more voting occasions.⁴³ As shown in Tables A.1-A.3 (Appendix A), these restrictions did not introduce any noteworthy selection bias.

4.4.2 Explanatory Variable

The explanatory variable in this chapter is time. It is operationalized as the parliamentary term, with all parliamentary terms from 1979 to 2010 included to the

⁴² This applies to an MEP's likelihood of following the voting positions of the particular parliamentary sub-group. For example, I did not calculate a Non-Inscrit MEP's likelihood of following the voting positions of his/her EP party group, but did calculate his/her likelihood of following the voting positions of his/her national delegation.

⁴³ This does not influence an MEP's potential inclusion as a case in a different parliamentary term, given that he/she participated in 20 or more voting occasions during it.

analysis. As such, the explanatory variable allows for a clustering of MEPs who served in the EP during the same parliamentary term when calculating their mean likelihood of following the voting positions of their (i) EP party group, (ii) national delegation, and (iii) national party delegation. With the exception of the Seventh Parliament, for which only MEPs who served in the EP from September 2009 to December 2010 are included, parliamentary terms incorporate all MEPs who served in the EP within the five-year period covered by the term.

Parliamentary terms are relied upon to distinguish between MEPs as they are the natural reference points for changes in the EP's make-up. Although a degree of change-over does also occur during the parliamentary terms, this remains marginal (European Parliament, 2012c). In reality, it is the European elections that meaningfully impact on the EP's composition. Therefore, treating the parliamentary terms as the differentiating factors between MEPs allows me to focus on sets of MEPs that are stable within themselves but considerably different from each other.

Limited Timeframe for the Seventh Parliament

Special attention must be given to using a shorter timeframe (from September 2009 to December 2010) to estimate MEPs' voting behaviour in the Seventh Parliament. As the post-2009 parliamentary term is still ongoing, it is not possible to rely on roll call voting data from its full five-year time period, as is done with the previous parliamentary terms, to evaluate post-2009 MEPs' voting behaviour. There are, however, reasons to expect that the estimates obtained on the basis of post-2009 MEPs' roll call voting choices within a shorter timeframe are appropriate for describing their overall voting behaviour.

First, there are no consistent theoretical reasons to expect that relying only on early-term behaviour provides systematically biased estimates. On one hand, one might argue that MEPs take a more nationality-driven approach to representation in the EP at the beginning of the parliamentary term. For example, with the turnover rate in the EP being around 50% (e.g., European Parliament, 2012c), a large number of first-time MEPs are introduced to the institution by the European elections. These MEPs have not been subjected to the unique supranational nature of the EP and its socializing effect (e.g., Archer, 1973; Mansbridge, 1990; Pitkin, 1981). As such, they are perhaps more likely to be nationality-driven when they start their mandates. On the other hand, one might also argue that MEPs take a more supranational approach to representation in the EP at the start of the parliamentary term. For example, with the upcoming European

elections being further away, MEPs are likely to be less sensitive to the punishment powers of their national party and national electorate (e.g., Lindstädt et al., 2011). Discarding the interests of their national party and national electorate is less likely remembered when distance to future elections is greater.

Second, a comparison between MEPs' voting behaviour at the start of the parliamentary term – i.e., from when they enter the EP up to December next year – and during the full parliamentary term confirms that estimates obtained from the shorter time period are consistent with the estimates obtained from the full parliamentary term. I compared MEPs' mean likelihood of following the voting positions of their EP party group, national delegation, and national party delegation within the two time periods in each of the six pre-2009 parliaments. The mean differences in MEPs' relative (absolute) voting behaviour between the two time periods are as low as 0.02 (1%), 0.01 (1%), and 0.02 (0%), respectively.⁴⁴ There is also no clear direction of bias present in the small discrepancies by which voting at the beginning of the parliamentary term and within the full parliamentary differ; MEPs followed the voting positions of their three sub-groups more/less likely at the beginning of the parliamentary term in case of 3/3, 3/3, and 2/4 of the 6 pre-2009 parliamentary terms, respectively. Moreover, paired t-tests for the two sets of measurements for MEPs' voting behaviour – i.e., at the beginning of the parliamentary term as opposed to across the parliamentary term – indicate that the differences in MEPs' relative (absolute) likelihood to follow the voting positions of their EP party group, national delegation, and national party delegation are not statistically significant.⁴⁵ Therefore, an empirical comparison of how loyal MEPs have been to their parliamentary sub-groups during the beginning of the parliamentary term and across the full corresponding parliamentary term suggests that the two periods of time provide consistent estimates for MEPs' voting behaviour.

Finally, relying on MEPs' voting choices within a part of the parliamentary term to estimate their voting behaviour within the corresponding parliamentary term is not a new approach. In fact, the few empirical studies that have already been conducted on post-2004 MEPs' voting behaviour rely on time periods of comparable length to that of September 2009 to December 2010 to study MEPs' behaviour within a single parliamentary term. For example, Coman (2009) studies MEPs' voting choices in the

⁴⁴ These differences constitute less than 1% of the range that the dependent variable of voting behaviour can take. Comparing the differences against the mean values for the corresponding voting behaviour, they constitute less than 2%, 1%, and 2% of those, respectively.

⁴⁵ The two-tailed p-values are 0.27 (0.18), 0.57 (0.90), and 0.72 (0.87) for MEPs' relative (absolute) likelihood to follow the voting positions of their EP party group, national delegation, and national party delegation, respectively.

Sixth Parliament by looking at the first 16 months of the parliamentary term, whereas Gabel and Hix (2007) looks at voting occasions between July 2004 and December 2005 to do so, and Hix and Noury (2009) focuses on roll call votes cast between July 2004 and December 2006. Thus, the reliance on a limited time period is an accepted practice.

4.5 Addressing the Research Questions

RQ4.1 is addressed by calculating and comparing post-2004 MEPs' mean likelihood of following the voting positions of their EP party group, national delegation, and national party delegation. This approach provides a comparative test to assess how salient the voting positions of the different parliamentary sub-groups are within post-2004 MEPs' approach to parliamentary representation in the EP.

RQ4.2 is answered by initially calculating MEPs' mean likelihood of following the voting positions of their EP party group, national delegation, and national party delegation during each parliamentary term between 1979 and 2010. These scores are then used in an over-time analysis that shows how the MEPs' voting behaviour has changed across the seven parliamentary terms.

Given the differences among MEPs elected from the 2004/2007 accession countries and MEPs elected from the pre-2004 EU member states (refer to Chapter 2), the previously highlighted procedures are also carried out separately on the two sub-samples of post-2004 MEPs for the Sixth and Seventh Parliaments. Measuring and comparing the mean voting behaviour of MEPs elected from the 2004/2007 accession countries and from the pre-2004 EU member states provides an additional insight into how post-2004 MEPs approach representation in the EP, and sheds light on how the 2004 and 2007 EU enlargements have influenced the voting dynamics in the EP.

4.6 Findings

The findings indicate that post-2004 MEPs continue to provide democratic input to the EU by prioritizing ideology-laden voting in their parliamentary behaviour, a conclusion that supports the theoretical expectations as set out in H4.1.1 and H4.1.2. I also find that the 2004/2007 EU enlargements have influenced, but not fundamentally altered, the voting dynamics in the EP by adding volatility. Whereas H4.2 is supported in the Seventh Parliament, it is not in the Sixth Parliament.

Tables A.4-A.5 (Appendix A) offer descriptive information about MEPs' mean likelihood of following the voting positions of their EP party group, national delegation, and national party delegation within each parliamentary term between 1979 and 2010.

4.6.1 Dominance of National Party Delegations' Voting Positions

The comparison of post-2004 MEPs' relative and absolute likelihood of following the voting positions of their EP party group, national delegation, and national party delegation indicates that national party delegations continue to command the greatest degree of loyalty from their members; thus, supporting H4.1.1.

The comparison is shown in Figures 4.1a and 4.1b. Figure 4.1a displays post-2004 MEPs' mean relative likelihood of following the voting positions of their different parliamentary sub-groups (x-axis) as their 'Relative Voting Behaviour' (y-axis), while Figure 4.1b displays post-2004 MEPs' mean absolute voting behaviour instead on the y-axis. Blue columns correspond to the full population of post-2004 MEPs (2004-2010), red columns relate to MEPs who served in the Sixth Parliament (2004-2009), and green columns refer to MEPs who served in the Seventh Parliament (2009-2010).

Figure 4.1a Post-2004 MEPs' Mean Relative Voting Behaviour

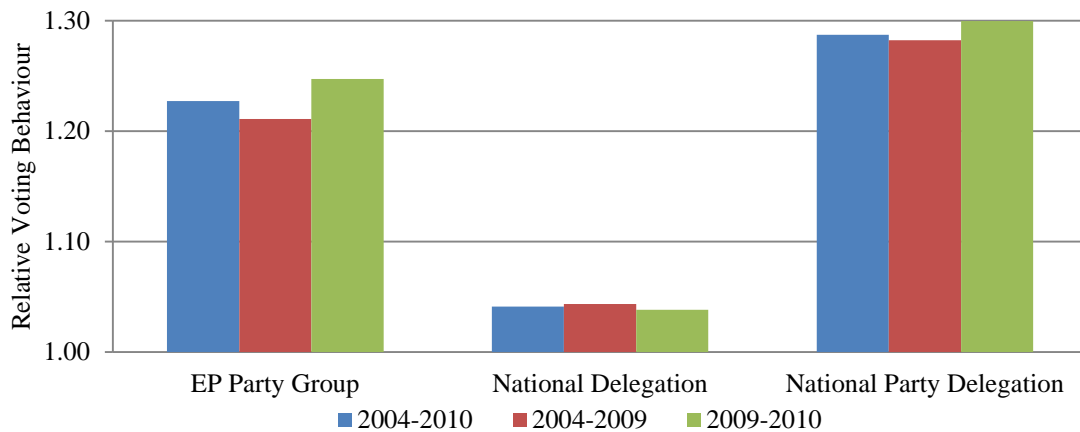
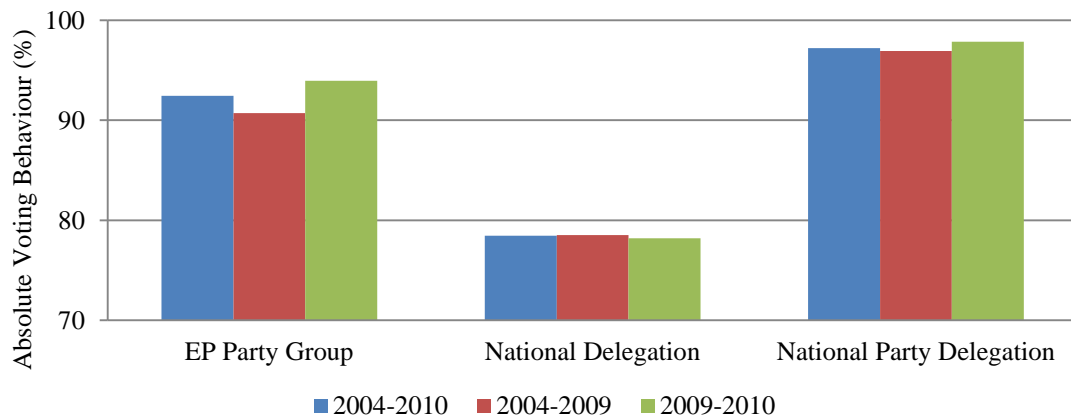


Figure 4.1b Post-2004 MEPs' Mean Absolute Voting Behaviour



Figures 4.1a and 4.1b suggest that, out of the three parliamentary sub-groups, national party delegations enjoy the highest degrees of loyalty from their members in the post-2004 era. This is very much in line with the theoretical expectations and the conventional wisdom on how MEPs approach parliamentary representation (e.g., Coman, 2009; Hix et al., 2007; Lindstädt et al., 2011; Ringe, 2010; Thiem, 2007, 2009). It is also visible when looking at either post-2004 MEPs' mean relative or absolute voting behaviour. The mean relative frequencies by which post-2004 MEPs followed the voting positions of their national party delegation, EP party group, and national delegation are 1.29, 1.23, and 1.04, respectively. If the mean parliamentary voting unity during the voting occasions that post-2004 MEPs participated in is excluded, these relative scores correspond to post-2004 MEPs following the voting positions of their national party delegation, EP party group, and national delegation on average for 97.2%, 92.4%, and 78.4% of the roll call voting occasions they participated in, respectively. Thus, national party delegations command an extremely high degree of loyalty from their members, noticeably exceeding the respective measurements for the EP party groups and national delegations.

The dominance of national party delegations' voting positions is particularly easy to see if we compare the percentage of post-2004 MEPs who most frequently followed the voting positions of their national party delegation, EP party group, or national delegation. Among post-2004 MEPs for whom the frequencies for following all three parliamentary sub-groups' voting positions can be calculated, the percentages are 91%, 8%, and 1%, respectively. Thus, post-2004 MEPs have continued to follow the voting positions of their national party delegation more frequently than those of their other parliamentary sub-groups.

This tendency is also clearly visible also in both post-2004 parliamentary terms. The mean relative scores (absolute scores given in parentheses) for MEPs' likelihood of following the voting positions of their national party delegation, EP party group, and national delegation are 1.28 (96.9%), 1.21 (90.7%), and 1.04 (78.5%) in the Sixth Parliament, and 1.30 (97.8%), 1.25 (93.9%), and 1.04 (78.2%) in the Seventh Parliament. Therefore, MEPs followed the voting positions of their national party delegation most frequently in both post-2004 parliamentary terms.

MEPs: 2004/2007 Accession Countries and the Pre-2004 EU Member States

To complement the analysis of post-2004 MEPs' likelihood of showing loyalty to their EP party group, national delegation, and national party delegation, the sample of

post-2004 MEPs was split between MEPs elected from the 2004/2007 accession countries and MEPs elected from the pre-2004 EU member states.

Figure 4.2 displays the mean relative likelihood of MEPs elected from the 2004/2007 accession countries and MEPs elected from the pre-2004 EU member states to follow the voting positions of their different parliamentary sub-groups (separated on the x-axis) on the y-axis as their ‘Relative Voting Behaviour’. Blue columns refer to the full population of post-2004 MEPs (2004-2010), red columns correspond to MEPs who served in the Sixth Parliament (2004-2009), and green columns relate to MEPs who served in the Seventh Parliament (2009-2010).

Figure 4.2 Post-2004 MEPs’ Mean Relative Voting Behaviour by Split Samples

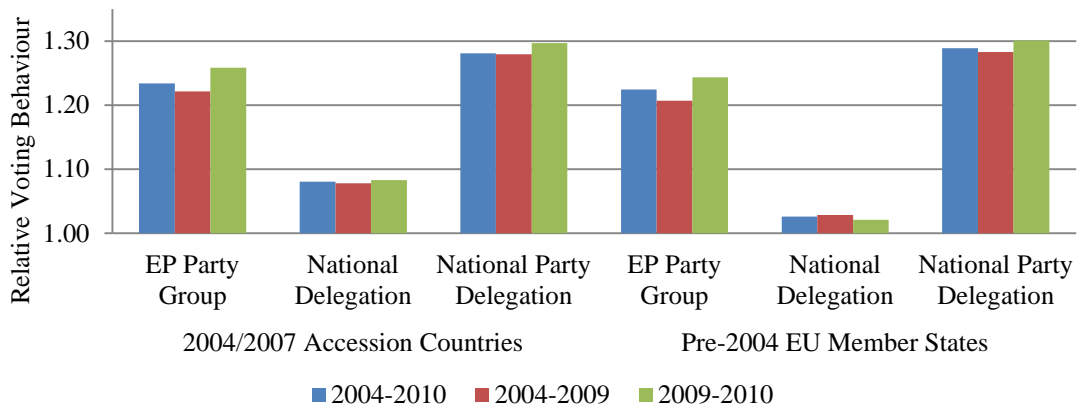


Figure 4.2 indicates that post-2004 MEPs’ greater likelihood of following the voting positions of their national party delegation is not restricted to MEPs elected from the 2004/2007 accession countries or MEPs elected from the pre-2004 EU member states. The figures for the mean relative likelihood of all post-2004 MEPs elected from the 2004/2007 accession countries to follow the voting positions of their national party delegation, EP party group, and national delegation are 1.28, 1.23, and 1.08, whereas the respective measurements for all post-2004 MEPs elected from the pre-2004 EU member states are 1.29, 1.22, and 1.03. Excluding the mean parliamentary voting unity during the voting occasions that MEPs participated in, these relative scores correspond to mean frequencies of 97.2%, 93.2%, and 81.4% for MEPs elected from the 2004/2007 accession countries and 97.2%, 92.1%, and 77.3% for MEPs elected from the pre-2004 EU member states. Thus, both sub-sets of post-2004 MEPs clearly followed the voting positions of their national party delegation more frequently than those of their EP party

group and national delegation. Moreover, they did so in both the Sixth Parliament as well as in the Seventh Parliament.

MEPs: Post-2004 vs. Pre-2004

The over-time analysis of how post-2004 MEPs' likelihood of following the voting positions of their EP party group, national delegation, and national party delegation corresponds to pre-2004 MEPs' voting behaviour adds useful context.

Figure 4.3 shows how the mean likelihood of MEPs to follow the voting positions of their three parliamentary sub-groups has changed across the parliamentary terms between 1979 and 2010. The x-axis specifies the parliamentary term, and the y-axis displays MEPs mean relative voting behaviour for the parliamentary term as 'Relative Voting Behaviour'. Green, blue, and red lines correspond to MEPs' mean likelihood of following the voting positions of their national party delegation, EP party group, and national delegation, respectively.

Figure 4.3 MEPs' Mean Relative Voting Behaviour by Parliamentary Terms

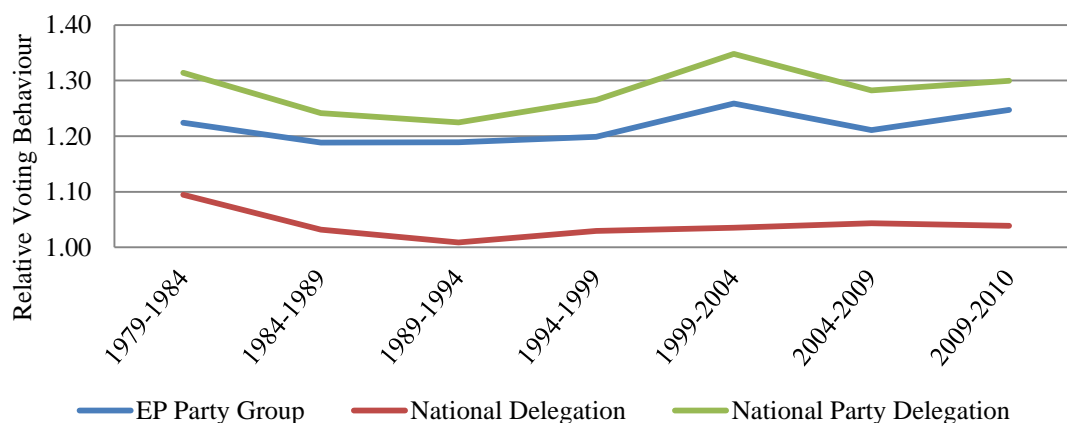


Figure 4.3 highlights that post-2004 MEPs, on average, most frequently follow the voting positions of their national party delegation in a manner that is consistent with the behaviour of pre-2004 MEPs. Looking at MEPs' voting behaviour from 1979 to 2010, national party delegations' voting positions are always the most frequently followed ones. The weakest dominance of national party delegations' voting positions in their members' voting behaviour occurred in the Third Parliament (1989-1994); MEPs' mean relative likelihood of following the voting positions of their national party delegation, EP party group, and national delegation was 1.22, 1.19, and 1.01. In contrast, the greatest dominance of national party delegations' voting positions in their

members' voting behaviour occurred in the Fifth Parliament (1999-2004), where MEPs' mean relative likelihood of following the voting positions of their national party delegation, EP party group, and national delegation was 1.35, 1.26, and 1.04. Finally, the respective measurements were 1.28, 1.21, and 1.04 for the Sixth Parliament, and 1.30, 1.25, and 1.04 in the Seventh Parliament. Therefore, although MEPs' comparative voting behaviour has fluctuated over time, national party delegations have consistently enjoyed greatest voting loyalty from their members between 1979 and 2010.

The greatest loyalty being shown to the national party delegations' voting positions is also present when comparing all post-2004 MEPs' voting behaviour to that of their predecessors. Pre-2004 MEPs' mean scores for the relative likelihood (absolute scores given in parentheses) of following the voting positions of their national party delegation, EP party group, and national delegation are 1.28 (95.7%), 1.21 (90.8%), and 1.04 (77.9%), respectively. The corresponding measurements are 1.29 (97.2%), 1.22 (92.4%), and 1.04 (78.4%) for post-2004 MEPs, respectively. In this sense, post-2004 MEPs' voting behaviour follows the empirical tendencies present in the pre-2004 era – i.e., national party delegations enjoy the highest rates of loyalty from their members.

However, Figure 4.3 also highlights that the 2004/2007 EU enlargements had some impact on MEPs' likelihood of following the voting positions of their national party delegation. Whereas national party delegations' voting positions were the most frequently followed ones in both the Sixth and Seventh Parliament, the two parliamentary terms witnessed contrasting developments. Comparing MEPs' voting behaviour in the Fifth and Sixth Parliaments, there is a decline in their mean relative (absolute) likelihood of following the voting positions of their national party delegation; -0.07 (-0.1%). By contrast, comparing MEPs' voting behaviour in the Sixth and Seventh Parliaments, there is an increase in their mean relative (absolute) likelihood of following the voting positions of their national party delegation; 0.02 (1.1%). The Sixth Parliament (immediately following the 2004 EU enlargement) witnessed the sharpest decline in MEPs' mean likelihood of following the voting positions of their national party delegation since 1979. This also reversed the increasing trend present since 1994. However, the decline disappeared again in the Seventh Parliament, indicating that there is some instability in the voting behaviour of post-2004 MEPs.

4.6.2 EP Party Groups' Voting Positions versus National Delegations'

The previous section shows that post-2004 MEPs continue to hold their primary loyalty to their national party delegation. In addition, however, I find that there is also a

clearly defined secondary loyalty present in post-2004 MEPs' parliamentary behaviour. The comparison of post-2004 MEPs' likelihood of following the voting positions of their EP party group versus those of their national delegation highlights the continuing dominance of supranational partisanship over national allegiance in guiding MEPs' voting choices. The comparison, presented in Figures 4.1a and 4.1b (page 91), supports the theoretical expectations set out in H4.1.2.

First, it is apparent from Figures 4.1a and 4.1b that post-2004 MEPs continue to follow the voting positions of their EP party group more frequently than those of their national delegation. Thus, the EP party groups tend to enjoy higher levels of intra-group unity. This is very much in line with the expectations and the conventional wisdom on how MEPs approach parliamentary representation (e.g., Hix and Noury, 2009; Hix et al., 2007; Roland, 2009). The empirical tendency is also visible when looking at both relative and absolute measures of post-2004 MEPs' voting behaviour. The relative frequencies by which post-2004 MEPs follow their EP party group versus their national delegation are 1.23 and 1.04, respectively. Similarly, the absolute frequencies indicate that post-2004 MEPs follow the voting positions of their EP party group and national delegation, on average, for 92.4% and 78.4% of the voting occasions. Therefore, it is the EP party groups that continue to better overcome their internal divisiveness in the post-2004 era than national delegations.

Second, this pattern is visible in both post-2004 parliamentary terms (Figures 4.1a and 4.1b). Whereas the results for MEPs' mean relative likelihood (absolute given in parentheses) of following the voting positions of their EP party group and national delegation are 1.21 (90.7%) and 1.04 (78.5%) in the Sixth Parliament, the respective scores are 1.25 (93.9%) and 1.04 (78.2%) in the Seventh Parliament. Consequently, both post-2004 parliamentary terms are characterized by MEPs showing a higher degree of loyalty to their EP party group than their national delegation.

Finally, post-2004 MEPs' stronger ties to their EP party group are particularly easy to see when comparing the how many post-2004 MEPs showed greater loyalty to one versus the other. Among 1663 MEPs for whom their likelihood of following both the voting positions of their EP party group and those of their national delegation was calculated, 1461 (88%) followed the former more frequently. There are no discernible patterns among the exceptional MEPs either – i.e., MEPs who follow the voting positions of their national delegation more often than those of their EP party group. These MEPs belong to a range of EP party groups and national delegations, although there is a tendency to belong to the larger groups as one would expect. For example, in

the Sixth Parliament, 64 MEPs were members of the EPP-ED and 46 of the Party of European Socialists (PES), while only one MEP belonged to The Greens – European Free Alliance (G-EFA), and seven to the Independence/Democracy (IND/DEM). In terms of their country of origin, 50 MEPs were elected from France and 30 from Poland, whereas only one from Estonia. On the whole, MEPs who more frequently follow the voting positions of their national delegation than those of their EP party group follow an expected spread across the parliamentary sub-groups.

MEPs: 2004/2007 Accession Countries and the Pre-2004 EU Member States

A comparison of MEPs elected from the 2004/2007 accession countries and MEPs elected from the pre-2004 EU member states (Figure 4.2) indicates that the dominance of supranational partisanship over national allegiance is present across both groups of post-2004 MEPs.

The mean relative (absolute) likelihood that post-2004 MEPs from the 2004/2007 accession countries follow the voting positions of their EP party group versus those of their national delegation are 1.26 (93.2%) and 1.08 (92.1%), whereas the respective measurements for post-2004 MEPs from pre-2004 EU member states are 1.22 (92.1%) and 1.03 (77.3%). Moreover, Figure 4.2 indicates that both sub-sets of post-2004 MEPs were more likely to follow the voting positions of their EP party group in both the Sixth and Seventh Parliaments.

MEPs: Post-2004 vs. Pre-2004 MEPs

The over-time analysis of MEPs' voting behaviour (Figure 4.3) shows the EP party groups' ability to command greater voting unity from their members than national delegations are able to enjoy is not unique to the post-2004 era.

First, an MEP's likelihood of following the voting positions of his/her national delegation is considerably lower than the likelihood of following his/her EP party group for all parliamentary terms between 1979 and 2010. The weakest dominance of supranational partisanship over national allegiance occurred in the First Parliament (1979-1984), where MEPs' mean relative (absolute) likelihood of following their EP party group and national delegation were 1.22 (87.4%) and 1.09 (78%), respectively. In the Fifth Parliament (1999-2004), which saw the greatest dominance of ideology-laden voting, the relative likelihood were 1.26 (90.5%) and 1.04 (78%) instead. Bearing this in mind, the difference in MEPs' mean likelihood of following the voting positions of their EP party group and national delegation was 0.21 (12.5%) in the Sixth Parliament

and 0.21 (15.7%) in the Seventh Parliament. Thus, post-2004 MEPs' propensity to follow their EP party group more frequently than their national delegation is consistent with the empirical tendencies of the pre-2004 era.

Second, this pattern is unsurprisingly also present when looking at all post-2004 MEPs, as opposed to all pre-2004 MEPs. Whereas pre-2004 MEPs' mean relative (absolute) likelihood of following the voting positions of their EP party group and national delegation were 1.21 (90.8%) and 1.04 (77.9%), these measurements for post-2004 MEPs are 1.22 (92.4%) and 1.04 (78.4%), respectively.

Finally, Figure 4.3 also highlights the presence of volatility in MEPs' likelihood of following the voting positions of these two parliamentary sub-groups in the post-2004 era. Whereas the EP party groups enjoyed weaker loyalties from their members in the Sixth Parliament compared to the Fifth Parliament, they enjoyed greater loyalties in the Seventh Parliament compared to the Sixth Parliament. National delegations, on the other hand, enjoyed greater loyalties from their members in the Sixth Parliament compared to the Fifth Parliament, but weaker loyalties in the Seventh Parliament compared to the Sixth Parliament. These developments are addressed in greater detail in the following section.

4.6.3 Changing Dominance of Ideology-Laden Voting

The previous analysis, among else, indicates that the post-2004 parliaments are characterized by volatility in MEPs' likelihood of following the voting positions of their EP party group versus those of their national delegation. As the former operate around European interests and the latter around nationality, MEPs' comparative loyalty to these parliamentary sub-groups offers useful insight into the extent to which MEPs approach representation in the EP in a supranational manner. With the European elections continuing to offer little in the way of support to the EU's functions of responsiveness and accountability (e.g., Hix and Marsh, 2011; Marsh, 2005; Schmitt, 2005), it is vital that MEPs continue to prioritize ideology-laden voting, as opposed to nationality-laden voting, for the post-2004 EP to provide democratic input to the organization.

Although I find evidence to support H4.1.2, an over-time look at this aspect of MEPs' voting behaviour suggests that the dominance of ideology-laden voting is not always clear-cut in the post-2004 era. In this section, I provide a brief introduction to the over-time trend, followed by an in-depth analysis of MEPs' voting behaviour in the Sixth and Seventh Parliaments.

In order to highlight the over-time changes in MEPs' voting behaviour, I calculate the difference between MEPs' mean likelihood of following the voting positions of their EP party group and national delegation for all parliamentary terms between September 1979 and December 2010. The resulting measurement, called the effect size, is presented in Figures 4.4a and 4.4b for all parliamentary terms since 1979. Figure 4.4a displays the relative effect size – i.e., based on MEPs' relative voting behaviour – on y-axis for all parliamentary terms (x-axis). Figure 4.4b displays the absolute effect size – i.e., based on MEPs' absolute voting behaviour – on y-axis for all parliamentary terms (x-axis) instead.

Figure 4.4a Relative Effect Size by Parliamentary Terms

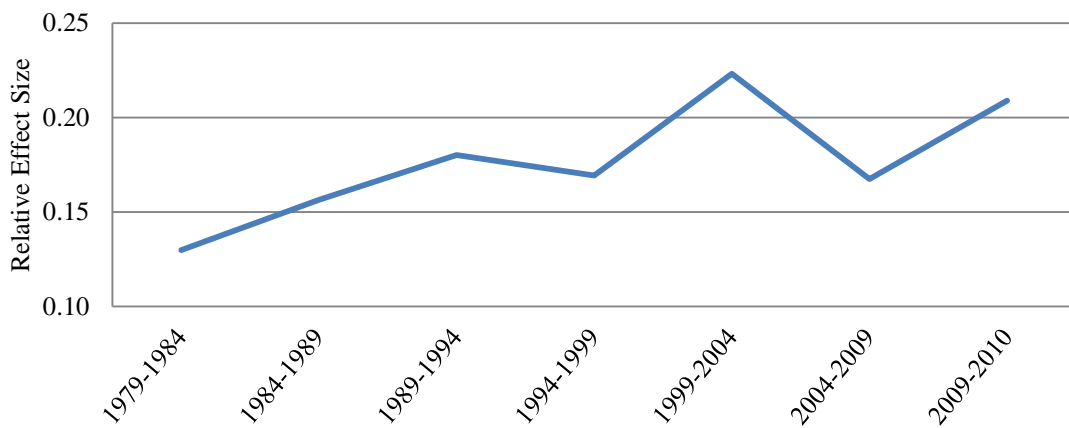
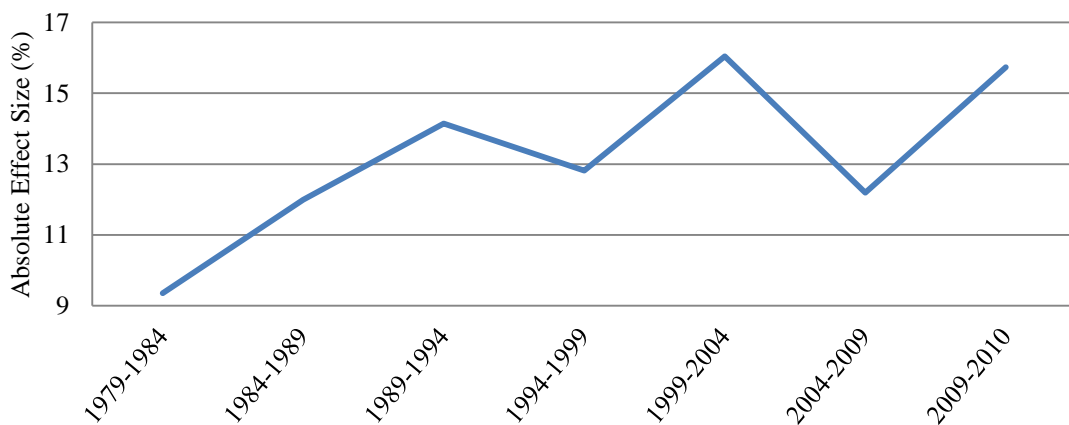


Figure 4.4b Absolute Effect Size by Parliamentary Terms



The comparison of post-2004 and pre-2004 MEPs highlights that the increasing dominance of ideology-laden voting that characterized the pre-2004 era does not appear to be present after 2004. Rather, there is a sharp decline in the effect size after the Fifth Parliament. Whereas the relative (absolute) effect size is 0.22 (16.0%) among MEPs who served in the EP from 1999 to 2004, the effect size declined to 0.19 (14.0%) among

all post-2004 MEPs. With the exception of the Fourth Parliament, where the dominance of ideology-laden voting was also smaller than in the preceding Third Parliament, the frequency with which MEPs follow voting positions of their EP party group more often than those of their national delegation has been steadily increasing since 1979.

Figures 4.4a and 4.4b also highlight that there is considerable volatility present not just between the pre-2004 and post-2004 eras, but also within the two post-2004 parliaments. The relative (absolute) effect size decreased from 0.22 (16.0%) in the Fifth Parliament to 0.17 (12.2%) in the Sixth Parliament, a difference of -0.05 (-3.8%). In contrast, this was reversed when looking at the Sixth and Seventh Parliaments, where an increase from 0.17 (12.2%) to 0.21 (15.7%) occurred, a difference of 0.04 (3.5%). Therefore, grouping all post-2004 MEPs together clearly tells only part of the story, as there are different trends present in how MEPs approach parliamentary representation in the Sixth and Seventh Parliaments.

Finally, there is evidence that the developments in the Sixth and Seventh Parliaments should be taken seriously. Although the decline in the effect size between the Fifth and Sixth Parliaments is not unique, it is of an unprecedented magnitude. The only previous decline in the relative (absolute) effect sizes was from 0.18 (14.1%) in the Third Parliament to 0.17 (12.8%) in the Fourth Parliament, a change of -0.01 (-1.3%). The respective change of -0.05 (-3.8%) that occurred following the 2004/2007 EU enlargements is of a considerably more significant scope. Moreover, the increase of 0.04 (3.5%) from the Sixth to the Seventh Parliament is unusually sharp, outweighed only by the change between the Fourth and Fifth Parliaments. Therefore, the two post-2004 parliaments follow rather unique developments regarding the comparative loyalty that MEPs show to the voting positions of their EP party group and national delegation.

4.6.3.1 Uniqueness of the Sixth Parliament

An over-time analysis of MEPs' comparative likelihood of following the voting positions of their EP party group and national delegation highlights an unprecedented decline in the dominance of ideology-laden voting in the Sixth Parliament. This contradicts the conventional wisdom on how MEPs' voting behaviour is changing over time (e.g., Hix and Noury, 2009; Hix et al., 2007), but is consistent with H4.2.

Following the EP Party Groups' and National Delegations' Voting Positions

Figure 4.3 (page 94), presenting the over-time developments in MEPs' mean likelihood of following the voting positions of their EP party group, national delegation,

and national party delegation within each parliamentary term from 1979 to 2010, offers useful insight into the changes in MEPs' over-time voting behaviour.

Although the comparative ranking of MEPs' loyalties in the Sixth Parliament is identical to the rankings in other parliamentary terms – i.e., national party delegations being MEPs' primary principal and MEPs holding their secondary loyalty to their EP party group rather than national delegation – these MEPs followed somewhat different voting behaviour than their predecessors. MEPs' mean relative likelihood of following the voting positions of their EP party group declined from 1.26 in the Fifth Parliament (1999-2004) to 1.21 in the Sixth Parliament (2004-2009). By contrast, an increase of 0.01 occurred in MEPs' mean likelihood of following the voting positions of their national delegation.⁴⁶ Therefore, MEPs in the Sixth Parliament were less likely to follow the voting positions of their EP party group, yet more likely to follow the voting positions of their national delegation, than MEPs who served in the Fifth Parliament.

The contrasting over-time changes in MEPs' voting behaviour are significant. Although MEPs' decreasing likelihood of following the voting positions of their EP party group and increasing likelihood of following those of their national delegation are by no means unique in themselves, at no other point have these changes occurred simultaneously prior to 2004. The only previous decline in MEPs' mean likelihood of following the voting positions of their EP party group occurred when looking at the First and Second Parliaments (i.e., MEPs' mean relative voting behaviour dropped from 1.22 to 1.19). At the same time, MEPs' likelihood of following the voting positions of their national delegation, however, decreased as well (i.e., by 0.06 from 1.09 to 1.03). At no point, prior to the Sixth Parliament, had MEPs been simultaneously less likely to show loyalty to their EP party group and more likely to show loyalty to their national delegation than their immediate predecessors.

Reversed Effect Size

The resulting changes in the effect size (i.e., the degree to which MEPs are more likely to follow their EP party group than their national delegation) shows a significant decline between the Fifth and Sixth Parliaments. Figures 4.4a and 4.4b (page 99) display how the dominance of ideology-laden voting has changed across the parliamentary terms between 1979 and 2010. They show that although the decline between the Fifth and Sixth Parliaments is not unique, it is of an unprecedentedly

⁴⁶ The increase, albeit not visible on Figure 4.3 due to the use of a two-digit decimal, is in fact 0.01 (from 1.035 to 1.044).

significant magnitude. The mean relative (absolute) effect size is 0.22 (16%) in the Fifth Parliament and 0.17 (12.9%) across all pre-2004 MEPs. The effect size in the Sixth Parliament – i.e., 0.17 (12.2%) – is considerably lower than the former as well as marginally lower than the latter. The last parliamentary term where the effect size was as low as in the Sixth Parliament was the Second Parliament, 20 years earlier. Although MEPs clearly continued to follow the voting positions of their EP party group more frequently than those of their national delegation in the Sixth Parliament, the extent to which they did so was considerably lower than it was for MEPs in the Fifth Parliament.

The magnitude of the decline in the dominance of ideology-laden voting in the Sixth Parliament is even more visible when comparing changes in the relative (absolute) effect size across consecutive parliamentary terms. Figure 4.5a displays changes in the relative effect size (y-axis) across consecutive parliamentary terms (x-axis), whereas Figure 4.5b does so for the absolute effect size. Figures 4.5a and 4.5b indicate that the change that occurred between the Fifth and Sixth Parliaments clearly stands out. Although the decline is not unique, it is of an overwhelmingly steep nature. Given that the average changes across consecutive parliamentary terms are 0.02 (relative) and 1.7% (absolute) in the pre-2004 era, the decline of 0.06 and 3.8% that occurred in the Sixth Parliament is very unusual. In fact, it is the largest change in effect size of any nature that has occurred since 1979.

Figure 4.5a Changes in the Relative Effect Size across Parliamentary Terms

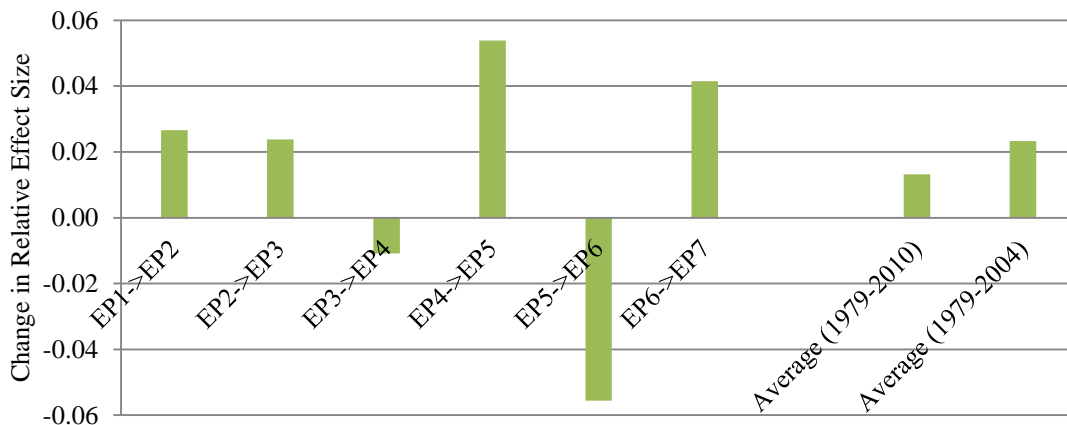
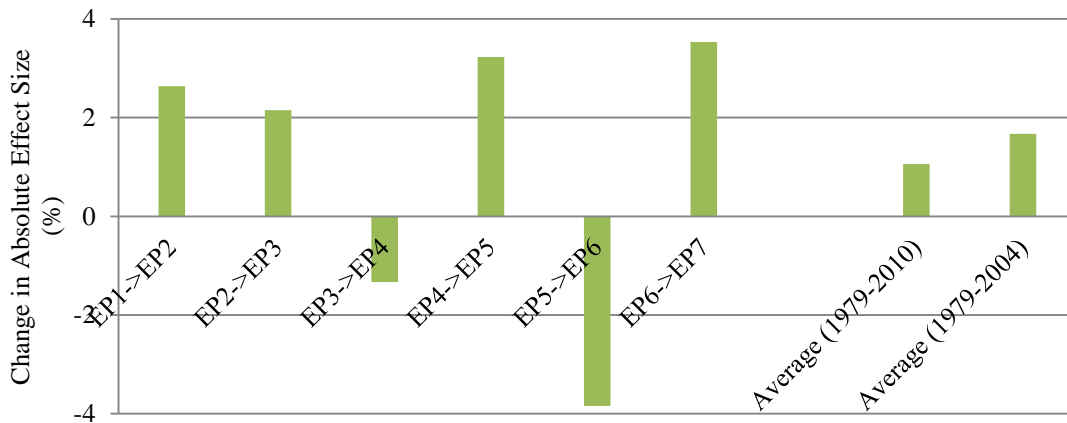


Figure 4.5b Changes in the Absolute Effect Size across Parliamentary Terms



Driving Forces

Further analysis reveals that the unprecedentedly steep decline in the dominance of ideology-laden voting between the Fifth and Sixth Parliaments is supported by both MEPs elected from the pre-2004 EU member states and MEPs elected from the 2004/2007 accession countries, albeit particularly salient among the latter. Figures 4.6a and 4.6b display the relative and absolute effect sizes across the parliamentary terms between 1979 and 2009, with MEPs in the Sixth Parliament divided into two sub-sets based on the country they were elected from. Figure 4.6a displays the relative effect size (y-axis) across the parliamentary terms (x-axis) and Figure 4.6b does so for the absolute effect size.

Figure 4.6a Relative Effect Size from 1979 to 2009 with Split Samples

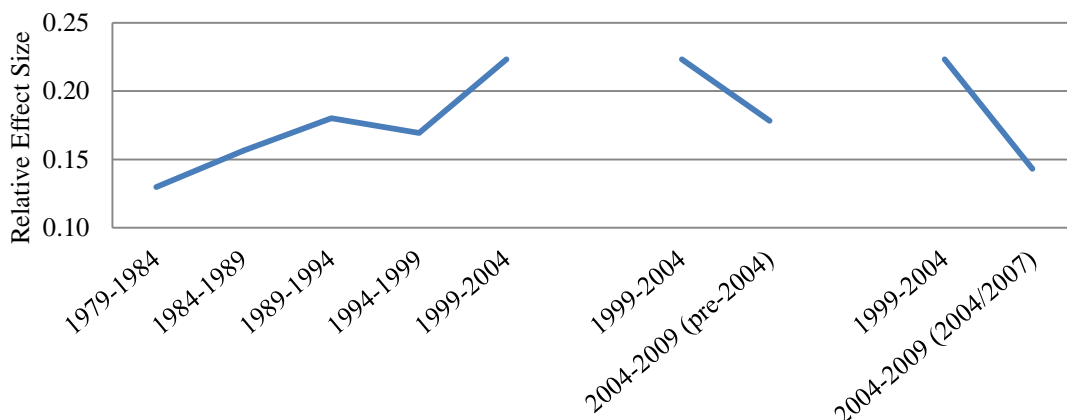
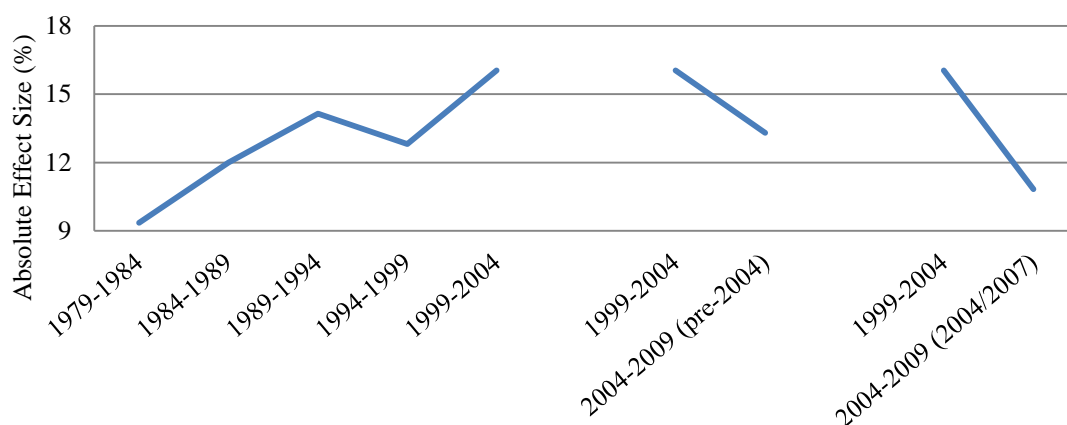


Figure 4.6b Absolute Effect Size from 1979 to 2009 with Split Samples



As discussed in Chapter 2, MEPs elected from the 2004/2007 accession countries are more nationality-driven than MEPs elected from the pre-2004 EU member states. Bearing this in mind, it is unsurprising that the decline in the effect size is particularly steep among the accession MEPs. For Sixth Parliament MEPs from the 2004/2007 accession countries, the mean relative (absolute) effect size is 0.14 (10.8%), compared with a mean effect size of 0.18 (13.3%) for MEPs from the pre-2004 EU member states. While both effect sizes are lower than they were for MEPs in the Fifth Parliament, where the effect size was 0.22 (16%), the difference in the effect size for MEPs from the 2004/2007 accession countries is almost twice the size of the difference for MEPs from the pre-2004 EU member states; the difference between the Fifth Parliament and accession MEPs in the Sixth Parliament being 0.08 (5.2%), while 0.04 (2.7%) between the Fifth Parliament and non-accession MEPs in the Sixth Parliament.

Further Reasoning

Throughout this thesis, I have highlighted that MEPs elected from the 2004/2007 accession countries are more nationality-driven than MEPs elected from the pre-2004 EU member states and, therefore, should be more sensitive to the interests of their national electorates. As such, it is unsurprising that the decline in the dominance of ideology-laden voting is particularly salient among the former. Here, I use individual-level and contextual characteristics to identify key differences among MEPs who served in the Fifth and Sixth Parliaments.

First, national allegiances, rather than supranational loyalties, are more noticeable among MEPs in the Sixth Parliament. Whereas 37% of MEPs prioritized the European identity over their national identity in 2000, 21% of MEPs did so in 2006

(Farrell et al., 2011). What is important, however, is that these more nationality-driven allegiances also translate into corresponding role perceptions. When MEPs were asked about their sense of representation, the average degrees of importance they assigned to following European-wide, national, and national party interests were 3.5, 3.9, and 3.7 in 2000, compared with 3.6, 4.3, and 4.0 in 2006 (Farrell et al., 2011).⁴⁷ Whereas MEPs prioritized the representation of national interests the highest in 2000 and 2006, the difference in how much more importance they assigned to representing national versus European-wide interests rose from 0.4 in the Fifth Parliament to 0.7 in the Sixth Parliament. Because the more nationality-dominated identity of MEPs in the Sixth Parliament does in fact correspond to their somewhat more nationality-driven role perception, it is only fair to assume that MEPs in the Sixth Parliament may also be less willing to discard the voting positions of their national delegation than their predecessors.

Second, the more nationality-driven role and self-perceptions of MEPs in the Sixth Parliament also correspond to their greater readiness to identify their national delegation as the natural point of contact. Looking at the self-perceived frequency of contact that MEPs had with their EP party group and national delegation, the mean scores were 1.54 and 1.46 in the Fifth Parliament and 1.74 and 1.56 in the Sixth Parliament (Farrell et al., 2011).⁴⁸ Although both sets of MEPs claimed to be in more frequent contact with their countrymen and women the degree to which these interactions took precedence over contact with supranational partisans increased from 0.08 in the Fifth Parliament to 0.18 in the Sixth Parliament. Therefore, the more nationality-driven role and self-perceptions of MEPs in the Sixth Parliament also manifested in related trends in MEPs' intra-parliamentary interactions.

Third, contextual situations related to the relative ease by which the EP party groups and national delegations in the Fifth and Sixth Parliaments are able to promote intra-group unity might explain the change in MEPs' over-time voting behaviour. On one hand, the EP party groups became considerably more fractionalized as a result of the 2004/2007 EU enlargements. While the mean ideological diversity within the EP party groups was 3.3 in both the Fifth and Sixth Parliaments (Farrell et al., 2011), the mean number of different national delegations represented among the EP party groups rose from 10 to 16 (European Parliament, 2012c). On the other hand, national delegations incorporated very similar degrees of mean ideological diversity in the Fifth

⁴⁷ Scale ranges from 1 'of little importance' to 5 'of great importance'.

⁴⁸ Scale ranges from 1 'at least once a week' to 6 'no contact'.

and Sixth Parliaments (Farrell et al., 2011), and by their very definition, also included MEPs elected from the same EU member state. As such, it is the EP party groups that were subjected to an increase in their intra-group heterogeneity as a result of the 2004/2007 EU enlargement, with no comparable change occurred within national delegations.

Finally, as highlighted in Chapter 2, the 2004/2007 EU enlargements added MEPs to the EP tend to who face re-election in economically weaker countries, which also include people who tend to be more patriotic and assign greater importance to the EP etc. (e.g., European Commission, 2005b, 2007; International Monetary Fund, 2010). The introduction of these MEPs to the EP effectively adds sensitivity to national electorates' punishment powers to the pool of MEPs that served in the Sixth Parliament. With these MEPs being absent from the Fifth Parliament, there may also be more contextual pressure on MEPs in the Sixth Parliament to follow nationality-laden voting than there was for their pre-2004 counterparts.

4.6.3.2 Return to Normality in the Seventh Parliament

The steep decline in the dominance of ideology-laden voting in the Sixth Parliament is followed by an unusually sharp increase in the Seventh Parliament. Although this supports our traditional understanding of how MEPs' voting behaviour is changing over time (e.g., Hix and Noury, 2009; Hix et al., 2007), it contradicts H4.2.

Looking at Figure 4.3, it is evident that MEPs' comparative likelihood of following the voting positions of their EP party group and national delegation changed in opposite manner from the Sixth Parliament to the Seventh Parliament. In fact, MEPs' mean relative (absolute) likelihood of following the voting positions of their EP party group increased from 1.21 (90.7%) in the Sixth Parliament (2004-2009) to 1.25 (93.9%) in the Seventh Parliament (2009-2010). At the same time, when focusing on MEPs' mean relative (absolute) likelihood of following the voting positions of their national delegation in the Sixth and Seventh Parliaments, there was a decline of 0.01 (0.3%); from 1.04 (78.5%) to 1.04 (78.2%).⁴⁹ Thus, MEPs in the Seventh Parliament are more likely to follow the voting positions of their EP party group, and less likely to follow the voting positions of their national delegation, than their predecessors.

⁴⁹ The decrease in MEPs' relative voting behaviour, albeit not visible on Figure 4.3 due to the use of two-digit decimal, is in fact 0.01 (from 1.044 to 1.038).

Normalized Effect Size

The effect size – i.e., the difference between MEPs' likelihood of following the voting positions of their EP party group and national delegation – gives a measure of the dominance of ideology-laden voting.

It is obvious from Figures 4.4a and 4.4b (page 99) that a significant increase in the dominance of ideology-laden voting has occurred in the post-2009 Parliament. Whereas the relative (absolute) effect size is 0.17 (12.2%) in the Sixth Parliament and 0.17 (12.8%) across all pre-2009 MEPs, it is 0.21 (15.7%) in the Seventh Parliament. As such, the effect size in the post-2009 Seventh Parliament exceeds both the effect size in the Sixth Parliament and the mean effect size in the pre-2009 era as a whole. Although the dominance of ideology-laden voting is not quite as high in the Seventh Parliament as it was in the Fifth Parliament that preceded the 2004 EU enlargement, the decline in ideology-laden voting that characterized the Sixth Parliament has disappeared. In fact, the dominance of ideology-laden voting is currently more prevalent than it has been since the Fifth Parliament.

The change in MEPs' comparative likelihood of following the voting positions of their EP party group and their national delegation is not unique when looking at MEPs' voting behaviour in the Sixth and Seventh Parliaments, but it does clearly stand out when looking at Figures 4.5a and 4.5b (pages 102-103). Figures 4.5a and 4.5b highlight that the increase in the dominance of ideology-laden voting in the Seventh Parliament is not unique or the sharpest increase to date. However, it is of among the largest over-time changes in MEPs' voting behaviour across consecutive parliamentary terms. With the mean change in the relative (absolute) effect size across consecutive parliamentary terms being 0.02 (1.7%) in the pre-2004 era, the increase of 0.04 (3.5%) that occurred between the Sixth and Seventh Parliaments is unusual. Thus, the Seventh Parliament has so far witnessed an unusual increase in the dominance of ideology-laden voting.

Driving Forces

As I have already demonstrated, the unprecedented decline in the dominance of ideology-laden voting in the Sixth Parliament was driven mostly by MEPs elected from the 2004/2007 accession countries. Therefore, the question then becomes, were they also the driving force behind the reversal of this decline in the Seventh Parliament?

Figure 4.7a Relative Effect Size from 1979 to 2010 with Split Samples

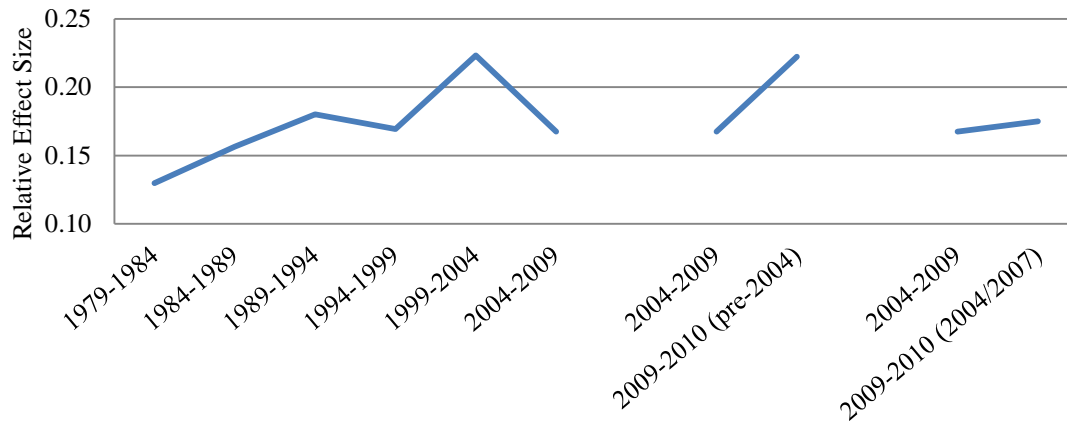
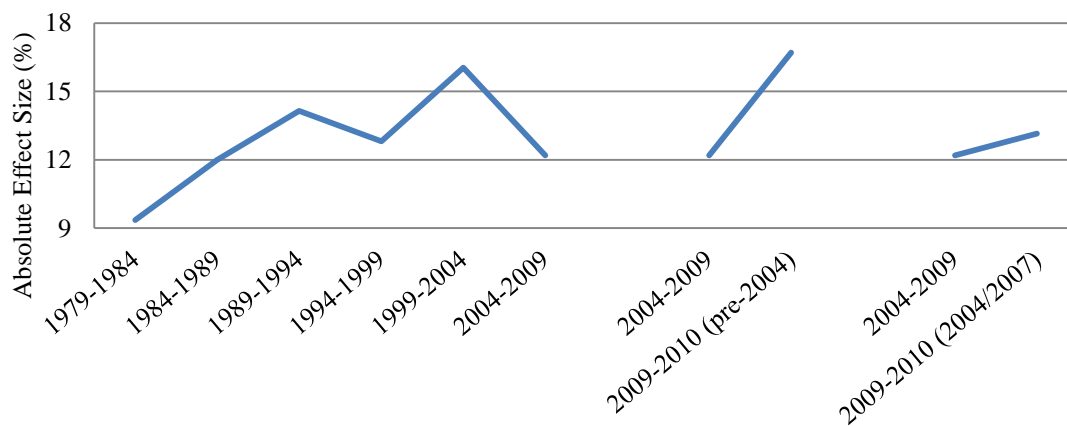


Figure 4.7b Absolute Effect Size from 1979 to 2010 with Split Samples



Figures 4.7a and 4.7b demonstrate that the change back to the increasing dominance of ideology-laden voting in the Seventh Parliament is supported by both MEPs from the 2004/2007 accession countries and MEPs from the pre-2004 EU member states. Recall that the relative (absolute) effect size in the Sixth Parliament was 0.17 (12.2%). In contrast, the effect size for MEPs elected to the Seventh Parliament from the 2004/2007 accession countries is 0.18 (13.2%) and 0.22 (16.7%) for MEPs from pre-2004 EU member states. This represents an increase of 0.01 (1%) for the former and an increase of 0.05 (4.5%) for the latter. Therefore, while the increasing dominance of ideology-laden voting can be attributed to both sub-sets of MEPs, it is predominantly driven by MEPs elected from the pre-2004 EU member states.

Further Reasoning: Sixth Parliament vs. Seventh Parliament

This increasing dominance of ideology-laden voting appears to be supported by individual-level factors.

First, national sentiments, as opposed to the supranational ones, are less salient in post-2004 MEPs' role and self-perceptions than they were in their predecessors'. A larger percentage of Seventh Parliament MEPs believe that the European identity takes priority over their national identity compared with MEPs belonging to the Sixth Parliament; the respective percentages being 28% and 21% (European Election Study, 2012a; Farrell et al., 2011). Moreover, these differences translate into differences in MEPs' role perception. When MEPs were asked about whose views it was most important for them to represent, the percentage of MEPs who said they should prioritize those of their voters was 17% in 2006 but only 10% in 2010 (Farrell et al., 2011). In comparison, the percentage who said they should prioritize the views of their EP party group was 9% in 2000 but 14% in 2006 (Farrell et al., 2011). Thus, there was a clear change in the comparative degree of importance that MEPs in the Sixth and Seventh Parliaments assigned to the representation of their different principals. Post-2009 MEPs perceive their national allegiance to be of less importance, both in absolute terms and in relation to the supranational sentiment, than MEPs in the Sixth Parliament.

Second, the Seventh Parliament incorporates considerably more returning MEPs than the Sixth Parliament did. Whereas 32% of MEPs in the Sixth Parliament had served in the EP prior to 2004, close to 50% of MEPs who entered the EP after the 2009 European elections had done so previously (European Parliament, 2012c). Given that returning MEPs have been subject to institutional socialization in the EP and have had more time to develop ties to their supranational EP party group (e.g., Barber, 1984; Brewer, 2001; Mansbridge, 1990; Pitkin, 1981; Stryker, 2000), they are more likely to adopt a supranational approach to parliamentary representation. As such, ideology-laden voting should be more acceptable to, and more frequently followed by, returning MEPs.

Finally, it does not appear that the increasing dominance of ideology-laden voting in the Seventh Parliament is driven by contextual characteristics. For example, I will show in Chapter 5 that ideological diversity within the parliamentary sub-groups that MEPs belong to is particularly useful in explaining variation in MEPs' voting behaviour. However, the mean comparative ideological diversity that MEPs in the Sixth and Seventh Parliaments faced within their EP party group and national delegation decreased by 0.5 (from 3.3 in 2006 to 2.8 in 2010 and from 4.1 2006 to 3.6 in 2010) for both parliamentary sub-groups (European Election Study, 2012a; Farrell et al., 2011). Moreover, characteristics specific to the EP party groups, national delegations, and national party delegations – e.g., their size, institutional fractionalization – offer very similar environments in which MEPs in the Sixth and Seventh Parliaments operate (e.g.,

European Commission, 2007, 2009; European Parliament, 2009a, 2009b). Thus, no obvious contextual reasons appear to explain why post-2009 MEPs would be more ideology-driven than their predecessors. As such, the increasing dominance of ideology-laden voting in the Seventh Parliament seems to be driven by individual-level characteristics; post-2009 MEPs being less nationality-oriented than their predecessors.

Further Reasoning: 2004/2007 Accession Countries and Pre-2004 EU Member States

One would expect the increasing dominance of ideology-laden voting to be driven by MEPs elected from the pre-2004 EU member states, as they tend to be less nationality-driven and more willing to promote supranational interests (Chapter 2). Therefore, the fact that MEPs elected from the 2004/2007 accession countries also conform to this pattern may appear slightly surprising at first instance. However, a comparison of the individual-level and contextual characteristics associated with both sub-sets of MEPs in the Sixth and Seventh Parliaments helps us understand why they both behave in a more supranational manner in the post-2009 era.

First, the increase in the saliency of supranational sentiments is clearly visible when we compare MEPs from the 2004/2007 accession countries and MEPs from the pre-2004 member states in the Sixth and Seventh Parliaments. The percentage of MEPs who prioritized the European identity over their respective national identity in 2006 and 2010 rose from 26% to 33% for MEPs from the pre-2004 EU member states and from 18% to 19% for MEPs from the 2004/2007 accession countries (European Election Study, 2012a; Farrell et al., 2011). Thus, both sub-sets of post-2009 MEPs assign the supranational European identity greater importance in their self-determination than the corresponding MEPs in the Sixth Parliament did. Although the change is by no means overwhelming, supranational sentiments are slightly more prevalent for both sub-sets of MEPs in the Seventh Parliament.

Second, MEPs have adopted less nationality-driven role perception in the Seventh Parliament, as opposed to in the Sixth Parliament. When MEPs were asked whether they would prioritize the views of their national electorate, EP party group, national party, or their own views, a clear shift in favour of a supranational approach to parliamentary representation occurred in the Seventh Parliament. Looking at MEPs from the 2004/2007 accession countries, the percentage of MEPs who prioritized the views of their national electorate changed from 18% in 2006 to 11% in 2010, while the percentage of MEPs who prioritized the views of their EP party group changed from 9% in 2006 to 13% in 2010 (European Election Study, 2012a; Farrell et al., 2011). These

changes for MEPs from pre-2004 EU member states were from 13% to 6% and from 6% to 16%, respectively (European Election Study, 2012a; Farrell et al., 2011). Clear changes occurred in the degree of importance that MEPs in the Sixth and Seventh Parliaments assigned to the views of their EP party group and national electorate. Whereas a larger percentage of MEPs prioritized the views of their national electorate in the Sixth Parliament, the opposite holds for MEPs in the Seventh Parliament. This change is visible for both MEPs elected from the pre-2004 EU member states and MEPs elected from the 2004/2007 accession countries.

Finally, there is also limited contextual evidence to suggest that post-2009 MEPs from the 2004/2007 accession countries ought to be less concerned with discarding the interests of their national electorate than their predecessors. Although the electoral context that those MEPs faced at the 2004 and 2009 European elections was similar (e.g., European Election Study, 2012c; European Commission, 2007, 2009, 2010), it is the continuing inability of the recent European elections to link MEPs' parliamentary behaviour with their electoral success that matters (e.g., Hix and Marsh, 2011; March, 2005; Schmitt, 2005). Since the 2009 European elections were the first elections where the electoral success of MEPs elected from the 2004/2007 accession countries could have been dependent on their previous actions in the EP, it is also those elections that proved the inability of the European elections to establish a meaningful link between MEPs' electoral success and parliamentary behaviour even in the 2004/2007 accession countries. As a result, it is fair to assume that post-2009 MEPs from the 2004/2007 accession countries are more willing to discard nationality-driven preferences of than MEPs elected from these countries to the Sixth Parliament were.

4.7 Summary

The EP has undergone significant changes over the last decade. Namely, the expansion of the EU in 2004 and 2007 introduced MEPs from 12 new member states to the institution. To date, however, empirical analyses of MEPs' voting choices focus predominantly on the pre-2004 era. The few existing post-2004 studies are limited in that they focus on narrow time periods, looking only at MEPs' loyalties to one or two principals, or are limited to small sub-sections of MEPs (Coman, 2009; Gabel and Hix, 2007; Hix and Noury, 2009; Mühlböck, 2012).

This is a shortcoming in our efforts to understand the voting dynamics in the contemporary EP. There is evidence that the addition of MEPs from the 2004/2007 accession countries might have influenced the voting dynamics in the institution. On the

whole, these MEPs are more nationality-driven than their counterparts elected from the pre-2004 EU member states, and face electoral contexts that encourage them to be more sensitive to discarding the interests of their national delegation and national party (e.g., European Commission, 2007; European Election Study, 2012a; Farrell et al., 2007). Moreover, the limited timeframe covered by the existing studies does not allow us to evaluate whether there are differences in how MEPs approach representation in the Sixth and Seventh Parliaments.

This chapter builds on the existing studies by incorporating the recent changes in the EP's make-up. It provides a comparative account of the extent to which post-2004 MEPs follow the voting positions of their EP party group, national delegation, and national party delegation.⁵⁰ It allows me to explore how effective the principals who influence MEPs' ability to act as vote-maximizing and/or policy-maximizing agents are in guiding post-2004 MEPs' voting behaviour. It also compares the voting behaviour of post-2004 MEPs with that of their predecessors. This is done by evaluating MEPs' likelihood of following the voting positions of their EP party group, national delegation, and national party delegation between 1979 and 2010.

Summary of Findings

First, the individual-level analysis of post-2004 MEPs' likelihood of following the voting positions of their EP party group, national delegation, and national party delegation shows that national party delegations continue to command the greatest degree of loyalty in the post-2004 era. This is consistent with the conventional wisdom on how MEPs approach parliamentary representation (e.g., Coman, 2009; Hix et al., 2007), and the theoretical expectations set out in H4.1.1. The mean relative frequencies by which post-2004 MEPs follow the voting positions of their national party delegation, EP party group, and national delegation are 1.29, 1.23, and 1.04, respectively. These relative scores correspond to post-2004 MEPs following the voting positions of these three parliamentary sub-groups in 97.2%, 92.4%, and 78.4% of the roll call voting occasions they participate in. As shown in Figures 4.1 and 4.2, MEPs have most frequently followed their national party delegation in both post-2004 parliamentary terms, a pattern that holds among MEPs from the 2004/2007 accession countries and pre-2004 EU member states. Moreover, Figure 4.3 shows that this is consistent with pre-2004 MEPs' voting behaviour. The degree of loyalty that national party delegations

⁵⁰ In doing so, this chapter also offers a useful framework which subsequent empirical chapters' analyses of variation can build on.

are able to command from their members is exceptionally high, exceeding the respective measurements for both the EP party groups and national delegations.

Second, the individual-level analysis of post-2004 MEPs' likelihood to follow the voting positions of their parliamentary sub-groups also highlights that MEPs hold their secondary allegiance to their supranational party group, rather than their national electorate. This also follows our understanding of how MEPs approach parliamentary representation (e.g., Hix and Noury, 2009; Roland, 2009), and supports the theoretical expectations as set out in H4.1.2. The mean relative (absolute) frequencies by which post-2004 MEPs follow the voting positions of their EP party group and national delegation are 1.23 (92.4%) and 1.04 (78.4%), respectively. Thus, they have continued to follow the voting positions of their EP party group considerably more often than those of their national delegation. Although the difference between the frequencies was smaller in the Sixth Parliament than it is in the Seventh Parliament, MEPs' greater likelihood of following the voting positions of their EP party group has been present in both post-2004 parliamentary terms. Moreover, Figures 4.2 and 4.3 show that this tendency is present among MEPs from the 2004/2007 accession countries, as well as MEPs from the pre-2004 EU member states, and it is consistent with the corresponding voting behaviour of pre-2004 MEPs. Therefore, ideology-laden voting along the EP party group lines remains prevalent in the post-2004 period.

Finally, the over-time analysis of how MEPs' likelihood of following the voting positions of their EP party group and their national delegation has changed between 1979 and 2010 highlights that the incremental increase in the dominance of ideology-laden voting that characterized the pre-2004 period is not present in the post-2004 era. Rather, I find that the difference in MEPs' mean relative (absolute) likelihood of following the voting positions of their EP party group and national delegation goes through a steep decline of 0.05 (3.8%) between the Fifth and Sixth Parliaments, a finding that supports H4.2. Moreover, I also find that there is an unusually sharp increase of 0.04 (3.5%) between the Sixth Parliament and Seventh Parliament, which contradicts H4.2. Although the introduction of MEPs from the 2004/2007 accession countries has not fundamentally altered the voting dynamics in the institution, there is considerable volatility in post-2004 MEPs' voting behaviour.

Implications of Findings

The findings of this chapter tap into the very heart of how post-2004 MEPs approach parliamentary representation, and the degree of loyalty they assign to the

actors who influence their ability to act as vote-maximizing and/or policy-maximizing agents. The findings also address the impact of the recent changes to the EP's make-up on the voting dynamics in the EP and whether the institution provides democratic input to the EU through its members' voting behaviour in the post-2004 era.

First, the findings indicate that caution is required when describing the impact of the 2004/2007 EU enlargements on the voting dynamics in the EP. Although the EP's make-up has changed significantly over the last decade, the individual-level analysis of post-2004 MEPs' likelihood of following the voting positions of their EP party group, national delegation and national party delegation conform to our traditional understanding of the comparative relevance of MEPs' principals in guiding their agents' voting behaviour. As suggested by existing studies on MEPs' roll call voting choices (e.g., Coman, 2009; Hix and Noury, 2009; Hix et al., 2007; Thiem, 2007, 2009), national parties remain as the primary principals for post-2004 MEPs; MEPs' defections from the voting positions of their national party delegation remain the rarest. Moreover, transnational party group affiliations continue to offer secondary loyalties to MEPs and be more important than national affiliations for shaping how post-2004 MEPs behave. In this broad sense, the 2004/2007 EU enlargements have not fundamentally altered the voting dynamics in the EP. That is, post-2004 MEPs do not approach parliamentary representation in an inherently different manner than their predecessors.

Second, the impact of the 2004/2007 EU enlargements on the voting dynamics in the EP, while not a fundamentally altering one, is still significant and needs to be accounted for. Namely, the post-2004 parliaments are characterized by the presence of volatility with regards to the comparative loyalty that MEPs show to their EP party group and national delegation. Whereas our traditional understanding of the over-time developments in MEPs' voting behaviour perceives the dominance of ideology-laden voting to be increasing incrementally (e.g., Hix and Noury, 2009; Hix et al., 2007), this has not been the case in the post-2004 era. Instead, analysis of the differences in MEPs' mean comparative likelihood of following the voting positions of their EP party group and their national delegation across the parliamentary terms do not show a gradual increase in the post-2004 era. Instead, I find a steep decline in the dominance of ideology-laden voting when comparing MEPs' voting behaviour in the Fifth and Sixth Parliaments, and an unusual increase between the Sixth and Seventh Parliaments.

Finally, the findings of this chapter also help to evaluate whether the post-2004 EP can instil a degree of democratic input to the EU through its members' approach to parliamentary representation. As shown in Chapter 2, the EP party groups and national

delegations are able to account for only one part of the ideology/nationality combination. Despite post-2004 MEPs being more nationality-driven in their role and self-perceptions than their predecessors (European Election Study, 2012a; Farrell et al., 2011), individual-level analysis of their roll call voting choices shows that these MEPs are following the voting positions of their EP party group more frequently than those of their national delegation. This tendency is particularly prevalent among MEPs in the Seventh Parliament, but evident also among MEPs in the Sixth Parliament. It implies that post-2004 MEPs continue to provide democratic input to the EU through their parliamentary behaviour, as they align their voting choices to greater extent with their fellow supranational partisans rather than the members of their national delegation. Thus, the EP can help the EU to fulfil the functions of democratic representation by encouraging its members to approach parliamentary representation in an ideology-laden manner, as one would expect from representatives in an institution that is supposed to represent cross-national interests.

Chapter 5: Variation in MEPs' Voting Behaviour

5.1 Introduction

The contemporary EP is a diverse political institution. As a result of the 2004/2007 EU enlargements, the post-2004 parliaments now incorporate MEPs from 27 EU member states. These MEPs differ from each other on a number of dimensions, including their role and self-perceptions, political experience and career aspirations, the way they interact with their parliamentary sub-groups, and the contexts in which they make their voting decisions (e.g., European Commission, 2004, 2010; European Election Study, 2012a, 2012c; Farrell et al., 2011). It is, therefore, plausible that individual-level and contextual differences may lead MEPs to hold contrasting vote-maximizing and policy-maximizing ambitions as well as loyalties to their principals, and, as a result, they may approach parliamentary representation in the EP in a different manner. Thus, it is important to move beyond a univocal interpretation of the European mandate. Only then can one comprehensively assess the complexity that surrounds the voting dynamics in the post-2004 parliaments.

In this chapter, I build on the general account of how post-2004 MEPs approach parliamentary representation in the EP (Chapter 4). I explore how post-2004 MEPs' voting behaviour varies in relation to three distinct types of explanatory characteristics: (i) their individual-level characteristics, (ii) the characteristics associated with their interactions with their parliamentary sub-groups, and (iii) the general context in which they make their voting choices. To analyse the effect of these factors, I use multivariate OLS regression alongside multilevel modelling on MEPs' individual-level roll call voting data from September 2004 to December 2010. In doing so, this chapter adds depth to the understanding of the voting dynamics in the post-2004 EP and illustrates how diversity shapes post-2004 MEPs' parliamentary behaviour.

The findings suggest that (i) the frequency by which post-2004 MEPs follow the voting positions of their EP party group, national delegation, and national party delegation vary considerably, (ii) this variation is related to characteristics specific to MEPs, their interactions with their parliamentary sub-groups, and the contexts in which they make their voting decisions, and (iii) certain characteristics, such as MEPs' role perception and the degree of ideological diversity in the parliamentary sub-groups that they belong to, are particularly relevant in explaining differences in how MEPs approach representation in the EP. The findings demonstrate that it is necessary to go

beyond MEPs' mean voting behaviour, as significant systematic variation exists in the degree of loyalty that MEPs show their three principals.

The chapter proceeds in the following manner. I start by highlighting the specific research questions addressed in the chapter. I then set out my expectations and the operationalization of the research design. Finally, I use multivariate OLS regression and multilevel modelling techniques to analyse MEPs' roll call voting choices, and to explore how unique combinations of individual-level and contextual characteristics shape the way post-2004 MEPs approach parliamentary representation.

5.2 Research Questions

Using multivariate OLS regression analysis and multilevel modelling on MEPs' individual-level roll call voting data from September 2004 to December 2010, I address the following research questions in this chapter:

RQ5.1: How do the characteristics of post-2004 MEPs affect their likelihood of following the voting positions of their (i) EP party group, (ii) national delegation, and (iii) national party delegation?

RQ5.2: How do the characteristics associated with the interactions between post-2004 MEPs and their parliamentary sub-groups affect their likelihood of following the voting positions of their (i) EP party group, (ii) national delegation, and (iii) national party delegation?

RQ5.3: How does the context in which post-2004 MEPs make their voting decisions affect their likelihood of following the voting positions of their (i) EP party group, (ii) national delegation, and (iii) national party delegation?

Specifying the research questions in this manner allows me to focus on how diversity of different nature explains why contemporary MEPs might hold contrasting loyalties to each of their three salient principals. In doing so, I provide a more comprehensive understanding of the voting dynamics in the post-2004 parliaments.

5.3 Hypotheses

As highlighted previously, diversity is an important component in the discussion of voting dynamics in the EP. MEPs have motivations to act as both vote-maximizing and policy-maximizing agents in their approach to parliamentary representation. At the same time, they need to balance loyalties to multiple principals – their EP party group, national electorate, and national party – represented by specific parliamentary sub-groups in the EP. Moreover, there is considerable heterogeneity present among MEPs

themselves, the way they interact with their parliamentary sub-groups, as well as the contexts in which they operate.

In light of this complex framework, it is plausible that a univocal interpretation of how post-2004 MEPs approach representation in the EP hides significant differences in their behaviour. In this section, I highlight the expected relationships between MEPs' voting behaviour and a number of important explanatory characteristics.

5.3.1 MEP: Left-Right Position

MEP's ideological stance on the traditional left-right spectrum offers useful insight into his/her belief and value system, and provides an indication of how natural partner his/her EP party group is for him/her.

Leftist political ideologies tend to emphasize values like egalitarianism, redistribution of welfare, social equality, and fairness, while rightist political philosophies tend to be more oriented around traditionalism, nationalism, and limited state intervention (e.g., Brzinski, 1995; Hix and Lord, 1997; Kreppel and Tsebelis, 1999). Being oriented around ideas that are not inherently related to one's nationality or defined in geographical terms, leftist MEPs ought to be more likely to support the development of a European society and find it more natural to undertake a supranational approach to parliamentary representation. Finding commonalities across nationalities and being open to transnational cooperation should simply be more natural for left-wing MEPs, with rightist MEPs being more nationality-oriented and looking 'inside' rather than 'across' country boundaries. As the EP party groups are the frontrunners of supranationalism in the EP, it is fair to assume that leftist MEPs will find their EP party group to be a more natural partner for cooperation.

Leftist political movements are also likely to be better able to promote cooperation across MEPs from a variety of national parties due to their more internationalist and homogeneous nature. While leftist and green parties rely largely on the clearly articulated and cohesive Marxist and Green ideologies, which are internationalist by their very nature, rightist political movements tend to be more heterogeneous in motivation and less defined by philosophical bases, as well as putting less emphasis on international cooperation (Brzinski, 1995; Hix and Lord, 1997; Kreppel and Tsebelis, 1999). The different historical foundations to the political movements suggest that there should be less ideological fragmentation among leftist MEPs across the different domestic party systems in Europe.

Given that the EP party groups are the frontrunners of supranationalism in the EP and that leftist MEPs are likely to find transnational cooperation more natural, I expect the following:

H5.1.1: Leftist MEPs are more likely to follow the voting positions of their EP party group.

5.3.2 MEP: Identity

MEPs who perceive the transnational European identity to be more important in their self-determination than their national identity send out strong statements of intent that they are more willing to approach parliamentary representation in the EP in a supranational manner. It is fair to expect that these MEPs find it easier to fit into the EP's supranational framework; they are more likely to pull away from their national sentiments that might restrict their willingness to act as policy-maximizing agents who strive to act in the good of all European citizens (Bellamy et al., 2006; Bideleux, 2001; Billig, 1995; Day and Shaw, 2006; Scully, 2005). By seeing oneself as more European, as opposed to German or Portuguese etc., an MEP is likely to feel greater kinship to European citizens outside his/her country of origin and take greater interest in furthering the interests of the EU as a whole. They are more likely to feel greater commonality and emotional connectedness with European citizens in general, rather simply relating to their fellow countrymen and women.

An MEP who sees Europeanism as being more salient in his/her self-perception should find his/her supranational EP party group more natural partner for cooperation and, therefore, I expect that:

H5.1.2: The greater the importance that an MEP assigns to the European identity, the more likely he/she is to follow the voting positions of his/her EP party group.

5.3.3 MEP: Representation

In addition to their self-perception, the degree of importance that MEPs assign to following the interests of their national electorate and national party voters also matters. It touches the very heart of MEPs' role perception and the saliency of the loyalty they hold to their different principals.

An MEP who assigns greater importance to representing the interests of his/her constituents and national party voters should also be more likely to frame his/her

parliamentary behaviour accordingly. In the context of the EP, an MEP's national delegation and national party delegation, first and foremost, represent the interests of his/her constituents and national party voters (e.g., Hix and Hoyland, 2011; Hix et al., 2007). As such, MEPs who assign greater importance to representing the interests of their constituents and national party voters should put greater emphasis on cooperating with their national delegation and national party delegation.

These MEPs are likely to be more willing to pursue contacts and cooperation with their national delegation and national party delegation, while less willing to discard the voting positions of their national delegation and national party delegation, because representing those interests plays more important roles in how they interpret their role perception. That is, they believe that the interests of their constituents and national party voters should constrain and guide their approach to parliamentary representation to greater extents. Therefore, I expect the following:

H5.1.3a: The greater the importance an MEP assigns to representing the interests of his/her constituents, the more likely he/she is to follow the voting positions of his/her national delegation.

H5.1.3b: The greater the importance an MEP assigns to representing the interests of his/her national party voters, the more likely he/she is to follow the voting positions of his/her national party delegation.

5.3.4 Interaction: Ideological Difference

The difference between an MEP's ideological position and the mean ideological position of his/her parliamentary sub-group captures the ease with which he/she is expected to find cooperation with his/her fellow members of the parliamentary sub-group. The ideological difference describes how naturally the actors align with each other. I expect that MEPs who belong to an EP party group or national delegation where the mean ideological position is further away from their own ideological beliefs will be more likely to disagree with the expected voting positions within these groups. Disagreements between actors who share more compatible ideological beliefs are less likely though, as there is more common ground between them, and the resulting voting preferences are more likely to coincide.

MEPs who are ideologically closer to the parliamentary sub-groups that they belong to should find it easier to convey to the voting positions of these parliamentary sub-groups. As such, I expect the following:

H5.2.1a: The greater the ideological distance between an MEP and the mean position of his/her national delegation, the less likely he/she is to follow the voting positions of his/her national delegation.

H5.2.1b: The greater the ideological distance between an MEP and the mean position of his/her EP party group, the less likely he/she is to follow the voting positions of his/her EP party group.

5.3.5 Interaction: Voting Instructions

The frequency with which MEPs receive voting instructions from the parliamentary sub-groups that they belong to helps us explain the level of interest that these groups have in their members' voting behaviour and the degree of pressure MEPs are under to act in particular manner. When MEPs' parliamentary sub-groups offer voting guidance, they emphasize the importance of casting particular voting choices, and highlight that they are interested (and possibly monitoring) MEPs' parliamentary behaviour. This may make MEPs cautious about discarding the preferred voting positions and policy preferences of their parliamentary sub-groups. Furthermore, MEPs may be even more hesitant to defect from the parliamentary sub-groups who issue frequent voting instructions. Discarding the voting instructions is more likely to be noticed and punished by the parliamentary sub-groups that are more active in trying to guide their members' voting behaviour.

The potential relevance of the frequency of voting instructions is likely to not just be pressure-related. The more frequently MEPs are informed of the expected common voting positions of their parliamentary sub-groups, the better able they are to follow these positions. It works towards overcoming the collective action problem, making sure that MEPs know how their fellow parliamentarians are likely to vote and how they are supposed to vote. Although MEPs may still choose to disregard the voting instructions they receive, their ability to vote with their fellow parliamentarians is aided by better knowing what the expected voting positions within their EP party group, national delegation, and national party delegation are.

MEPs who receive more frequent voting instructions from their parliamentary sub-groups are likely to be under greater pressure to, and better able to, follow the voting positions of these parliamentary sub-groups. Therefore, I expect the following:

H5.2.2a: The more frequently an MEP receives voting instructions from his/her national delegation, the more likely he/she is to follow the voting positions of his/her national delegation.

H5.2.2b: The more frequently an MEP receives voting instructions from his/her EP party group, the more likely he/she is to follow the voting positions of his/her EP party group.

H5.2.2c: The more frequently an MEP receives voting instructions from his/her national party, the more likely he/she is to follow the voting positions of his/her national party delegation.

5.3.6 Context: Importance of the EP

Moving on to the roles of contextual characteristics, the perceived importance of the EP in an MEP's home country is likely to influence his/her parliamentary behaviour.

The electoral incentives that MEPs have to follow national interests and voting positions of their national delegation are partly based on the potential punishment and rewarding capabilities of their electorate (e.g., Hix and Hoyland, 2011; Hix et al., 2007). Fundamental to the meaningful manifestation of these powers is that voters are aware of an MEP's parliamentary behaviour and voting choices. The degree to which voters are able to establish such an electoral link between MEP's electoral success and voting behaviour is likely to vary across countries.

The extent to which the EP plays an important role within the EU may provide an insight into whether voters are likely to be aware of the actions of MEPs. In countries where more individuals believe that the EP is an important actor within the EU, it is likely that more people will also take an interest in the parliamentary affairs and how their elected representatives – i.e., MEPs – behave. They may also be more concerned with their ability to influence the make-up of the EP through the European elections. Therefore, in countries where the EP is perceived to an important institution by more people, more voters are likely to monitor MEPs' voting choices and, as such, it is more likely that MEPs' defection from a nationality-driven approach to representation in the EP will be punished. Thus, these MEPs should be more sensitive to the punishment powers of their national electorate and less willing to defect from the voting positions of their national delegation as a result.

It could of course be argued that the electoral connection between an MEP's behaviour in the EP and the support he/she receives from his/her national electorate remains unrelated, regardless of the salience of the EP. The institution does indeed

remain distant and unknown across the EU (e.g., European Commission, 2007, 2009). Monitoring MEPs behaviour has, however, become increasingly easier as a result of websites such as www.votewatch.eu (VoteWatch, 2012). Therefore, even if an MEP predicts that his/her voting behaviour will not be scrutinized, the importance attributed to the EP should have at least some psychological impact. Given that a lot is at stake at the European elections – i.e., re-election – it is fair to expect that an MEP should be more sensitive to the punishment powers of his/her national electorate when elected from a country where more people consider the EP to be an important institution within the EU. Therefore, I expect that:

H5.3.1: The greater the importance attached to the EP within a country, the greater the likelihood that an MEP from that country will follow the voting positions of his/her national delegation.

5.3.7 Context: Ideological Diversity

The presence of ideological diversity tends to be inevitable even among rather homogeneous groups of people. The extent to which it is present, however, can vary significantly and make intra-group agreements easier (or more difficult) to reach.

On one hand, intra-group consensus and common voting positions ought to be more difficult to reach within the more ideologically diverse parliamentary sub-groups. These groups have to mitigate a more diverse set of viewpoints, and their members' ideal policy preferences and voting positions may be less likely to align. An MEP who belongs to an EP party group or national party delegation that has greater internal ideological diversity is likely to more frequently face voting occasions where there is no natural voting agreement present among his/her fellow supranational partisans or national partisans, respectively. At the same time, disagreement between MEPs who share more compatible ideological beliefs is less likely as there is more common ground between them, and more overlap in their ideal policy positions.

On the other hand, greater overlap in MEPs' ideological beliefs is also likely to aid reaching consensus, should it not be naturally present. It is fair to assume that the presence of fewer differences in supranational and national partisans' ideological beliefs is less likely to deter MEPs who belong to the same EP party group and national party delegation from trying to adopt common voting positions, and more likely to ensure that their efforts are successful.

As such, I expect the following:

H5.3.2a: The more ideologically diverse the EP party group that an MEP belongs to is, the more likely he/she is to defect from the voting positions of his/her EP party group.

H5.3.2b: The more ideologically diverse the national party delegation that an MEP belongs to is, the more likely an MEP is to defect from the voting positions of his/her national party delegation.

5.3.8 Context: Financial Dependency

The incentives that an MEP has to prioritize the voting positions of his/her national party delegation are largely based on the ability of his/her party to punish or reward his/her behaviour (e.g., Hix and Hoyland, 2011; Hix et al., 2007). The varying degree of financial support that different national parties offer their candidates is likely to give rise to varying degree of sensitivity for their punishment and rewarding powers.

Although money is not the ultimate key to ensuring one's electoral success, campaign spending does tend to influence candidates' chances of getting elected (e.g., Benoit and Marsh, 2008; Gerber, 2004; Johnston and Pattie, 1995; Potters et al., 1997). Candidates who are able to attain more financial resources to support their campaign efforts have an advantage over their competitors and are better placed to carry out successful campaigns. As such, national parties whose campaign contributions make up larger shares of their candidates' campaign expenditure have more impact on their candidates' chances of getting elected. The influence that national parties can exercise over their candidates' electoral chances, however, is likely to translate into degrees of sensitivity on the part of the candidates. Being aware that they rely on the financial support of their national party to greater (or lesser) extent, these politicians are likely to be more (or less) hesitant to engage in behaviour that might jeopardize the financial support they receive.

Although financial support cannot directly buy influence over representatives' parliamentary behaviour, one can assume that it relates to how sensitive representatives are to maintaining the support of their national party. Therefore, I expect the following:

H5.3.3: The larger the proportion of party candidates' campaign expenditure is provided by the national party that an MEP belongs to, the more likely he/she is to follow the voting positions of his/her national party delegation.

5.4 Variable Operationalization

5.4.1 Dependent Variable

The dependent variable in this chapter is the voting behaviour of MEPs. As in Chapter 4, the dependent variable adopts three parallel forms to account for the fact that MEPs face three salient principals when approaching representation in the EP. It is an MEP's likelihood of following the voting positions of his/her (i) EP party group, (ii) national delegation, and (iii) national party delegation, within a parliamentary term relative to the mean parliamentary voting unity in the voting occasions that he/she participated.⁵¹ Each dependent variable ranges from 0 to (but not including) 3. The higher the value, the more frequently an MEP followed the voting positions of his/her parliamentary sub-group relative to the mean parliamentary voting unity in the voting occasions that he/she participated. Table B.1 (Appendix B) provides descriptive information about post-2004 MEPs' likelihood of following the voting positions of their EP party group, national delegation, and national party delegation.

5.4.2 Explanatory Variables

This chapter makes use of a variety of explanatory characteristics to explore a number of sources of diversity that might shape how MEPs approach representation in the EP.⁵² The explanatory characteristics used in this chapter account for large proportions of variation in MEPs' voting behaviour. This is clearly visible in the mean r-squared value for the three parallel models of voting behaviour being 0.32. Given the extreme complexity associated with voting in the EP, the ability to explain 32% of variation in post-2004 MEPs' voting behaviour is impressive.

There are three types of explanatory variables included in the analyses below: individual-level characteristics describing MEPs, individual-level characteristics that are associated with the relationships between MEPs and their parliamentary sub-groups, and characteristics associated with the contextual environments in which MEPs operate.

First, individual-level characteristics specific to post-2004 MEPs are introduced to the models that explain variation in their voting behaviour. These include control variables for an MEP's age and gender, as well as a dummy variable for whether the particular measure for MEP's voting behaviour derives from his/her voting choices in the Sixth Parliament or the Seventh Parliament. These control variables are not expected to systematically relate to MEPs' voting behaviour, but are standard additions to

⁵¹ Refer to Chapter 4 (pages 82-86) for a detailed overview of how each dependent variable is calculated.

⁵² The full lists of explanatory characteristics can be found in Tables B.2-B.4 (Appendix B). Descriptive information about the explanatory characteristics is presented in Table B.5 (Appendix B).

analyses of variation in individual-level voting choices. The individual-level characteristics specific to post-2004 MEPs also describe various aspects that relate to who MEPs are as politicians and how they perceive themselves – e.g., their political experience, future aspirations, ideological self-placements on the traditional left-right and pro-anti integration spectrums, sense of identity, and the perceived relevance they assign to representing the interests of their different principals. Unlike the control variables, these explanatory characteristics are expected to explain how MEPs approach parliamentary representation.

The second type of characteristics is associated with the relationship between post-2004 MEPs and the parliamentary sub-groups they belong to. These characteristics include the frequency by which MEPs receive voting instructions from their parliamentary sub-groups and the ideological difference between MEPs' ideal positions and the mean positions of their parliamentary sub-groups on the traditional left-right and pro-anti integration spectrums. These characteristics capture the pressure MEPs are under to cast particular voting choices and how likely they are to agree with the common voting positions of their parliamentary sub-groups. As such, they have the potential to affect the degree of loyalty that MEPs show to their principals.

The final set of characteristics relate to the contextual environment in which post-2004 MEPs make their voting choices. These characteristics include country-specific characteristics (e.g., the electoral system used for the European elections, the percentage of citizens who perceive the EP to be an important institution within the EU), characteristics specific to the EP party groups (e.g., the level of fractionalization along national and national party lines), characteristics specific to national parties (e.g., whether national party is able to extract regular financial donations from MEPs' salary, how centralized the nomination process for becoming a national party candidate for the European elections is), and characteristics applied across all three models of voting behaviour (e.g., the degree of ideological diversity within the parliamentary sub-groups that an MEP belongs to). The contextual characteristics are added because they are expected to affect the costs and benefits associated with MEPs' voting choices.

Additional Considerations

First, a dummy variable was entered into all three multivariate models to describe whether an MEP was elected to the Sixth or Seventh Parliament. This was vital as Chapter 4 showed MEPs to follow rather different voting behaviour in the post-2004 parliaments. The inclusion of such a dummy variable allows me to capture whether

there is a statistically significant ‘parliamentary term’ effect present in how MEPs approach parliamentary representation in the Sixth and Seventh Parliaments; an effect that exists independent of changes to other individual-level or contextual characteristics.

Second, as far as possible, I attempt to maximize cross-model comparison by including the same sets of explanatory characteristics in all three parallel models of voting behaviour. Although the model specification is not consistent across the three models – i.e., certain characteristics are entered only to one or two of the three models (e.g., whether national parties are able to extract regular financial donations from their MEPs’ salary) – the majority of explanatory characteristics are included in all model. For example, I focus on the relevance of individual-level characteristics specific to MEPs (e.g., their political experience, role perception, career aspiration), individual-level characteristics that describe MEPs’ interactions with their parliamentary sub-groups (e.g., frequency of receiving voting instructions), and contextual characteristics (e.g., ideological diversity in the parliamentary sub-groups that MEPs belong to) in explaining variation in MEPs’ likelihood of following the voting positions of all three parliamentary sub-groups they belong to.

Finally, as far as possible, measurements for the explanatory characteristics are specific to the parliamentary term that an MEP belonged to. For example, the 2006 MEP survey by Farrell et al. (2011) is used to obtain individual-level measures for MEPs who served in the Sixth Parliament, whereas the 2010 MEP survey by Farrell et al. (2011) is used to do so for MEPs who served in the Seventh Parliament. Similarly, contextual characteristics, such as the degree of ideological diversity that is present in the parliamentary sub-groups, is calculated separately for the EP party groups, national delegations, and national party delegations in the Sixth and Seventh Parliaments. This approach allows for accurate measurement of the explanatory variables and helps to account for the over-time changes in MEPs’ role and self-perceptions, as well as in the contexts they operate.

5.5 Samples

The reliance on a multivariate approach to explain how diversity shapes post-2004 MEPs’ voting behaviour restricts the sample sizes that I can use in the analyses. In particular, the reliance on elite survey data from MEP surveys to collect several individual-level measurements limits the number of MEPs for whom the full set of information on both the dependent and explanatory characteristics is available. The

detailed information on the samples that are used to eventually study variation in post-2004 MEPs' voting behaviour can be found in Tables B.8-B.10 (Appendix B).

As shown in Tables 5.1, 5.3, and 5.5, post-2004 MEPs' likelihood of following the voting positions of their EP party group, national delegation, and national party delegation is explained by using samples of 433, 422, and 227 MEPs, respectively.⁵³ These post-2004 MEPs are the only ones for whom there is information on both their voting behaviour and all corresponding explanatory characteristics available. Of the MEPs included in the respective samples, 73% (309 MEPs), 71% (308 MEPs), and 81% (184 MEPs) were elected from the pre-2004 EU member states.

These samples, however, represent well the full population of post-2004 MEPs. Duncan indices of dissimilarity are used to compare the distribution of countries and EP party groups within the full population of post-2004 MEPs and the three samples used to explain variation in MEPs' voting behaviour.⁵⁴ The Duncan index of dissimilarity measures the evenness with which two sets of MEPs – i.e., MEP sample and the full population of MEPs – are distributed across different parliamentary sub-groups – e.g., EP party groups and EU member states. The index ranges from 0 to 1 (or 0% to 100% if looking at percentages rather than proportions), with higher values corresponding to greater discrepancy between the MEP sample and the full population of MEPs. The values for Duncan indices of dissimilarity for the distribution of countries and EP party groups are 0.15 and 0.07 for explaining MEPs' likelihood of following the voting positions of their EP party group, 0.13 and 0.08 for explaining their likelihood of following the voting positions of their national delegation, 0.29 and 0.15 for explaining their likelihood of following the voting positions of their national party delegation. Although some discrepancies exist between the samples used and all post-2004 MEPs, these remain small. There does not appear to be any strong bias on the basis of MEPs' national affiliation or EP partisanship. Therefore, one can be confident that the results obtained on the basis of the particular samples are accurate and represent post-2004 MEPs as a whole.

⁵³ Refer to Tables B.8-B.10 (Appendix B) for detailed information about the samples.

⁵⁴ The Duncan index of dissimilarity is defined as $D = 0.5 \times \sum |A_i/X - B_i/Y|$, where A_i and B_i are the number of mutually exclusive cases in larger units – e.g., EP party groups or EU member states – in the full population of MEPs (A_i) or the sample of MEPs (B_i), X is the sum of A_i , and Y is the sum of B_i . For a more in-depth overview of the Duncan index of dissimilarity, see for example Duncan and Duncan (1955a, 1955b) or Taylor et al. (2000). For uses of the Duncan index of dissimilarity in assessing MEP samples, see for example Farrell et al. (2011).

5.6 Addressing the Research Questions

RQ5.1, RQ5.2, and RQ5.3 are addressed through three parallel multivariate OLS regression models. These models explain variation in post-2004 MEPs' likelihood of following the voting positions of their (i) EP party group, (ii) national delegation, and (iii) national party delegation. The three OLS regression models incorporate explanatory characteristics of all three different types, and provide multivariate tests to show how diversity shapes the way MEPs approach parliamentary representation.

I cluster standard errors in all three multivariate OLS regression models by the EP party groups and EU member states to account for post-2004 MEPs' nationality-oriented and ideology-oriented similarities.⁵⁵ The multivariate OLS regression models with clustered standard errors fit the specific data well as shown in Figures B.1-B.3 (Appendix B); the residuals for all three models follow distributions sufficiently close to normal distribution. The resulting models also address the hierarchical nature of data structure by accounting for clustering of post-2004 MEPs' national and supranational allegiances, as well as are easy to interpret due to the commonality of the method.

To verify the robustness of the findings reached using the multivariate OLS regression models with clustered standard errors, I also re-estimate these models using multilevel modelling. The findings of the three multilevel models – corresponding to variation in MEPs' likelihood of following the voting positions of their EP party group, national delegation, and national party delegation – confirm the reliability of findings reached on through the multivariate OLS regression models. As shown in Table B.7, the OLS regression models and multilevel models produce very similar results for MEPs' likelihood of following the voting positions of their EP party group, national delegation, and national party delegation. Given that the findings for explaining variation in post-2004 MEPs' voting behaviour are robust to the choice of the statistical test, one can be confident in the accuracy of the empirical trends that the OLS regression models with clustered standard errors reveal.

Additional Insight

To complement the multivariate OLS regression models, the findings associated with the relationships between post-2004 MEPs' voting behaviour and the explanatory characteristics are also presented in graphical and descriptive manner.

⁵⁵ It is of course possible to group together post-2004 MEPs who share similar national allegiances and ideological beliefs by using national party delegation as the clustering variable. As shown in Table B.6 (Appendix B), both approaches yield very similar findings, as the multivariate OLS regression models are very robust to changes in how their standard errors are clustered.

First, predicted values for the three dependent variables are calculated. This gives further insight into how a particular source of diversity – i.e., the explanatory characteristic – influences MEPs’ approach to representation in the EP. Holding the explanatory characteristics constant at their mean, predicted values allow me to isolate the effect of one specific explanatory characteristic.

Second, predicted values for the dependent variables are also calculated on the basis of OLS regression models that explain MEPs’ absolute likelihood of following the voting positions of their parliamentary sub-groups. The additional predicted values are provided to provide more easily understood measurements for the variation-inducing impact of the explanatory variables. Absolute voting behaviour, and the corresponding predicted value, is a percentage score, and it is not dependent on the mean parliamentary voting unity in the voting occasions that MEPs participated.⁵⁶ The substantive meanings of how changes in explanatory characteristics relate to MEPs’ changing absolute voting behaviour are simply easier to understand (e.g., Cameron and Trivedi, 2009; Long and Freese, 2006). Therefore, predicted values for MEPs’ absolute voting behaviour are also calculated to complement the more accurate relative measurements.

Finally, the predicted values for MEPs’ voting behaviour are plotted together with their corresponding 95% confidence intervals. This allows for a graphical display of the relationships between MEPs’ predicted voting behaviour across the values of the explanatory characteristics (e.g., Cameron and Trivedi, 2009; Long and Freese, 2006). Creating graphical interpretations of how changes in the explanatory characteristics bring about changes in MEPs’ predicted relative and absolute voting behaviour makes the relationships between the two variables easier to grasp. In addition, the comparison of the upper- and lower-bound confidence intervals shows whether the relationships are substantively meaningful in addition to being statistically significant.

5.7 Findings

Given the diversity surrounding the voting dynamics in the EP, it is unsurprising that variation exists in MEPs’ voting behaviour. The multivariate analyses offer useful insight into how this variation relates to characteristics specific to MEPs, their interactions with their parliamentary sub-groups, and the contexts in which they make their voting decisions. Overall, I find that all three types of characteristics help us

⁵⁶ Refer to Chapter 4 (page 82-86) for further discussion on the benefits of providing absolute measures as complementary evidence for MEPs’ voting behaviour.

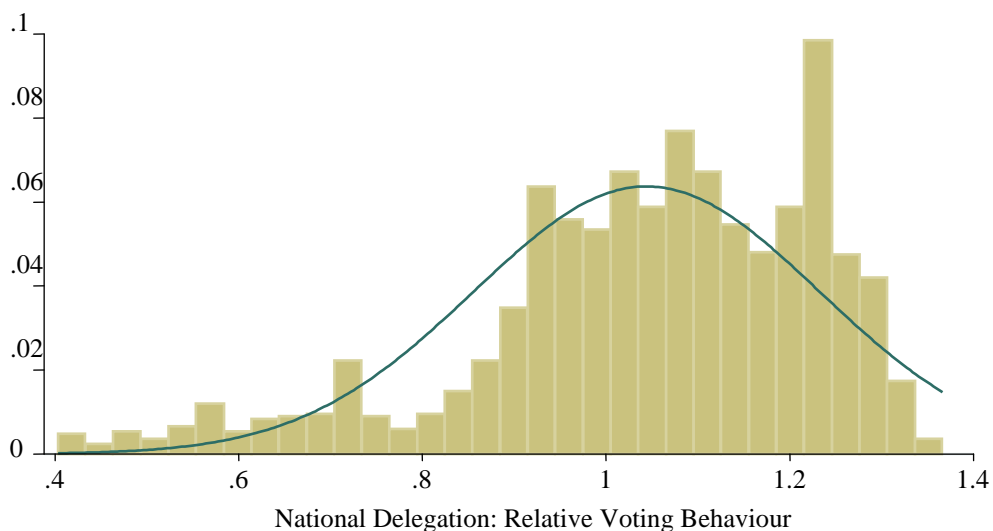
explain variation in MEPs' likelihood of following the voting positions of each of their three parliamentary sub-groups.

5.7.1 Following National Delegations' Voting Positions

As shown in Chapter 4, national delegations have been the least successful parliamentary sub-groups in promoting intra-group unity. This does, however, give most room for variation to be present among post-2004 MEPs' likelihood of following the voting positions of their national delegation, as opposed to those of their EP party group and national party delegation.

The presence of such variation is indeed clearly visible when looking at post-2004 MEPs' voting behaviour. The standard deviations in post-2004 MEPs' relative (absolute) likelihood of following the voting positions of their national delegation, EP party group, and national party delegation are 0.19 (14.6%), 0.11 (8.5%), and 0.05 (3.2%), respectively. Significant degree of variation does exist in the degree of loyalty that post-2004 MEPs show to their national delegation. Figure 5.1 displays this variation, with the height of the bars scaled to add up to 1 (y-axis), the overlaying continuous line displaying the appropriately scaled normal density, and the x-axis showing the spread of post-2004 MEPs' relative likelihood of following the voting positions of their national delegation.⁵⁷

Figure 5.1 Relative Voting Behaviour: National Delegation



⁵⁷ Note that 6 extreme outliers with relative score under 0.4 – Paul van Buitenen 0.04, Robert Kilroy-Silk 0.22, Philippe de Villiers 0.24, Paul Marie Couteaux 0.36, Laurence J.A.J. Stass 0.37, and Jean-Marie Le Pen 0.39 – are excluded from the graph to narrow the range on the x-axis and display better the variation.

Variation is clearly present in post-2004 MEPs' likelihood of following the voting positions of their national delegation. This is further emphasized by the range of values that the measurement takes. The relative and absolute measurements for the particular voting behaviour range from 0.04 and 2.9% to 1.33 and 99.1%. The lowest extreme value is attributed to Paul van Buitenen who entered the EP and its G-EFA party group in 2004, having been elected from the Europa Transparant (Europe Transparent) party list in the Netherlands. The highest extreme value represents the Polish MEP Jerzy Buzek in the Seventh Parliament; he belongs to the EPP party group and to the Platforma Obywatelska (Civic Platform) national party. There are vast differences in post-2004 MEPs' likelihood of showing loyalty to the voting positions of their national delegation.

Having shown the presence of variation in post-2004 MEPs' voting behaviour, I looked at whether certain EP party groups and national delegations incorporate MEPs who are particularly likely or unlikely to follow the voting positions of their national delegation. On one hand, it is the anti-integrationist MEPs who stand out as particularly less likely to show loyalty to their national delegation. MEPs who belonged to the IND/DEM in the Sixth Parliament and the Europe of Freedom and Democracy (EFD) in the Seventh Parliament were least likely to show loyalty to their national delegation; their mean relative (absolute) likelihood of doing so being respectively 0.65 (49.3%) and 0.67 (49.7%). In contrast, the corresponding mean scores for MEPs belonging to the EPP-ED in the Sixth Parliament and the Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe (ALDE) in the Seventh Parliament were as high as 1.13 (85.4%) and 1.11 (83.5%). The differences in MEPs' mean likelihood of following the voting positions of their national delegation, based on their supranational party-belonging, are significant. On the other hand, variation is also salient, albeit to lesser extent, when grouping post-2004 MEPs by national delegation. Looking at the mean relative (absolute) likelihood of MEPs who belong to same national delegation to follow the voting positions of their national delegation, it is the British and Dutch MEPs who have been the least likely ones to do so with their respective mean voting behaviour being 0.90 (67.5%) and 0.96 (71.8%). In contrast, the respective scores for Estonian and Maltese MEPs are 1.16 (87.6%) and 1.16 (87.6%). Although clustering of MEPs by national delegations displays less variation in MEPs' voting behaviour, the range of 0.26 (20.1%) is still noteworthy.

Significant variation exists in how frequently post-2004 MEPs vote with their national delegation. This is present when looking at individual MEPs' voting behaviour, as well as when looking at clusters of national delegations and EP party groups.

5.7.1.1 Multivariate Analysis

Multivariate regression analysis (Table 5.1) shows that this variation in MEPs' likelihood of following the voting positions of their national delegation systematically relates to both individual-level and contextual characteristics. Among the 3 control variables and 11 explanatory variables entered to the model, I found statistically significant evidence regarding the systematic variation-inducing role of four characteristics – one specific to MEPs, two describing how MEPs interact with their national delegation, and one country-specific characteristic. Showing an r-squared value of 0.29 and the Prob>F statistic of 0.00, the regression model is of a good fit. It explains a considerable degree of variation in post-2004 MEPs' voting behaviour.

Table 5.1 presents the findings of the multivariate OLS regression analysis. Predicted values for post-2004 MEPs' relative (and absolute) likelihood of following the voting positions of their national delegation are presented in Table 5.2 (page 141).

Table 5.1 Following National Delegation's Voting Positions

Explanatory Characteristic	Coefficient (Std. Err.)
<u>MEP</u>	
Career	-.00 (.02)
Future	-.01 (.02)
Left-Right	.00 (.01)
Identity	-.00 (.02)
Representation	.02** (.01)
<u>Interaction</u>	
Ideological Difference	-.04*** (.01)
Voting Instructions	.02*** (.01)
<u>Context</u>	
EU Member	.00 (.00)
Fractionalization	.00 (.00)
Ideological Diversity	-.01 (.01)
EP Importance	.01*** (.00)
<u>Control</u>	
EP Term	.02 (.04)
Gender	.02 (.02)
Age	-.00 (.00)
Constant	.40 (.33)
Observations	422
Nr of groups	62
R-squared	.29

***p<.01; **p<.05

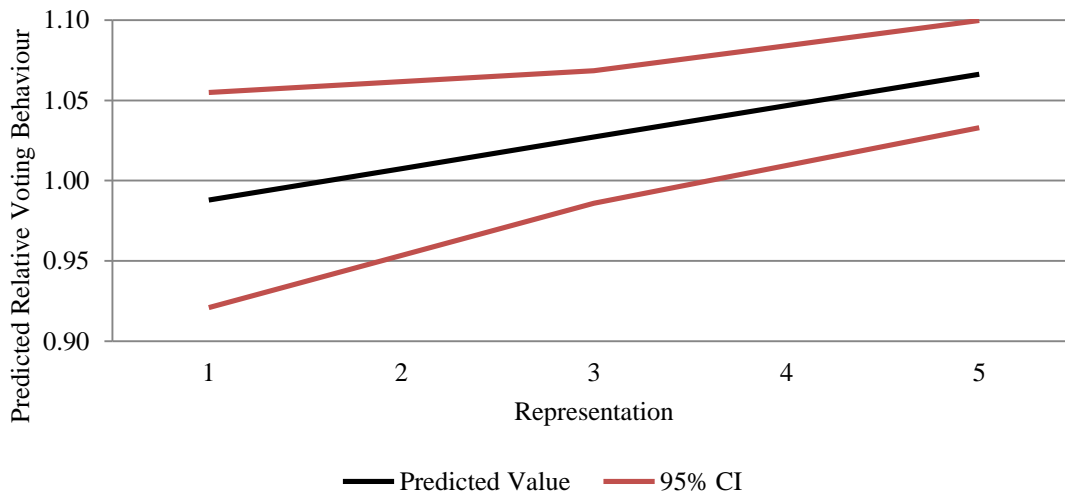
5.7.1.2 MEP: Sense of Representation

Table 5.1 highlights a relationship between the frequency with which an MEP follows the voting positions of his/her national delegation and his/her sense of representation. The positive coefficient of 0.02 shows that an MEP who perceives the

representation of his/her constituents' interests to be more important is also more likely to follow the voting positions of his/her national delegation. A one-unit increase in the perceived importance of constituents' interests on a scale from 1 to 5 corresponds to a 0.02-point increase in the relative frequency that he/she votes with his/her national delegation, supporting H5.1.3a.

To capture the substantive effect that an MEP's sense of representation has on his/her voting behaviour, Figure 5.2 presents the predicted values for the frequency that an MEP follows the voting positions of his/her national delegation (y-axis), given his/her sense of representation (x-axis).⁵⁸

Figure 5.2 Predicted Values: National Delegation by Representation



There is a clear positive relationship between the variables. When representation takes its minimum value of one, the predicted value for MEPs' relative (absolute) frequency of following the voting positions of their national delegation is 0.99 (74.3%) – i.e., proportion of voting occasions MEPs are loyal to their national delegation is even smaller than the mean parliamentary voting unity in the voting occasions that they participate in for MEPs who consider the representation of their constituents' interests to be of little importance. For MEPs who assign some importance to representing their constituents' interest (i.e., representation takes on a value of three), the predicted value for their voting behaviour is 1.03 (77.3%). Finally, for MEPs who assign great importance to their constituents' interests (i.e., representation takes on its maximum value of five), the predicted value for their voting behaviour is equal to 1.07 (80.2%).

⁵⁸ Corresponding graph with the predicted values for MEPs' absolute voting behaviour is presented in Figure B.4 (Appendix B).

The difference between the extreme categories of MEPs' sense of representation is 0.08 (5.9%). Holding all characteristics, but MEPs' sense of representation constant at their mean, MEPs with more nationality-driven role perception are showing greater loyalty to their national delegation.

The observed values of the frequency that MEPs follow their national delegation tell a similar story. The observed mean relative (absolute) frequency that post-2004 MEPs are following the voting positions of their national delegation is 1.01 (76%) among MEPs who assign little importance to representing their constituents' interests. For MEPs who assign some importance to representing their constituents' interests, the mean observed behaviour increases to 1.04 (78.5%). Finally, for MEPs who perceived the representation of their constituents' interest to be of great importance, the mean voting behaviour is 1.07 (80.3%).

Although the relationship between MEPs' sense of representation and the frequency that they follow their national delegation is statistically significant, it must be noted that the substantive impact is somewhat limited. As visible from Figure 5.2, there is overlap in the clusters of predicted values for MEPs' voting behaviour that fall within the 95% confidence intervals for when MEPs assign the least and most importance to representing their constituents' interests. The respective clusters of predicted dependent variables are 0.92-1.06 and 1.03-1.10. Although the overlap in the confidence intervals is not excessive, it is still present and does highlight the somewhat limited substantive effect that MEPs' sense of representation has on their voting behaviour.

Further Evidence

There is evidence to suggest that MEPs who hold more nationality-driven role perception should find their national delegation, which represents the interests of their national electorate the best, as their more natural partner for cooperation in the EP.

MEPs who assign the representation of their constituents' interests greater importance in their role perception tend to regard nationality more dominant in their self-perception also. When looking at the degree of importance an MEP assigns to representing the interests of his/her constituents and the saliency of his/her national identity within his/her self-determination, as opposed to the European identity, there is a positive relationship present; bivariate correlation coefficient of 0.11 (p-value=0.02). Whereas only 16.7% of MEPs who saw themselves as European only assigned more than some degree of relevance to representing the interests of their constituents, as many as 84.9% of MEPs who emphasized their national identity only did so.

At the same time, MEPs also appear to adjust their behaviour in relation to their role perception. MEPs who perceive representing the interests of their constituents to be more important are in more frequent contacts with their national delegation in the EP and the ministers from their home country. The correlation coefficients associated with these bivariate relationships are .10 (p-value=0.03) and .21 (p-value=0.00), respectively. Therefore, as an MEP interacts more frequently with nationality-driven actors – both in the EP and his/her home country – he/she may see his/her national delegation as a more natural partner for cooperation and dialogue. He/she should find it slightly easier to relate to his/her national delegation and its voting positions.

5.7.1.3 Interaction: Ideological Difference and Voting Instructions

Moving on the relationships between MEPs' voting choices and characteristics that describe their interaction with their national delegation, the multivariate regression model (Table 5.1) highlights the relevance of ideological difference and frequency of voting instructions. The negative coefficient of -0.04 for ideological difference indicates that the smaller the ideological difference is between an MEP's ideological self-placement and the mean ideological placement within his/her national delegation, the more often he/she follows the voting positions of his/her national delegation. At the same time, the positive coefficient of 0.02 associated with the frequency of voting instructions indicates that the more frequently an MEP receives voting instructions from his/her national delegation, the more often he/she follows the voting positions of his/her national delegation. A one-unit increase in the ideological difference and frequency of voting instructions corresponds to a 0.04-point decrease and a 0.02-point increase in the relative frequency that an MEP votes with his/her national delegation, respectively.⁵⁹ The findings support H5.2.1a and H5.2.2a, respectively.

To demonstrate the substantive effects of the two explanatory characteristics, Figures 5.3a and 5.3b present the predicted values for MEPs' likelihood of following the voting positions of their national delegation (y-axis) across the range of ideological differences and frequencies of voting instructions (x-axis), respectively.⁶⁰

The predicted frequency that MEPs follow the voting positions of their national delegation declines from 1.18 (74.3%) for MEPs whose ideological position matches perfectly with the mean ideological position in their national delegation to 0.79 (59.4%)

⁵⁹ Measurements for ideological difference range from 0.33 to 10.22, whereas the scale for frequency of voting instructions is from 1 to 5.

⁶⁰ Corresponding graphs with the predicted values for MEPs' absolute voting behaviour are presented in Figures B.5a and B.5b (Appendix B).

for MEPs who are ideologically far from their national delegation.⁶¹ Conversely, a positive relationship is present between MEPs' relative (absolute) voting behaviour and how often they perceive to receive voting instructions from their national delegation.⁶² The predicted frequency that MEPs follow the voting positions of their national delegation rises from 0.99 (74.5%) for MEPs who never receive voting instructions from their national delegation to 1.04 (77.9%) for MEPs who receive voting instructions sometimes, and finally to 1.08 (81.4%) for MEPs who do so almost always.⁶³

Figure 5.3a Predicted Values: National Delegation by Ideological Difference

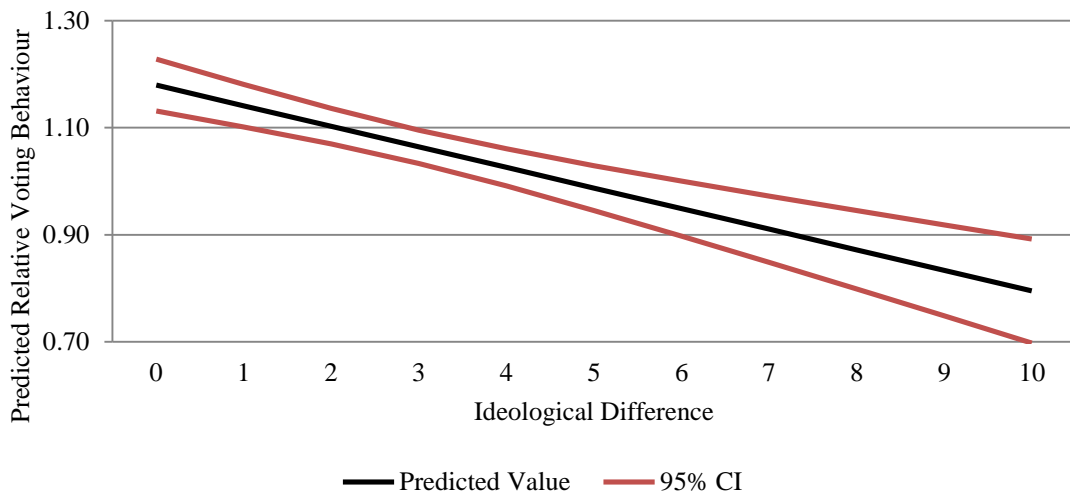
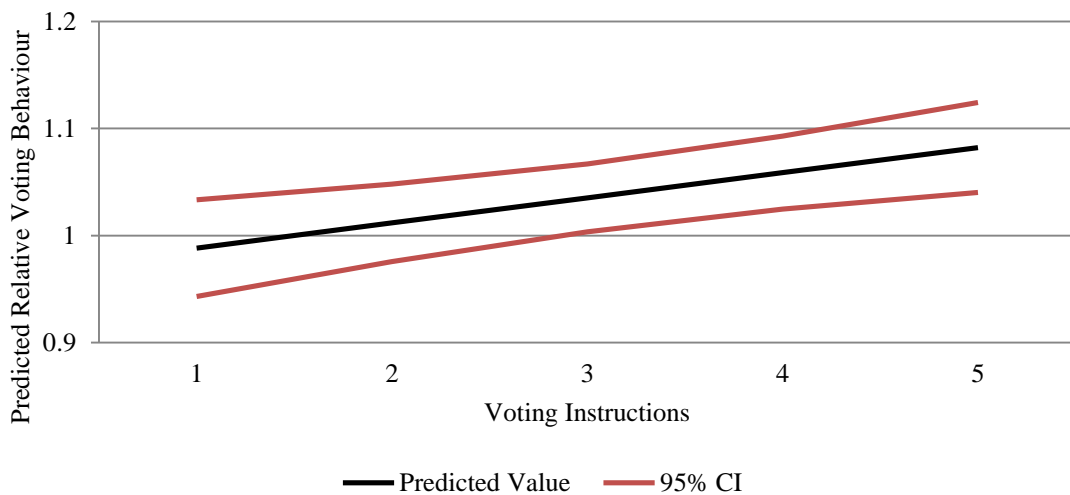


Figure 5.3b Predicted Values: National Delegation by Voting Instructions



⁶¹ Large difference is defined as 'ideological difference = 10' and no difference is defined as 'ideological difference = 0'.

⁶² Although it is not clear from looking at Figure 5.3b, there is no overlap in the 95% confidence intervals for the relationship. The lower- and upper-bound 95% confidence intervals for the lowest and highest values of the frequency of voting instructions are 0.94-1.03 and 1.04-1.11.

⁶³ Never is defined as 'voting instructions = 1', sometimes as 'voting instructions = 3', and almost always is defined as 'voting instructions = 5'.

Similar tendencies are also evident when focusing on changes in MEPs' observed voting behaviour. Whereas the mean observed value for MEPs' relative (absolute) frequency of following the voting positions of their national delegation is 1.08 (81%) among MEPs who are relatively close to the mean ideological position of their national delegation, it declines to 0.91 (68%) among MEPs who are relatively far from the mean ideological position of their national delegation.⁶⁴ When comparing the mean relative (absolute) observed loyalty that MEPs show to the voting positions of their national delegation, given the frequency that they receive voting instructions, the mean voting behaviour rises from 0.96 (72.4%) among MEPs who never receive voting instructions from their national delegation to 1.06 (79.7%) among MEPs who receive voting instructions from their national delegation almost always. Therefore, regardless of whether predicted or observed values are used, MEPs who are ideologically closer to their national delegation and receive voting instructions more often from their national delegation also follow the voting positions of their national delegation more frequently.

Further Evidence

There is supporting evidence for the idea that it is easier for an MEP to be loyal to his/her national delegation when being ideologically closer to the mean position within his/her national delegation and when receiving more frequent voting instructions from his/her national delegation. Bivariate correlation coefficients of -0.07 (p-value=0.11) and .11 (p-value=0.02) show that MEPs who are ideologically closer to the mean position within their national delegation and who receive more frequent voting instructions from their national delegation, respectively, assign greater relevance to representing the interests of their constituents. The kind of interactions MEPs have with their national delegation do appear to frame, albeit in a limited manner, how prevalent they perceive the interests of these actors who are represented by national delegations. Having more constrained interactions with one's national delegation is related to assigning less importance to representing the interests of one's constituents.

5.7.1.4 Context: EP Importance

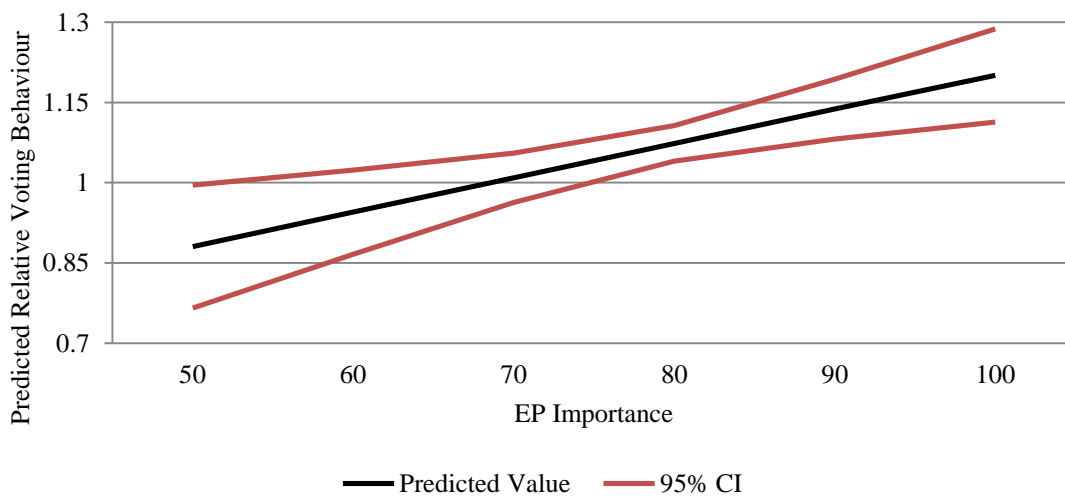
The multivariate regression model (Table 5.1) also indicates that there is a statistically significant relationship between the frequency that MEPs follow the voting positions of their national delegation and one contextual characteristic: the importance

⁶⁴ Relatively close is defined as 'ideological difference < 5' and relatively far is defined as 'ideological difference > 5'.

of the EP in their home country. A positive coefficient of 0.01 in the multivariate setting shows that the more people treat the EP as an important institution within the EU in an MEP's home country, the more often he/she shows voting loyalty to his/her national delegation. A one-unit increase (effectively a 1% increase since the characteristic ranges from 0% to 100%) in the percentage of people treating the EP as important corresponds to a 0.01-point increase in the relative frequency that an MEP votes with his/her national delegation. This finding supports the theoretical expectations set out in H5.3.1.

Figure 5.4 presents predicted values for how frequently MEPs follow the voting positions of their national delegation (y-axis) across the range of values for the importance of the EP (x-axis).⁶⁵

Figure 5.4 Predicted Values: National Delegation by EP Importance



There is clearly a positive relationship between the two variables. The predicted value for MEPs' relative (absolute) likelihood of following the voting positions of their national delegation rises from 0.88 (66%) for MEPs elected from country where the EP is perceived important by some people to 1.08 (81.4%) for MEPs elected from countries where the EP is perceived important by everyone.⁶⁶ The difference in MEPs' voting behaviour when elected from countries where half of the people or all the people treat the EP as an important institution within the EU is 0.2 (15.4%), indicating that the variable is extremely important for explaining how diversity shapes MEPs' approach to parliamentary representation.

⁶⁵ Corresponding graph with the predicted values for MEPs' absolute voting behaviour is presented in Figure B.6 (Appendix B).

⁶⁶ Some people is defined as 'EP importance = 50' and everyone is defined as 'EP importance = 100'.

Moreover, this empirical trend is also evident when looking at variation in MEPs' observed, rather than predicted, voting behaviour. Whereas the mean relative (absolute) frequency that post-2004 MEPs are following the voting positions of their national delegation is 0.99 (74.8%) among MEPs elected from countries where fewer than three-quarters of people consider the EP to be an important institution within the EU, it rises to 1.08 (81.6%) for MEPs elected from countries where more than three-quarters of people do so.

Further Evidence

There is further evidence to suggest that MEPs elected from countries where the EP is perceived to be an important institution by more people are in fact under greater pressure to adopt a nationality-driven approach to their voting behaviour. Looking at other measures that tap into interest taken in the parliamentary affairs, there are indications that national electorates who perceive the EP to be more important treat the institution as one which policies are worth greater interest.

European affairs appear to be slightly more relevant in countries where more people treat the EP as an important institution. Bivariate correlation coefficients of 0.10 (p-value=0.00) and 0.12 (p-value=0.00) show that the more important the EP is treated within a country, the better informed of the parliamentary affairs people consider to be and the more influence they think they have over European policy-making, respectively. It is only fair to assume that MEPs elected from a these countries are more sensitive to the punishment powers of their electorate, simply because their electorate should be better able to link MEPs' future electoral success to their parliamentary behaviour. Therefore, countries where more people assign importance to the EP should influence MEPs to be more cautious of discarding the preferences of their national electorate and showing disloyalty to the voting positions of their national delegation.

5.7.1.5 Which Characteristics are particularly useful for Explaining Variation?

The multivariate regression model (Table 5.1) indicates that four explanatory characteristics are consistently important for explaining variation in the frequency that different post-2004 MEPs follow the voting positions of their national delegation. Table 5.2 presents the predicted relative (absolute) values for MEPs' voting behaviour change for all those four explanatory variables, allowing for a comparison of the effects across variables. It highlights the particular relevance of two explanatory characteristics – i.e.,

ideological difference and EP importance – in helping us better understand how diversity shapes post-2004 MEPs’ likelihood of voting with their national delegation.

Table 5.2 Predicted Voting Behaviour: National Delegation

Explanatory Characteristic	Relative Voting Behaviour			Absolute Voting Behaviour (%)		
	Mean	95% LB CI	95% UB CI	Mean	95% LB CI	95% UB CI
<u>MEP: Representation</u>						
Little Importance (=1)	0.99	0.92	1.06	74.3	69.3	79.3
Some Importance (=3)	1.03	0.99	1.07	77.3	74.2	80.3
Great Importance (=5)	1.07	1.03	1.10	80.2	77.7	82.7
<u>Interaction: Ideological Difference</u>						
No Difference (=0)	1.18	1.13	1.23	88.8	85.1	92.4
Some Difference (=5)	0.99	0.94	1.03	74.1	70.9	77.3
Large Difference (=10)	0.79	0.69	0.89	59.4	52.0	66.8
<u>Interaction: Voting Instructions</u>						
Never (=1)	0.99	0.94	1.03	74.5	71.0	77.9
Sometimes (=3)	1.04	1.00	1.07	77.9	75.5	80.3
Almost Always (=5)	1.08	1.04	1.12	81.4	78.3	84.4
<u>Context: EP Importance</u>						
Not Very Important (=50)	0.88	0.77	1.00	66.0	57.3	74.6
Rather Important (=75)	1.04	1.01	1.08	78.3	75.7	80.9
Very Important (=100)	1.20	1.11	1.29	90.6	83.9	97.4

The ideological difference between an MEP and his/her national delegation is measured as the cumulative difference between an MEP’s ideal position and the mean position of his/her fellow countrymen and women on the traditional left-right and pro-anti integrationist spectrums. The change in the predicted values indicates that it has a significant influence on MEPs’ interactions with their national delegation, an effect that outweighs the effect of the other characteristics. Holding other characteristics constant at their mean, the predicted relative (absolute) voting behaviour for MEPs who share highly similar ideological beliefs with their fellow countrymen and women is 1.18 (88.8%), but only 0.79 (59.4%) for MEPs who are ideologically far away from the mean position of their national delegation. As shown in Table 5.2, this difference – i.e., 0.39 (29.4%) – is the largest one in MEPs’ voting behaviour when comparing MEPs who are located at the extreme ends of the four different explanatory characteristics.

In addition, the percentage of people in an MEP’s home country that considers the EP to be an important institution within the EU also appears to be highly useful for explaining variation in MEPs’ voting behaviour. As shown in Table 5.2, the predicted relative (absolute) frequency of following one’s national delegation is as low as 0.88 (66%) for an MEP who is elected from a country where only half of the people consider the EP to be an important institution within the EU, whereas it is considerably higher at 1.20 (90.6%) for an MEP who is elected from a country where everyone perceives the

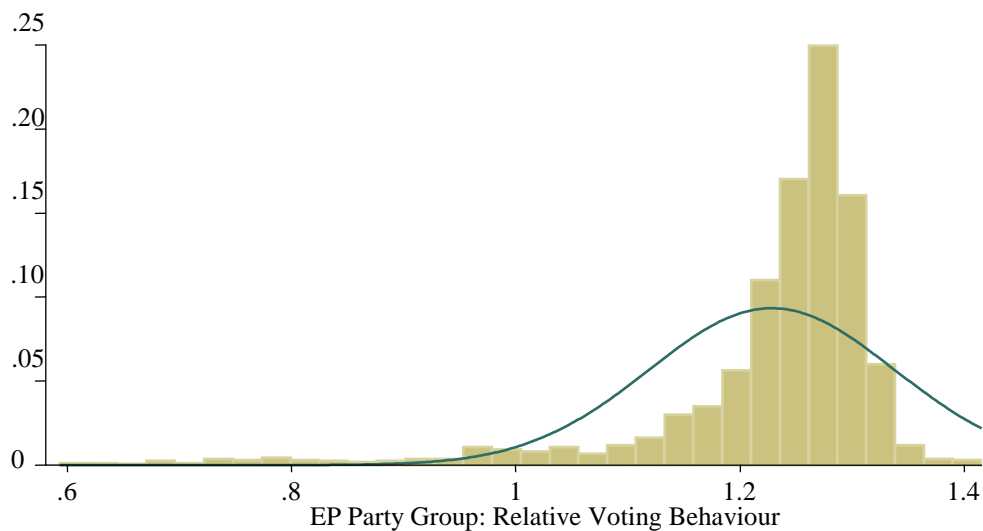
EP as an important institution within the EU. The difference in MEPs' predicted voting behaviour – i.e., 0.32 (24.6%) – is smaller than the difference that can be attributed to the ideological difference, but is, nonetheless, extremely large.

5.7.2 Following EP Party Groups' Voting Positions

As shown in Chapter 4, ideology-oriented EP party groups have more success in promoting intra-group voting unity than the nationality-driven national delegations. Post-2004 MEPs, on average, follow the voting positions of their EP party group on 92.4% of the voting occasions they participate in (mean relative voting behaviour score: 1.23). Despite the high level of voting unity, there is still considerable variation in this aspect of post-2004 MEPs' voting choices.

Looking at the standard deviation of the relative (absolute) frequency that post-2004 MEPs follow the voting positions of their EP party group, we see that it reaches as high as 0.11 (8.5%). The corresponding measurements for loyalty to national delegation and national party delegation are 0.19 (14.6%) and 0.05 (3.2%), respectively. Figure 5.5 displays the variation in MEPs' voting loyal to their EP party group. The heights of the bars are scaled to add up to one, while the overlaying continuous line displays the appropriately scaled normal density. The x-axis shows the spread of post-2004 MEPs' relative likelihood of following the voting positions of their EP party group.⁶⁷

Figure 5.5 Relative Voting Behaviour: EP Party Group



⁶⁷ Note that 2 extreme outliers with relative score under 0.5 – Paul van Buitenen 0.08 and Georgios Georgio 0.45 – have been excluded from the graph to narrow the range on x-axis and display better the existing variation in post-2004 MEPs' voting behaviour.

Figure 5.5 highlights that there is considerable variation in how frequently post-2004 MEPs follow the voting positions of their EP party group. The difference between the highest and lowest frequency is 1.34 (92.2%). The lowest value – i.e., 0.08 (6.2%) – is attributed to Paul van Buitenen who entered the EP and its G-EFA party group in 2004, having been elected from the Europa Transparant (Europe Transparent) party list in the Netherlands. At the same time, the highest extreme value – i.e., 1.42 (98.4%) – belongs to a Romanian MEP Cătălin Sorin Ivan who was elected to the EP in 2009 from the Partidul Social Democrat (Social Democratic Party) national party and who entered the Progressive Alliance of Socialists and Democrats (S&D). Although there is slightly less variation in post-2004 MEPs' likelihood of following the voting positions of their EP party group than those of their national delegation, it is still very much evident.

I also look at whether some EP party groups and national delegations are particularly prone (or not) to voting unity (or disunity). Some outliers are visible when examining MEPs by their EP party group and national delegation. Once again, it is the anti-integrationist MEPs who stand out. MEPs' mean relative (absolute) frequency of following the voting positions of their EP party group is 0.86 (64.5%) for the IND/DEM group in the Sixth Parliament and 0.86 (64.6%) for the EFD group in the Seventh Parliament. By contrast, it is 1.25 (93.9%) for the PES group in the Sixth Parliament and 1.29 (97.5%) the Greens-EFA group in the Seventh Parliament. Excluding the IND/DEM and EFD groups, the second lowest mean voting behaviour in the post-2004 parliaments is actually rather high; 1.10 (82.8%) for the Union for Europe of the Nations (UEN) in the Sixth Parliament and 1.17 (88.0%) for the European United Left – Nordic Green Alliance (GUE-NGL) in the Seventh Parliament. At the same time, variation is also present, albeit to a limited extent, when grouping MEPs by their national delegation. Looking at the mean relative (absolute) frequency of MEPs elected from the same EU member state to follow the voting positions of their EP party group, Danish and Swedish MEPs have been the least likely ones to do so; their respective voting behaviour being 1.14 (85.9%) and 1.14 (85.7%). In contrast, the respective scores for Bulgarian and Slovenian MEPs are 1.16 (87.6%) and 1.16 (87.6%)

Significant variation also exists in how frequently post-2004 MEPs vote with their EP party group. This is clearly present when looking at individual MEPs' voting choices, as well as when looking at clusters of fellow supranational partisans.

5.7.2.1 Multivariate Analysis

Multivariate regression analysis (Table 5.3) shows that this variation in the frequency that MEPs follow the voting positions of their EP party group is not random. Rather, it systematically relates to both individual-level and contextual characteristics. Among the three control variables and ten explanatory variables entered to the model, I found evidence of a statistically significant relationship for five characteristics: two specific to both MEPs and the way they interact with their EP party group, and specific to the EP party group. Given that the model has an r-squared of 0.38 (Prob>F statistic of 0.00), the regression model is of a very good fit – i.e., it explains a considerable degree of variation in post-2004 MEPs’ voting behaviour.

Table 5.3 presents the findings of the multivariate OLS regression analysis. Predicted values for the corresponding relative (and absolute) frequency that post-2004 MEPs follow the voting positions of their EP party group are presented in Table 5.4 (page 152).

Table 5.3 Following EP Party Group’s Voting Positions

Explanatory Characteristic	Coefficient (Std. Err.)
<u>MEP</u>	
Career	.01 (.01)
Future	.01 (.01)
Left-Right	-.01** (.00)
Identity	.03** (.02)
Representation	.01 (.00)
<u>Interaction</u>	
Ideological Difference	-.01** (.00)
Voting Instructions	.01** (.00)
<u>Context</u>	
EU Member	-.00 (.00)
Fractionalization	.00 (.00)
Ideological Diversity	-.07*** (.02)
<u>Control</u>	
EP Term	.01 (.02)
Gender	.00 (.01)
Age	-.00 (.00)
Constant	1.30*** (.15)
Observations	433
Nr of groups	62
R-squared	.38

***p<.01; **p<.05

5.7.2.2 MEP: Left-Right Stance and Identity

Looking first at the individual-level characteristics, Table 5.3 highlights the relevance of MEPs’ left-right ideological stance and identity in shaping the frequency that MEPs follow the voting positions of their EP party group. The negative coefficient

associated with MEPs' left-right ideological stance (-0.01) and the positive coefficient associated with their identity (0.03) indicate that leftist MEPs and MEPs for whom the European identity is more dominant in their self-perception follow the voting positions of their EP party group more frequently. A one-unit increase in ideology and in the importance of being European corresponds to a 0.01-point decrease and to a 0.03-point increase in the relative frequency that an MEP votes with his/her fellow supranational partisans, respectively. These findings support H5.1.1 and H5.1.2, respectively.

To highlight the substantive effects of ideology and European identity on MEPs' relative voting behaviour, Figures 5.6a and 5.6b show the predicted values for the frequency that MEPs follow the voting positions of their EP party group (y-axis) in relation to each of the two explanatory characteristics (x-axis).⁶⁸

Figure 5.6a Predicted Values: EP Party Group by Left-Right

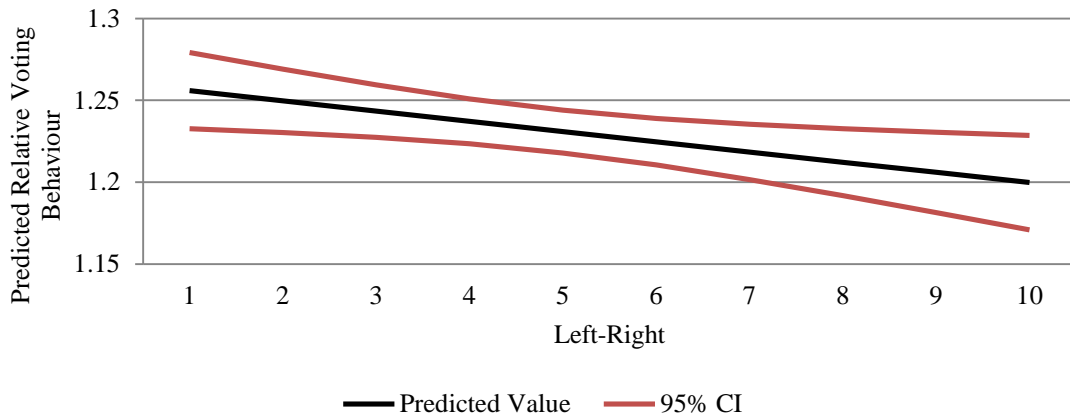
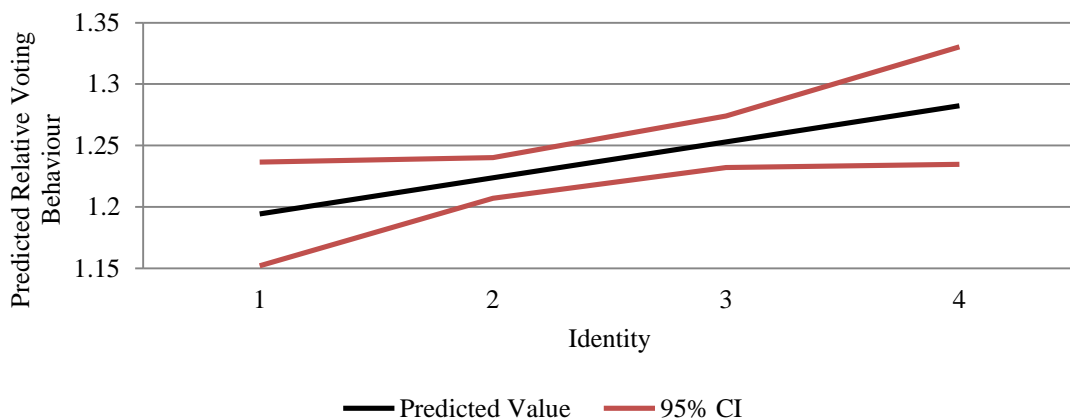


Figure 5.6b Predicted Values: EP Party Group by Identity



⁶⁸ Corresponding graphs with the predicted values for MEPs' absolute voting behaviour are presented in Figures B.7a and B.7b (Appendix B).

The two explanatory characteristics are clearly related to the frequency that MEPs follow the voting positions of their EP party group. Looking at how MEPs' relative (absolute) voting behaviour relates to their ideological position on the traditional left-right spectrum, a negative and substantially meaningful relationship is present. The predicted value for MEPs' likelihood of following the voting positions of their EP party group declines from 1.26 (94.8%) for MEPs who are on the extreme left to 1.20 (90.4%) for extreme rightist MEPs.⁶⁹ At the same time, a positive relationship is present when looking at MEPs' relative (absolute) voting behaviour and the dominance of the European identity in their self-determination.⁷⁰ The predicted value for the frequency that MEPs follow the voting positions of their EP party group increases from 1.19 (89.5%) for MEPs who see themselves through their national identity only to as high as 1.28 (96.9%) for MEPs who see themselves as European only.⁷¹

Moreover, similar patterns are also evident when looking at how changes in the two individual-level characteristics are related to changes in post-2004 MEPs' observed, rather than predicted loyalty. Whereas MEPs' mean voting behaviour is 1.25 (94.1%) when looking at MEPs who situate themselves on the left side of the left-right spectrum, it is 1.21 (91.3%) for MEPs on the right side of the spectrum.⁷² The corresponding measurements for MEPs who saw themselves European only or as relating to only their national identity are 1.03 (76.6%) and 1.25 (94.1%), respectively.

Further Evidence

There is also supporting evidence to suggest that MEPs who are more leftist and European ought to be more sympathetic towards supranationalism both in their ideological viewpoints and real life behaviour. By their very nature, these MEPs should more readily accept the unique supranational structure for decision-making of the EP. Bivariate correlation coefficients of -0.25 (p-value=0.00) and 0.50 (p-value=0.00) show that MEPs who are more leftist and more European, respectively, are also more pro-European integration. It is the EP party groups, rather than national delegations or national party delegations, who are the frontrunners of supranational decision-making and interests that cross national boundaries in the EP. As such, they are also more

⁶⁹ Extreme left is defined as 'left-right = 0' and extreme right is defined as 'left-right = 10'.

⁷⁰ Although it is not as clear from looking at Figures 5.6a and 5.6b, there is no overlap in the 95% confidence intervals for neither relationship. The lower- and upper-bound 95% confidence intervals for the lowest and highest values of the explanatory characteristics are 1.24-1.29 and 1.17-1.23 for left-right, whereas 1.15-1.24 and 1.24-1.33 for identity.

⁷¹ National identity only is defined as 'identity = 1' and European identity is defined as 'identity = 4'.

⁷² Left is defined as 'left-right < 5', while right is defined as 'left-right > 5'.

natural partners for cooperation for MEPs who are more leftist and more European in their ideological beliefs and self-perception.

This tendency also appears to have been recognised by MEPs, with more leftist and European MEPs tailoring their parliamentary behaviour towards their EP party group to greater extent. Bivariate correlation coefficients 0.17 and 0.20 (p-values=0.00) show that MEPs who are more leftist and more European, respectively, perceive the views of their EP party group to be more relevant when approaching parliamentary voting. Moreover, bivariate correlation coefficients 0.09 (p-value=0.04) and 0.14 (p-value=0.00) show that the more leftist and European MEPs are, the more frequently they are in contact with their fellow supranational partisans.

5.7.2.3 Interaction: Ideological Difference and Voting Instructions

Moving on to the relationship between MEPs' voting behaviour and the characteristics that describe their interactions with their EP party group, the multivariate regression model (Table 5.3) indicates that two explanatory characteristics – i.e., ideological difference and frequency of voting instructions – consistently relate to variation in MEPs' voting behaviour. The negative coefficient of -0.01 associated with the ideological difference indicates that the greater the ideological difference between an MEP's ideological self-placement and the mean ideological placement among his/her fellow supranational partisans, the less frequently he/she follows the voting positions of his/her EP party group. At the same time, the positive coefficient of 0.01 associated with the frequency of voting instructions indicates that the more frequently he/she receives voting instructions from his/her EP party group, the more often he/she follows the voting positions of his/her EP party group. A one-unit increase in the ideological difference and frequency of voting instructions corresponds to a 0.01-point decrease and to a 0.01-point increase in the relative frequency by which an MEP votes with his/her EP party group respectively.⁷³ These findings support the theoretical expectations as set out in H5.2.1b and H5.2.2b, respectively.

The substantive relationships between MEPs' frequency of following the voting positions of their EP party group and the two explanatory characteristics are shown in Figures 5.7a and 5.7b. In Figure 5.7a, ideological difference (x-axis) is plotted against MEPs' predicted relative voting behaviour (y-axis). In Figure 5.7b, MEPs' predicted

⁷³ Measurements for ideological difference range from 0 to 13, whereas the scale for frequency of voting instructions ranges between 1 and 5.

relative voting behaviour (y-axis) is assessed against frequency of voting instructions (x-axis).⁷⁴

Figure 5.7a Predicted Values: EP Party Group by Ideological Difference

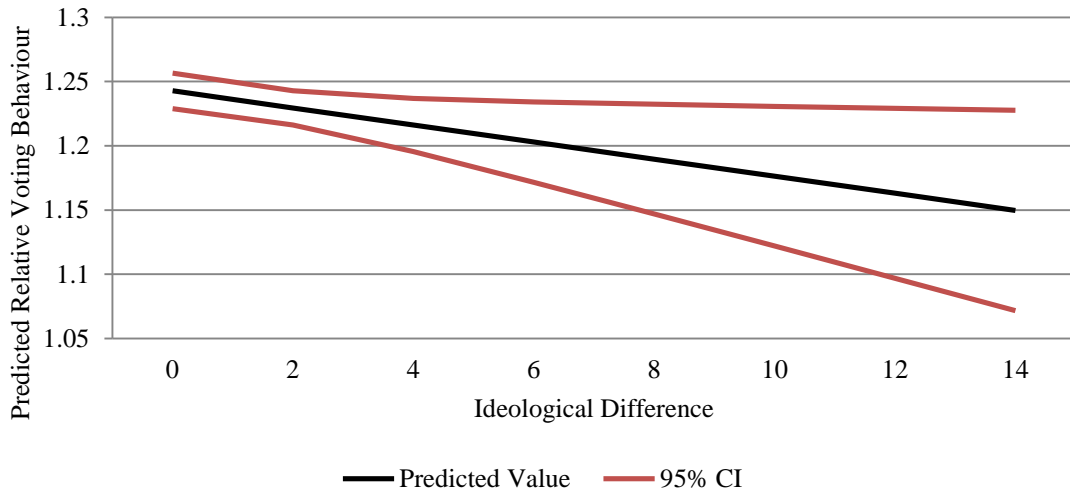


Figure 5.7b Predicted Values: EP Party Group by Voting Instructions

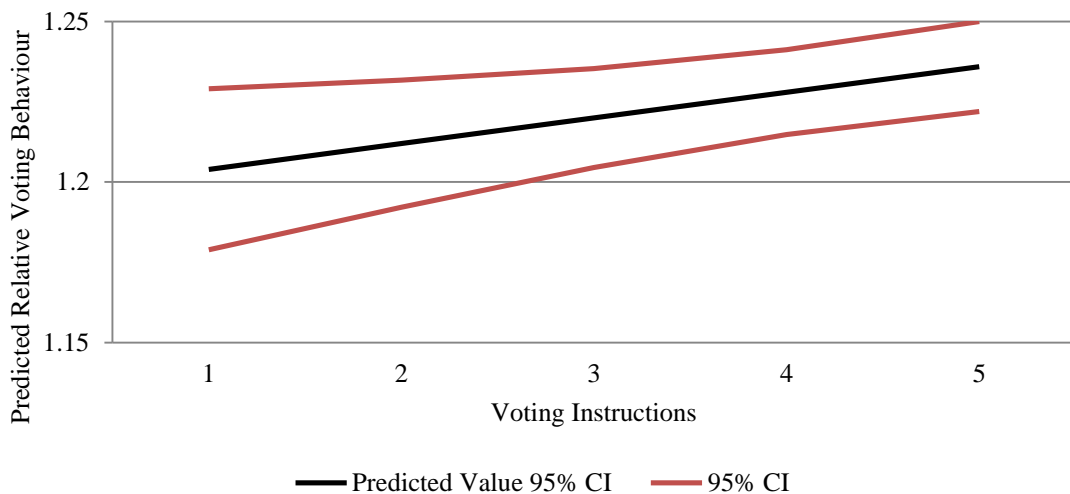


Figure 5.7a shows that there is a negative relationship between the relative frequency that MEPs follow the voting positions of their EP party group and the distance between MEPs' ideal ideological position and the mean ideological position of their fellow supranational partisans.⁷⁵ The predicted relative (absolute) value for MEPs' voting behaviour declines from 1.24 (93.5%) for MEPs whose ideological position matches perfectly with the mean ideological position in their EP party group to 1.15

⁷⁴ Corresponding graphs with predicted values for MEPs' absolute voting behaviour on the y-axis are presented in Figures B.8a and B.8b (Appendix B).

⁷⁵ Although it is not as clear from looking at Figure 5.7a, there is no overlap in the 95% confidence intervals for the relationship. The lower- and upper-bound 95% confidence intervals for the lowest and highest values of ideological difference are 1.23-1.26 and 1.07-1.22, respectively.

(86.2%) for MEPs who are ideologically very far from the mean position of their EP party group.⁷⁶ At the same time, Figure 5.7b shows a positive relationship is present between how often MEPs receive voting instructions from their EP party group and their relative voting behaviour. The predicted value for MEPs' relative (absolute) likelihood of following the voting positions of their EP party group rises from 1.20 (90.6%) for MEPs who never receive voting instructions to 1.24 (92.9%) for MEPs who receive them for almost all voting occasions.⁷⁷

Similar tendencies are also clearly evident in MEPs' actual voting behaviour. Whereas the mean observed value for MEPs' relative (absolute) likelihood of following the voting positions of their EP party group is 1.24 (93%) among MEPs who are relatively close to the mean ideological position of their fellow supranational partisans, it declines to 1.12 (84.2%) among MEPs who are far away from the mean ideological position in their EP party group.⁷⁸ When comparing the observed loyalty that MEPs show to the voting positions of their EP party group among different categories of MEPs – i.e., MEPs who receive voting instructions from their EP party group never or almost always – there is a clear increase in the frequency that they vote with their EP group; mean voting behaviour rises from 1.16 (87.3%) to 1.24 (93%).

It must be noted that the effect associated with the frequency by which MEPs receive voting instructions from their EP party group, albeit statistically significant, is of limited substantive relevance. As visible from Figure 5.7b, there is a degree of overlap in the clusters of predicted values for MEPs' voting behaviour that fall within the 95% confidence intervals for 'never' and 'almost always' categories. The lower- and upper-bound 95% confidence intervals for the lowest and highest values of frequency of voting instructions are 1.18-1.23 and 1.22-1.25, respectively. Although the overlap is small, it does highlight the somewhat limited substantive effect that the particular explanatory characteristic has on explaining variation in MEPs' voting behaviour.

Further Evidence

Supporting evidence from individual-level MEP surveys by Farrell et al. (2011) and the European Election Study (2012a) suggests that MEPs should find it easier (and more necessary) to be loyal to their EP party group when ideologically closer to their fellow supranational partisans and receiving more frequent voting instructions from

⁷⁶ No difference is defined as 'ideological difference = 0' and great difference is defined as 'ideological difference = 14'.

⁷⁷ Never is defined as 'voting instructions = 1' and almost always is defined as 'voting instructions = 5'.

⁷⁸ Relatively close is defined as 'ideological difference < 7', far is defined as 'ideological difference > 7'.

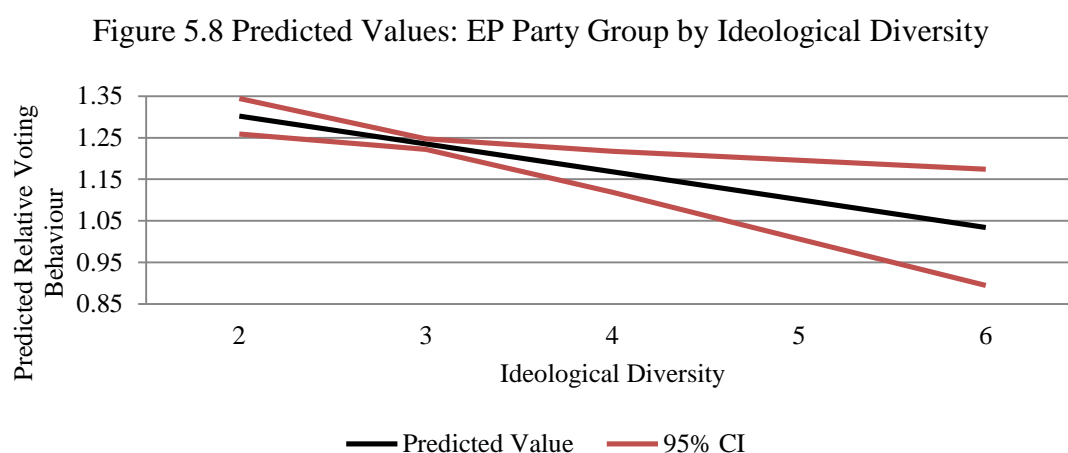
their EP party group. Bivariate correlation coefficients of 0.15 and 0.20 (p-values=0.00) show that MEPs whose ideological self-placement is closer to the mean ideological position within their EP party group and who receive more frequent voting instructions from their EP party group, respectively, also assign greater relevance to the views of their EP party group when approaching parliamentary voting. Moreover, bivariate correlation coefficients of 0.17 and 0.16 (p-values=0.00) show that these MEPs are also in more frequent contact with their supranational partisans.

The way an MEP interacts with his/her EP party group does frame how he/she approaches parliamentary representation. An MEP whose interactions with his/her EP party group are more constrained also tends to hold less sympathy to the interests of his/her EP party group and have fewer contacts with fellow supranational partisans.

5.7.2.4 Context: Ideological Diversity

Finally, Table 5.3 highlights that one contextual characteristic helps to explain variation in the frequency that MEPs follow the voting positions of their EP party group in a consistent manner: ideological diversity. The negative coefficient of -0.07 shows that the more ideologically diverse EP party group an MEP belongs to, the less likely he/she votes with his/her EP party group; a one-unit increase in diversity corresponds to a 0.07-point decrease in his/her likelihood of doing so.⁷⁹ This supports H5.3.2a.

To highlight display the substantive relationship between ideological diversity and MEPs' voting behaviour, Figure 5.8 indicates how the predicted values for MEPs' likelihood of following the voting positions of their EP party group (y-axis) vary in relation to the ideological diversity in their EP party group (x-axis).⁸⁰



⁷⁹ Observed measurements for ideological diversity range from 2.4 to 5.7.

⁸⁰ Corresponding graph with the predicted values for MEPs' absolute voting behaviour on the y-axis is presented in B.9 (Appendix B).

Figure 5.8 highlights a strong negative relationship between the two variables. As the ideological diversity increases within an MEP's EP party group, he/she displays considerably weaker loyalty to his/her fellow supranational partisans. Whereas MEPs' predicted relative (absolute) frequency of following the voting positions of their EP party group is as high as 1.30 (97.8%) for MEPs who belong to an EP party group with low intra-group ideological diversity, the predicted voting behaviour declines to as low as 1.03 (78.2%) if an MEP's EP party group is ideologically very diverse.⁸¹

Unsurprisingly, the same empirical tendency is also present when looking at changes in post-2004 MEPs' observed voting choices. Whereas MEPs' relative (absolute) frequency of showing voting loyalty to their EP party group is 1.24 (93.5%) among MEPs who belong to a rather homogeneous EP party group, the corresponding score is 1.02 (76.8%) among MEPs who belong to a heterogeneous EP party group.⁸²

Further Evidence

The relative ease by which the ideologically homogenous EP party groups ought to be able to promote intra-group voting unity is further supported by variation in the EP party groups' means of influencing MEPs' political career within the EP. A bivariate correlation coefficient $-.49$ ($p\text{-value}=.00$) shows a strong relationship between the level of intra-group ideological diversity among the EP party groups and their size, with bigger EP party groups being less diverse on ideological lines. However, the procedural means that the EP party groups have to influence their members' political career (e.g., ability to allocate speaking time, assign rapporteurships) are allocated to the EP party groups on the basis of their size (European Parliament, 2012a). Therefore, it is the larger EP party groups that are better able to shape their members' actions, as they have more rewards at their disposal to offer as incentives for loyalty.

As a result, an MEP who belongs to a more ideologically diverse EP party group does not just face a more difficult context for reaching intra-group voting consensus, but he/she also faces a principal who is less able to promote overcoming these differences. It is only fair to expect that this further contributes to the idea that common voting positions within ideologically more diverse EP party groups are more difficult to reach.

⁸¹ Low diversity is defined as 'ideological diversity = 2' and high diversity is defined as 'ideological diversity = 6'.

⁸² Homogeneity is defined as 'ideological diversity < 4', whereas heterogeneity is defined as 'ideological diversity > 4'.

5.7.2.5 Which Characteristics are particularly useful for Explaining Variation?

The multivariate regression model (Table 5.3) indicates that five explanatory characteristics looked at are explaining variation in the frequency that post-2004 MEPs follow the voting positions of their EP party group in a consistent manner. To determine which one(s) might be particularly useful for explaining this variation, Table 5.4 shows MEPs' predicted relative and absolute voting behaviour for all those five characteristics.

Table 5.4 Predicted Voting Behaviour: EP Party Group

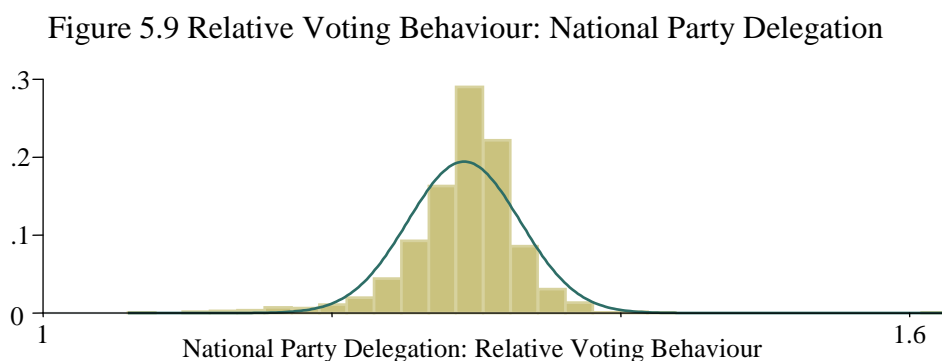
Explanatory Characteristic	Relative Voting Behaviour			Absolute Voting Behaviour (%)		
	Mean	95% LB CI	95% UB CI	Mean	95% LB CI	95% UB CI
<u>MEP: Left-Right</u>						
Left (=0)	1.26	1.24	1.29	94.8	92.7	96.8
Middle (=5)	1.23	1.22	1.24	92.6	91.6	93.5
Right (=10)	1.20	1.17	1.23	90.4	88.2	92.5
<u>MEP: Identity</u>						
National Only (=1)	1.19	1.15	1.24	89.5	86.3	92.7
European Only (=4)	1.28	1.24	1.33	96.9	93.3	100.5
<u>Interaction: Ideological Difference</u>						
No Difference (=0)	1.24	1.23	1.26	93.5	92.5	94.6
Some Difference (=7)	1.20	1.16	1.23	89.9	87.3	92.5
Large Difference (=14)	1.15	1.07	1.23	86.2	80.7	91.7
<u>Interaction: Voting Instructions</u>						
Never (=1)	1.20	1.18	1.23	90.6	88.7	92.5
Sometimes (=3)	1.22	1.21	1.24	91.8	90.6	92.9
Almost Always (=5)	1.24	1.22	1.25	92.9	91.9	94.0
<u>Context: Ideological Diversity</u>						
Low Diversity (=2)	1.30	1.26	1.35	97.8	94.4	101.2
Some Diversity (=4)	1.17	1.12	1.22	88.0	84.3	91.6
High Diversity (=6)	1.03	0.89	1.17	78.2	67.7	88.7

First, the ideological diversity in the EP party group that an MEP belongs to stands out as an important predictor of his/her likelihood of following the voting positions of his/her EP party group. Measured as the cumulative standard deviation among its members' left-right and pro-anti integrationist self-placements, increases in ideological diversity reduce MEPs' loyalty to their EP party group to a considerable degree. The change in the predicted value for an MEP's relative (absolute) likelihood of following the voting positions of his/her EP party group is extremely large. For an MEP who belongs to a highly diverse EP party group, the predicted voting behaviour is as low as 1.03 (78.2%). In contrast, for an MEP who belongs to an EP party group that is rather homogeneous, the predicted voting behaviour is 1.30 (97.8%). As shown in Table 5.4, this difference of 0.27 (19.6%) is the largest of the five explanatory characteristics. Therefore, ideological diversity is an important explanatory characteristic for understanding variation in how often MEPs show voting loyalty to their EP party group.

Beyond ideological diversity, identity and ideological difference are also more important predictors of MEPs' voting behaviour. Although their substantive effect is considerably smaller than that of ideological diversity, the two explanatory characteristics help to explain significant variation in MEPs' voting behaviour. The difference in the predicted relative (absolute) voting behaviour between an MEP who sees himself/herself through his/her national identity only and an MEP who sees himself/herself through the European identity is 0.09 (7.4%). There is also an almost identical difference of 0.09 (7.3%) in MEPs' voting behaviour when looking at an MEP whose ideological self-placement is a perfect match with his/her fellow supranational partisans' mean position and an MEP whose ideological self-placement is far from the mean positions of his/her fellow supranational partisans. Therefore, individual-level characteristics of identity and ideological difference are also more useful for explaining variation in how frequently MEPs follow the voting positions of their EP party group.

5.7.3 Following National Party Delegations' Voting Positions

Finally, I explore the frequency that post-2004 MEPs follow the voting positions of their national party delegation. Although post-2004 MEPs do so very frequently as shown in Chapter 4 – i.e., their mean relative (absolute) voting behaviour being 1.29 (97.2%) – there is still some variation present in the particular aspect of MEPs' voting behaviour. The standard deviations of the relative and absolute frequency that post-2004 MEPs follow the voting positions of their national party delegation by are 0.05 and 3.2%, respectively. Figure 5.9 displays this variation, with the height of the bars scaled to add up to one, the overlaying continuous line displaying the appropriately scaled normal density, and the x-axis showing MEPs' relative likelihood of following the voting positions of their national party delegation.⁸³



⁸³ Note that 3 extreme outliers with relative score under 1 – Robert Kilroy-Silk 0.64, Sajjad Karim 0.99, and Edward McMillan-Scott 0.72 – have been excluded from the graph to narrow the range on x-axis and display better the existing variation around post-2004 MEPs' voting behaviour.

In comparison to Figures 5.1 and 5.5, Figure 5.9 shows that the distribution of post-2004 MEPs' likelihood of voting with their national party delegation is rather homogeneous. Their relative (absolute) voting behaviour ranges from 0.64 (48.9%) up to 1.63 (100%). The lowest extreme value is attributed to Robert Kilroy-Silk from the United Kingdom Independence Party and who entered the EP from the United Kingdom in 2004, whereas the highest extreme value represents Giorgos Papakonstantinou from Panellinio Socialistiko Kinima (Panhellenic Socialist Movement) and who was elected to the EP from Greece in 2009.

Whereas some variation is present in MEPs' likelihood of voting with their national party delegation, no strong outliers are present when grouping MEPs by their national party. It is the Österreichische Volkspartei (The Austrian People's Party) in Austria and the Panellinio Socialistiko Kinima (Panhellenic Socialist Movement) in Greece which MEPs are the most likely ones to follow the voting positions of their national party delegation; the respective mean relative (absolute) voting behaviour of their members being 1.32 (99.6%) and 1.33 (99.2%). At the same time, the lowest mean scores for are found in the United Kingdom Independence Party in the United Kingdom and the Partito Democratico (Democratic Party) in Italy; the mean voting behaviour of their members being 1.25 (94.4%) and 1.24 (93.8%), respectively.

Variation in the frequency that post-2004 MEPs follow the voting positions of their national party delegation is also limited when grouping MEPs by their EP party group or national delegation. Looking at MEPs who belong to the same EP party group, the mean relative (absolute) voting behaviour is lowest in the UEN group in the Sixth Parliament and in the GUE-NGL in the Seventh Parliament; 1.26 (95.2%) and 1.25 (94.6%), respectively. The highest scores – i.e., 1.31 (98.4%) and 1.31 (99.1%) – occur in the IND/DEM group in the Sixth Parliament and in the Greens/EFA group in the Seventh Parliament. The differences being 0.05 (3.2%) in the Sixth Parliament and 0.06 (4.5%) in the Seventh Parliament are rather small. On the other hand, very limited variation is also present when grouping post-2004 MEPs by their national delegation. Whereas the mean likelihood of Finnish and Italian MEPs to follow the voting positions of their national party delegation is 1.25 (94.6%) and 1.28 (96.3%) in the post-2004 era, the most loyal Greek and Slovakian national delegations enjoy corresponding measures of 1.32 (98.6%) and 1.32 (99.2%). Some variation does exist in post-2004 MEPs' likelihood of following the voting positions of their national party delegation. However, it is not really concentrated to any particular parliamentary sub-group.

5.7.3.1 Multivariate Analysis

The multivariate regression analysis presented in Table 5.5 indicates that the frequency that MEPs follow the voting positions of their national party delegation systematically relates to several individual-level and contextual characteristics. In total, I find the consistent importance of four explanatory characteristics: one specific to MEPs, one describing how MEPs interact with their national party delegation, and two contextual characteristics specific to MEPs' national party and national party delegation. The r-squared of the model is 0.29 (Prob>F statistic of .00). Therefore, the regression model explains a considerable degree of variation in how frequently post-2004 MEPs follow the voting positions of their national party delegation. Predicted values for post-2004 MEPs' corresponding relative (and absolute) likelihood of following the voting positions of their national delegation are presented below in Table 5.6 (page 162).

Table 5.5 Following National Party Delegation's Voting Positions

Explanatory Characteristic	Coefficient (Std. Err.)
<u>MEP</u>	
Career	.00 (.005)
Future	.00 (.006)
Left-Right	-.00 (.00)
Pro-Anti	.00 (.00)
Representation	.01** (.00)
<u>Interaction</u>	
Ideological Difference	.00 (.00)
Voting Instructions	.01** (.00)
<u>Context</u>	
Ideological Diversity	-.07*** (.01)
Electoral System	.01 (.01)
Government	.01 (.01)
Party Taxes	.00 (.00)
Financial Dependency	.0003** (.0001)
Candidate Selection	-.00 (.00)
<u>Control</u>	
EP Term	.01 (.01)
Gender	-.00 (.01)
Age	-.00 (.00)
Constant	1.34*** (.06)
Observations	227
Nr of groups	43
R-squared	.29

***p<.01; **p<.05

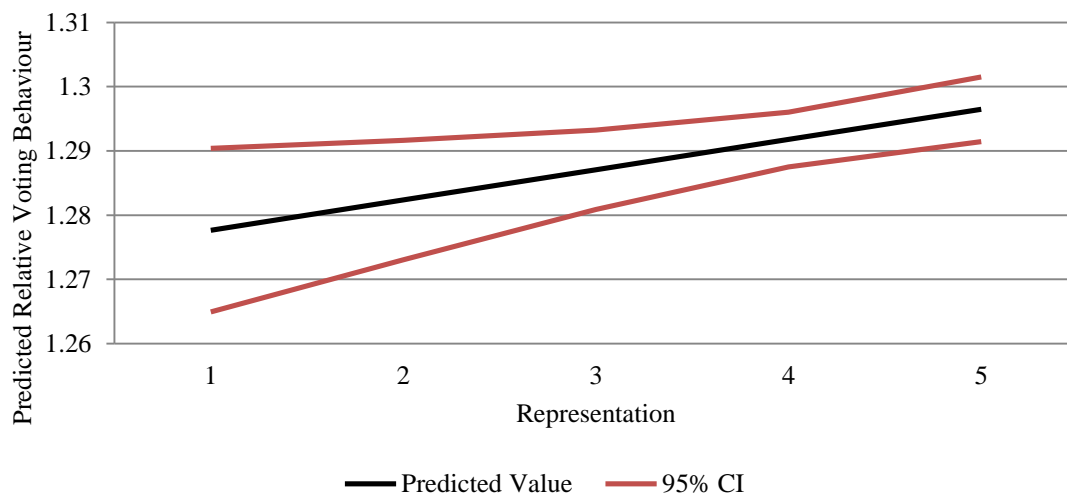
5.7.3.2 MEP: Sense of Representation

The multivariate regression model (Table 5.5) highlights the relevance of MEPs' sense of representation. The positive coefficient of 0.01 shows that MEPs who perceive

the representation of their national party voters' interests to be more important in their role perception are also more loyal to their national party delegation when it comes to voting. A one-unit increase in the degree of importance an MEP assigns to the particular aspect of his/her role perception corresponds to a 0.01-point increase in the relative frequency by which he/she follows the voting positions of his/her national party delegation, supporting H5.1.3b.

Figure 5.10 presents the relationship between the degree of importance an MEP assigns to representing the interests of his/her national party voters (x-axis) and his/her predicted frequency of following the voting positions of his/her national party delegation.⁸⁴ The predicted (absolute) likelihood of MEPs who assign the representation of their national party voters' interests little importance to follow the voting positions of their national party delegation is 1.28 (96.5%), whereas the measure is 1.30 (97.3%) for MEPs who assign the representation of their national party voters' interests great importance.⁸⁵ An MEP whose role perception is more strongly linked to representing the interests of his/her national party voters is showing greater loyalty to the voting positions of his/her national party delegation.

Figure 5.10 Predicted Values: National Party Delegation by Representation



A similar tendency is also evident when looking at changes in MEPs' observed voting behaviour. Whereas the mean relative (absolute) likelihood of following the voting positions of their national party delegation is 1.28 (96.5%) among MEPs who

⁸⁴ Corresponding graph with the predicted values for MEPs' absolute voting behaviour on the y-axis is presented in B.10 (Appendix B).

⁸⁵ Little importance is defined as 'representation = 1' and great importance is defined as 'representation = 5'.

perceive the representation of their national party voters' interest as rather unimportant, the corresponding score is 1.30 (97.2%) for MEPs who perceived it as important.⁸⁶ Even when not holding other characteristics constant at their mean, it is latter MEPs who are more likely to vote with their fellow national partisans.

Although the change in MEPs' voting behaviour, as they assign different degrees of importance on representing the interests of their national party voters, is of a rather limited nature, it is necessary to bear in mind that the mean relative (absolute) likelihood of post-2004 MEPs to follow the voting positions of their national party delegation – i.e., 1.29 (97.2%) – is extremely high. Therefore, there is simply less room for variation to occur in the particular aspect of MEPs' parliamentary behaviour. This holds also when interpreting how other explanatory characteristics (discussed below) help us understand the differences in the frequency that MEPs follow the voting instructions of their national party delegation.

Further Evidence

MEPs who assign greater importance to representing the interests of their national party's voters also tend to modify their behaviour accordingly. Bivariate correlation coefficients of 0.11 (p-value=0.01) and 0.10 (p-value=0.02) show that the more important an MEP perceives the representation of his/her party voters' interests to be, the more frequently he/she is in contact with his/her fellow national partisans in the EP and with his/her national party leaders, respectively. National party delegations represent the interests of national party voters and, therefore, are more natural partners for cooperation for MEPs who see their role perception to be more strongly linked with furthering the interests of their national party voters.

5.7.3.3 Interaction: Voting Instructions

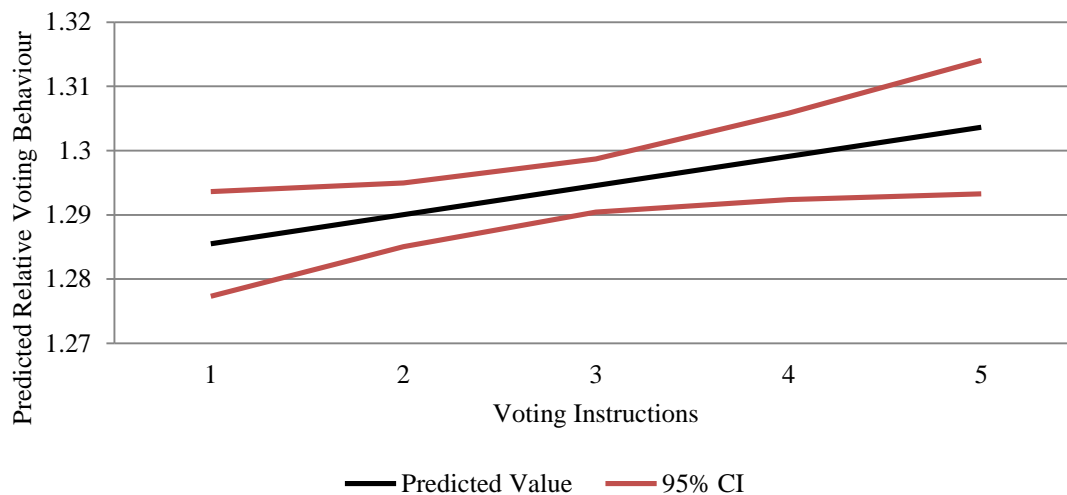
Moving on to the explanatory characteristics that describe MEPs' interactions with their national party, the multivariate regression model (Table 5.5) indicates that one characteristic is consistently related to how frequently MEPs follow the voting positions of their national party delegation: frequency of voting instructions. The positive coefficient of 0.01 shows that the more frequently an MEP perceives to receive voting instructions from his/her national party, the more often he/she shows voting

⁸⁶ Rather unimportant is defined as 'representation < 3' and important is defined as 'representation > 3'.

loyalty to his/her national party delegation. A one-unit increase in the former corresponds to a 0.01-point increase in the latter.⁸⁷ This finding supports H5.2.2c.

In order to capture the substantive relevance of the explanatory characteristic, Figure 5.11 plots the predicted values for MEPs' relative voting behaviour (y-axis) against the frequency of voting instructions (x-axis).⁸⁸

Figure 5.11 Predicted Values: National Party Delegation by Voting Instructions



There is a clear positive relationship between how often an MEP receives voting instructions from his/her national party and how often he/she shows voting loyalty to his/her national party delegation. The predicted relative (absolute) frequency of doing so increases from 1.29 (96.7%) for MEPs who never receive voting instructions from their national party to 1.30 (98%) for MEPs who receive instructions almost always.⁸⁹ Moreover, the observed relative (absolute) likelihood of being loyal to one's national party delegation also increases when looking at the corresponding categories of the explanatory characteristic: from 1.28 (96.6%) to 1.31 (98.5%).⁹⁰ Although the change is not extensive, it does show the relevance of the particular source of diversity in shaping the parliamentary behaviour of MEPs.

⁸⁷ Measurements for the frequency of voting instructions range from 1 to 5.

⁸⁸ Corresponding graph with the predicted values for MEPs' absolute voting behaviour on the y-axis is presented in Figure B.11 (Appendix B).

⁸⁹ Never is defined as 'frequency of voting instructions = 1' and almost always is defined as 'frequency of voting instructions = 5'.

⁹⁰ Although it is not as clear from looking at Figure 5.11, there is no overlap in the 95% confidence intervals for the relationship. The lower- and upper-bound 95% confidence intervals for the lowest and highest values of the explanatory characteristic are 1.28-1.29 and 1.29-1.31.

Further Evidence

The idea that more frequent voting instructions translate into greater pressure (and ability) to follow the parliamentary sub-group's voting positions is also supported by additional evidence regarding MEPs' role perception and parliamentary behaviour.

MEPs who receive voting instructions from their national party more frequently also tend to be more sensitive to its policy preferences. Whereas 16% of MEPs who receive voting instructions from their national party frequently assign the greatest relevance to following the views of their national party, only 8% of MEPs who rarely receive voting instructions from their national party do so.⁹¹ Therefore, more frequent voting instructions are related to the preferences of an MEP's national party being more likely the dominant ones in his/her role perception.

MEPs who receive more frequent voting instructions from their national party also tend to align their parliamentary behaviour accordingly. Bivariate correlation coefficients of 0.07 (p-value=0.11) and 0.19 (p-value=0.00) show that the more frequently an MEP receives voting instructions from his/her national party, the more often he/she is in contact with his/her national party delegation and national party leadership, respectively. The kind of interaction an MEP has with his/her national party does seem to frame how prevalent he/she perceives the interests of his/her national party to be in his/her role perception and how natural partners his/her fellow national partisans are for political dialogue.

5.7.3.4 Context: Ideological Diversity and Financial Dependency

The multivariate regression model presented in Table 5.5 also indicates that two contextual characteristics, ideological diversity and financial dependency, are related to the frequency that MEPs follow the voting positions of their national party delegation in systematic manner. Coefficients of -0.07 and 0.0003 show that a one-point increase in the ideological diversity of the national party delegation and how financially dependent national party candidates are on their national party's financial electoral contributions correspond, respectively, to a 0.07-point decrease and a 0.0003-point increase in MEPs' relative likelihood of voting in a loyal manner to their national party delegation.⁹² These findings support H5.3.2b and H5.3.3, respectively.

⁹¹ Frequently is defined as 'frequency of voting instructions => 4' and rarely is defined as 'frequency of voting instructions <= 2'. Percentages of MEPs refer to these MEPs who assign greatest relevance to the views of their national party, as opposed to the views of their EP party group, voters, and oneself.

⁹² Measurements for ideological diversity range from 2 to 3, whereas the observed scale of financial dependency is 0-100.

Figures 5.12a and 5.21b display the substantive effects of ideological diversity and financial dependency (x-axis) on MEPs' relative voting behaviour (y-axis).⁹³ Figure 5.12a highlights that an MEP who belongs to a national party delegation that is more diverse along ideological lines is predicted to show less voting loyalty to his/her national party delegation. The predicted relative (absolute) voting behaviour for an MEP who belongs to a homogeneous national party delegation is 1.30 (97.4%), while the corresponding measure for an MEP in a heterogeneous national party delegation is 1.23 (92.2%).⁹⁴ At the same time, Figure 5.12b shows that national party delegations are better able to command voting loyalty from their members if the related national party's candidates are more reliant on its campaign support. The predicted relative (absolute) voting behaviour increases from 1.28 (96.4%) to 1.31 (98.2%) when looking at MEPs whose national party provides no financial campaign contributions to its members and MEPs whose national party covered all costs of its members' electoral campaigns.⁹⁵

Figure 5.12a Predicted Values: National Party Delegation by Ideological Diversity

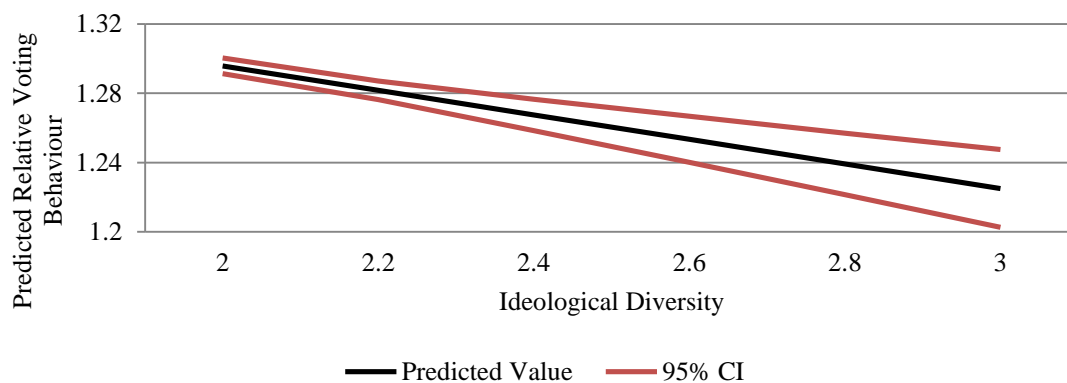
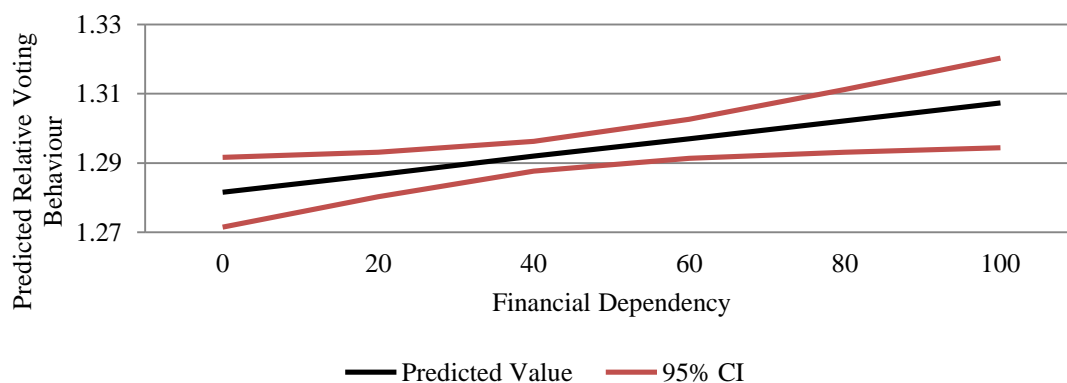


Figure 5.12b Predicted Values: National Party Delegation by Financial Dependency



⁹³ Corresponding graphs with the predicted values for MEPs' absolute voting behaviour on the y-axis are presented in Figures B.12a and B.12b (Appendix B).

⁹⁴ Homogeneous is defined as 'ideological diversity = 2' and heterogeneous as 'ideological diversity = 3'.

⁹⁵ No financial campaign contributions are defined as 'financial dependency = 0', whereas covering all costs is defined as 'financial dependency = 100'.

MEPs' observed voting behaviour reveals same empirical tendencies. The mean relative (absolute) frequency that MEPs from heterogeneous national party delegations show follow the voting positions of his/her national party delegation is 1.30 (97.5%). It is considerably lower at 1.21 (91.2%) for MEPs who belong to homogeneous national party delegations. At the same time, the respective mean measures are 1.28 (96.7) and 1.30 (97.9%) for MEPs whose national party's financial contributions make up, on average, either less than 50% or more than 50% of its candidates' campaign expenses, respectively. An MEP who belongs to a national party delegation which is less diverse on ideological lines and who belongs to a national party which provides more financial support for its candidates' electoral campaigns is more likely to follow the voting positions of his/her national party delegation.

Further Evidence

There is also further evidence to suggest that national parties, which are more diverse on ideological lines, struggle more to exercise control over their members. Bivariate correlation coefficient of -0.11 (p-value=0.00) shows that the more ideologically diverse a national party delegation is, the less likely the corresponding national party is able to extract regular financial donations from its MEPs.⁹⁶ This indicates a clear difference in the balance of power between national parties and their elected representatives. MEPs who belong to an ideologically heterogeneous national party delegation are simply in a stronger position vis-à-vis their national party, and one would, therefore, expect them to also be slightly less sensitive to the punishment powers of their national party (e.g., Bolleyer et al., 2012).⁹⁷ This does indicate that intra-group voting unity is likely to be more difficult to reach and less successfully enforced in national party delegations that are more diverse along ideological lines.

On the other hand, MEPs' financial dependency on the financial resources of their national party tends to be greater in countries where closed lists are used for the European elections. Bivariate correlation coefficient 0.21 (p-value=0.00) shows that the greater the financial dependency is, the more likely closed lists are used for the European elections in the home country of the national party. The reliance on closed lists, however, allows parties to better control their members' electoral success (e.g., Bowler and Farrell, 1999; Carey, 2007; Faas, 2003; Hix, 2004). This further emphasizes

⁹⁶ Information on national parties' ability to exert regular financial donations from its MEPs is obtained from original data collected by Bolleyer et al. (2012).

⁹⁷ Similar tendency has also been shown in the relationships between national parties and their elected representatives in domestic legislatures (e.g., Bolleyer, 2012).

the idea that an MEP elected from a national party that provides more financial support to its members should be more sensitive to the ability of his/her national party to control his/her future electoral success. Moreover, bivariate correlation coefficients of 0.12 (p-value=0.01) and 0.08 (p-value=0.09) show that the greater the financial dependency, the more frequently MEPs are in contact with their national party delegation and national party leadership, respectively. An MEP whose national party can exercise more control over its members' electoral success does, in fact, tend to tailor his/her parliamentary behaviour in a manner that emphasizes loyalty to his/her national party delegation.

5.7.3.5 Which Characteristics are particularly useful for Explaining Variation?

To further compare the substantive relationships between MEPs' likelihood of voting with their national party delegation and the highlighted characteristics, Table 5.6 presents MEPs' predicted relative and absolute voting behaviour across the range of the four explanatory characteristics. It highlights that variation in the frequency that MEPs follow the voting positions of their national party delegation is rather limited. This is hardly surprising given that the mean observed relative (absolute) frequency for doing so is as high as 1.29 (97.2%). Moreover, the standard deviation in post-2004 MEPs' relative (absolute) likelihood of following the voting positions of their national party delegation is 0.05 (3.2%), whereas the respective measurements for voting with their national delegation and EP party group are higher at 0.19 (14.6%) and 0.11 (8.5%), respectively. As such, there is simply less room for variation to occur in the frequency by which different MEPs show voting loyalty to their fellow national partisans.

Table 5.6 Predicted Voting Behaviour: National Party Delegation

Explanatory Characteristic	Relative Voting Behaviour			Absolute Voting Behaviour (%)		
	Mean	95% LB CI	95% UB CI	Mean	95% LB CI	95% UB CI
<u>MEP: Representation</u>						
Little Importance (=1)	1.28	1.27	1.29	96.5	95.6	97.3
Some Importance (=3)	1.29	1.28	1.29	96.9	96.5	97.3
Great Importance (=5)	1.30	1.29	1.30	97.3	97.0	97.7
<u>Interaction: Voting Instructions</u>						
Never (=1)	1.29	1.28	1.29	96.7	96.1	97.2
Sometimes (=3)	1.30	1.29	1.30	97.3	97.1	97.6
Almost Always (=5)	1.30	1.29	1.31	98.0	97.5	98.6
<u>Context: Ideological Diversity</u>						
Low Diversity (=1)	1.30	1.29	1.30	97.4	97.1	97.7
High Diversity (=2)	1.23	1.20	1.25	92.2	90.1	94.2
<u>Context: Financial Dependency</u>						
No Dependency (=0)	1.28	1.27	1.29	96.4	95.8	97.1
Some Dependency (=50)	1.29	1.29	1.30	97.3	97.0	97.7
Full Dependency (=100)	1.31	1.29	1.32	98.2	97.2	99.2

One explanatory characteristic, ideological diversity within the national party delegation than an MEP belongs to, however, does stand out in Table 5.6. The change in the predicted value for an MEP's relative (absolute) frequency of following the voting positions of his/her national party delegation is particularly large when comparing an MEP who belongs to a national party delegation that is heterogeneous along ideological lines and an MEP who belongs to a national party delegation that is homogeneous along ideological lines. Holding all other characteristics constant at their mean, the predicted voting behaviour for former MEP is as low as 1.23 (92.2%), but considerably higher at 1.30 (97.4%) for latter MEP. This difference of 0.07 (5.2%) is by far the largest one in MEPs' predicted voting behaviour when comparing MEPs who are located at the extreme ends of the four explanatory characteristics. Ideological diversity, therefore, is a particularly useful explanatory characteristic for helping to better understand variation in how often MEPs show voting loyalty to their national party delegation.

5.7.4 Relevance of Different Explanatory Characteristics across the Three Models of Voting Behaviour

The three multivariate analyses give useful insight into how diversity shapes the way that MEPs approach parliamentary representation. Given the high degree of overlap between the explanatory characteristics used for explaining variation in MEPs' likelihood of following the voting positions of all three parliamentary sub-groups, some valuable observations can also be made across the three parallel analyses.

First, as shown in Tables 5.1, 5.3 and 5.5, explanatory characteristics of all three types relate to all three aspects of MEPs' voting behaviour in a consistent manner. This is unsurprising as the different types of explanatory characteristics – i.e., individual-level characteristics specific to MEPs and the way they interact with their parliamentary sub-groups, and contextual characteristics that describe the situations in which they make their voting decisions – tap into different aspects related to how MEPs might evaluate the costs and benefits associated with loyalty to their different principals. For example, an MEP's role perception describes how natural partners his/her parliamentary sub-groups are for him/her, whereas the frequency by which an MEP receives voting instructions helps understand the degree of pressure he/she is likely under to show loyalty to the particular parliamentary sub-group, and belonging to a parliamentary sub-group that is more or less diverse along ideological lines is likely to hinder or promote intra-group voting unity within the particular parliamentary sub-group. The relevance of all three types of explanatory characteristics confirms that all three types of

characteristics are needed to explain how diversity shapes how MEPs approach representation in the EP. It is not just differences among MEPs, how they interact with their fellow parliamentarians, or the contexts in which they operate that relate to variation in MEPs' voting behaviour.

Second, the relevance of how frequently an MEP receives voting instructions from his/her parliamentary sub-groups stands out when looking across the three multivariate analyses. It is the only explanatory characteristic that explains variation in how likely MEPs are to follow the voting positions of their EP party group, national delegation, and national party delegation as well. Receiving voting instructions from these parliamentary sub-groups 'almost always', as opposed to 'never', changes MEPs' predicted relative (absolute) likelihood of following the voting positions of their EP party group, national delegation, and national party delegation from 1.20 (90.6%) to 1.24 (92.9%), from 0.99 (74.5%) to 1.08 (81.4%), and from 1.29 (96.7%) to 1.30 (98%), respectively. Although the frequency of the voting instructions does not have the greatest substantive effect among the explanatory characteristics, as shown in Tables 5.2, 5.4 and 5.6, it is unique in the consistency of its effect.

Finally, three other explanatory characteristics appear to be more useful for explaining variation in MEPs' voting behaviour across all three parallel models. MEP's sense of representation, the ideological difference between an MEP and his/her parliamentary sub-groups, and ideological diversity in the parliamentary sub-groups that an MEP belongs to are statistically significant in two of the three multivariate models. For example, lower degrees of ideological diversity appear to promote parliamentary sub-groups' ability to foster intra-group voting unity. Belonging to an EP party group or national party delegation which is characterized by 'low' rather than 'high' ideological diversity increases an MEP's predicted relative (absolute) frequency of following their voting positions from 1.03 (78.2%) to 1.30 (97.8%) and from 1.23 (92.2%) to 1.30 (97.4%), respectively. Moreover, these three explanatory characteristics are of different types. This further supports the notion that all three different types of characteristics – i.e., individual-level characteristics specific to MEPs and the way they interact with their parliamentary sub-groups, and contextual characteristics that describe the situations in which they make their voting decisions – are relevant to understanding how diversity shapes the way that MEPs approach parliamentary representation.

5.8 Summary

The contemporary EP is diverse in its make-up. It incorporates MEPs who differ in terms of their individual-level characteristics, the way they interact with their parliamentary sub-groups, as well as the contexts in which they make their voting choices. Moreover, it is fair to expect that differences might exist in the strength of the role-maximizing and policy-maximizing ambitions that post-2004 MEPs hold, and, as a result, how much emphasis they put on showing loyalty to the interests of their different principals. However, to date, empirical analyses of variation in MEPs' voting behaviour tend to focus on the potential relevance of a limited set of characteristics, and almost universally on the pre-2004 era. As such, we know little about how diversity among the heterogeneous post-2004 MEPs and their principals shapes how they choose to approach representation in the EP. This is a limitation in the efforts to understand the voting dynamics in the post-2004 parliaments. For example, one might argue that an MEP who considers the representation of European-wide interests to be more important in his/her role perception should also be more inclined to take a supranational and policy-maximizing approach to parliamentary representation, and, as a result, follow the voting positions of his/her EP party group more frequently.

This chapter addressed the variation, moving beyond the univocal interpretation of the European mandate, and focusing on how diversity shapes the way that post-2004 MEPs approach parliamentary representation. It explores how the frequency that MEPs follow the voting positions of their EP party group, national delegation, and national party delegation is related to (i) MEPs' individual-level characteristics, (ii) the characteristics associated with their interactions with the parliamentary sub-groups, and (iii) the general contexts in which they make their voting decisions. This is done by using multivariate OLS regression alongside multilevel modelling on MEPs' individual-level roll call voting data from September 2004 to December 2010.

Summary of Findings

The individual-level analysis shows that noteworthy variation exists in how post-2004 MEPs approach parliamentary representation. The variation is most prevalent in the degree of loyalty MEPs show to their national delegation and least evident in the degree of loyalty they show to their national party delegation. The standard deviations in post-2004 MEPs' relative (absolute) frequency of following the voting positions of their national delegation, EP party group, and national party delegation are 0.19 (14.6%), 0.11 (8.5%), and 0.05 (3.2%), respectively. The corresponding ranges for the

three aspects of MEPs' voting behaviour are 0.04-1.33 (2.9%-99.1%), 0.08-1.42 (6.2%-98.4%), and 0.64-1.63 (48.9%-100%), respectively. Therefore, significant degree of variation exists in how frequently post-2004 MEPs follow the voting positions of their parliamentary sub-group.

The findings highlight the relevance of four explanatory characteristics in explaining variation in how frequently post-2004 MEPs are loyal to their national delegation. The frequency that an MEP follows the voting positions of his/her national delegation increases as he/she assigns greater relevance to representing the interests of his/her constituents, holds ideological beliefs which are closer to the mean ideological position among his/her national delegation, receives voting instructions from his/her national delegation more frequently, and is elected from a country where larger percentage of people treat the EP as an important institution within the EU.

I find five explanatory characteristics that explain variation in how often post-2004 MEPs align to the voting positions of their EP party group. Greater frequency of supranational behaviour is present among MEPs who are more leftist, assign the European identity greater dominance in their self-perception, and hold ideological beliefs which are closer to the mean ideological position among their fellow supranational partisans. Moreover, it is also present among MEPs who receive voting instructions from their EP party group more frequently and who belong to a more ideologically diverse EP party group.

The findings also highlight the consistent relevance of four explanatory characteristics in explaining variation in post-2004 MEPs' likelihood of following the voting positions of their national party delegation. I find that an MEP shows greater voting loyalty to his/her national party delegation when he/she treats the representation of his/her national party voters' interests as more important, receives more frequent voting instructions from his/her national party, belongs to a national party delegation that is ideologically heterogeneous, and belongs to a national party which candidates are more reliant on their national party for campaign finance.

Overall, there are explanatory characteristics that are particularly relevant for explaining variation in MEPs' voting behaviour. The frequency by which an MEP receives voting instructions from his/her parliamentary sub-groups that he/she belongs to stands out; it is the only explanatory characteristic that consistently explains variation in the frequency that he/she follows the voting positions of all three parliamentary sub-groups that he/she belongs to. At the same time, three other explanatory characteristics – i.e., MEP's sense of representation, ideological difference between an MEP and

his/her parliamentary sub-group, ideological diversity in the parliamentary sub-group that an MEP belongs to – explain variation in MEPs’ voting behaviour in two of the three multivariate models. These explanatory characteristics, representing all three types of characteristics used to study how diversity shapes MEPs’ approach to parliamentary representation, are also very useful in helping us understand how individual-level and contextual factors affect MEPs’ voting behaviour.

Implications of Findings

The findings of this chapter have important implications to our understanding of how diversity shapes the way MEPs approach parliamentary representation.

First, I have shown that a univocal interpretation of the European mandate is not appropriate for understanding post-2004 MEPs’ parliamentary behaviour. Chapter 4 provides useful insight into the comparative relevance of MEPs’ principals in guiding their members’ voting choices, but indicate also that a more comprehensive analysis is necessary to isolate additional patterns of variation in MEPs’ approach to representation in the EP. For example, not all post-2004 MEPs prioritize ideology-laden voting and the voting positions of their EP party group over nationality-laden voting and the voting positions of their national delegation. Significant differences exist among post-2004 MEPs, the way they interact with the parliamentary sub-groups they belong to, and the contexts in which they operate. These differences also have a systematic influence on how post-2004 MEPs approach parliamentary representation in the EP and the degree of loyalty they show to their different principals. As a result, one should be cautious when making generalizations about MEPs’ parliamentary behaviour. Various individual-level and contextual characteristics do motivate MEPs to act differently when carrying out their duties in the EP, and, as such, need to be acknowledged when talking about the voting dynamics in the post-2004 parliaments.

Second, the findings of this chapter also imply that one needs to use a multivariate approach to capture the complexity surrounding MEPs’ parliamentary behaviour. I find that variation in the frequency that MEPs follow the voting positions of their EP party group, national delegation, and national party delegation is linked to three distinct types of explanatory characteristics, describing both individual-level and contextual factors. This is true for all three models of voting behaviour, indicating that the aggregate analyses of MEPs’ voting behaviour, or analyses that focus on the relevance of a few explanatory characteristics in explaining differences in MEPs’ parliamentary behaviour, cannot fully capture the different sources of variation that

influence MEPs' voting behaviour. Therefore, future studies should be cautious when adopting an approach that assumes that a single characteristic, or a few characteristics, are able explain the bulk of the variation in MEPs' voting behaviour.

Finally, this chapter also highlights the need to build upon such efforts to explain variation in post-2004 MEPs' voting behaviour. Although the three multivariate models explain a considerable portion of variation in MEPs' likelihood of following the voting positions of the three parliamentary sub-groups they belong to, the majority of the variation remains unaccounted for. This will become easier in the future as more data is gathered about MEPs and their voting behaviour. As the 2014 European elections approach, there will soon be an even larger sample of post-2004 MEPs and their manifestations of representation – i.e., voting choices – available to study. With a larger sample, it is also possible to build more comprehensive explanations of how diversity shapes the way that MEPs approach representation in the EP. One could then add explanatory characteristics such as the frequency of contact that MEPs have with their parliamentary sub-groups or their list position in their national party's electoral list to the models of voting behaviour. Consequently, one would be able to further improve the understanding of how diversity shapes MEPs' approach to representation in the EP.

Chapter 6: Invisible Votes. Non-Roll Call Votes in the European Parliament

6.1 Introduction

The formal framework for voting in the EP is set out by the institution's rules of procedure. They specify that voting in the EP can take place either by roll call, show of hands, electronically, or by secret ballot (European Parliament, 2012a). Whereas the EP votes by show of hands as a general rule, or electronically if its result is doubtful, roll call votes are the only voting occasions where all participating MEPs' individual voting choices – i.e., yes, no, or abstain – are recorded and publicized (European Parliament, 2012a).⁹⁸ As a result, it is important that we have an accurate and full understanding of how MEPs approach parliamentary representation across all parliamentary voting occasions: roll call and non-roll call. Only then do we have a sufficiently comprehensive understanding of the voting dynamics in the post-2004 EP and the degree of democratic input MEPs' parliamentary behaviour is able to instil to the EU.

In Chapter 4, I give a general account of how post-2004 MEPs approach parliamentary representation during roll call voting occasions. Then, in Chapter 5, I build on this foundation and show how heterogeneity within the post-2004 parliaments shapes its members' voting behaviour. This chapter complements and extends the previous analyses by moving beyond roll call voting occasions. It looks at how voting procedures influence the legislative outputs of the EP and the way MEPs approach parliamentary representation. To my knowledge, it is the first scholarly effort that explicitly shows whether and how MEPs change their individual-level vote-perception when voting by different voting procedures.

MEP Survey

The key feature of this chapter is an original MEP survey that was conducted among MEPs serving in the EP as of 01/01/2011. The survey is tailored to assessing the influence of voting procedures on how MEPs approach parliamentary representation. Specifically, the survey collects individual-level data on (i) whether MEPs' likelihood of defecting from the voting instructions of their EP party group in favour of the voting instructions of their national party depends on whether they are voting by roll call,

⁹⁸ Note that roll call voting is currently required for electing or rejecting the Commission, voting on the motion of censure on the Commission, and when voting on any proposal for a legislative act (European Parliament, 2012a).

electronically, or by show hands, and (ii) whether MEPs' likelihood of defecting from the voting instructions of their EP party group in favour of the interests of their national electorate varies depending on whether they are voting by roll call, electronically, or by show hands.

Using the survey, which allows me to control for the voting dilemmas MEPs face as well as the response options available for them, I am able to assess how diversity in the voting procedures influences MEPs' loyalties to their principals and the way they approach parliamentary representation.

Summary of Findings

The findings presented in this chapter provide important insights into the voting procedure effect within MEPs' parliamentary behaviour. First, I show that MEPs do, in fact, approach parliamentary representation slightly different depending on the voting procedure. Second, I show that the proportion of MEPs who consider themselves to more likely defect from the voting instructions of their EP party group when those conflict with the voting instructions of their national party or with the interests of their national electorate is slightly bigger when voting by show of hands or electronically (as opposed to by roll call). Finally, my findings indicate that although the voting procedure effect is present among MEPs elected from both the pre-2004 EU member states and the 2004/2007 accession countries, it is particularly strong among the latter.

The presence of a voting procedure effect within MEPs' voting-perception also offers a useful insight into how the EP could promote supranational behaviour among its members. The findings suggest that the EP party groups tend to lose a degree of loyalty when votes are taken by show of hands or electronically as opposed to by roll call. Therefore, a greater reliance on roll call voting occasions could help empower these supranational parliamentary sub-groups. In other words, it could encourage MEPs to approach voting and parliamentary representation in a more supranational manner.

Chapter Outline

This chapter proceeds as follows: I start by highlighting the specific research questions tackled. I then set out my expectations and the operationalization of the research design. Finally, I employ descriptive statistics to analyse the presence and direction of the voting procedure effect in post-2009 MEPs' voting-perception.

6.2 Research Questions

Employing descriptive statistics on original individual-level MEP survey data on MEPs' voting-perception when voting by roll call, show of hands, or electronically in two voting situations key to our understanding of how MEPs approach parliamentary representation, I address the following more specific research questions in this chapter:

RQ6.1: Do voting procedures (voting by roll call, show of hands, electronically) affect MEPs' likelihood of defecting from the voting instructions of their EP party group when these instructions are perceived not to be in the best interests of their national electorate?

RQ6.2: Do voting procedures (voting by roll call, show of hands, electronically) affect MEPs' likelihood of defecting from the voting instructions of their EP party group when these instructions conflict with the voting instructions of their national party?

Specifying the research questions in this particular manner enables me to focus on how the diversity of voting procedures that are used in the EP helps to explain why MEPs might hold contrasting loyalties to their three salient principals in different voting situations. In doing so, I provide a more comprehensive understanding of how MEPs approach parliamentary representation.

6.3 Hypotheses

The public nature of roll call votes clearly makes them unique, and it does so in a manner that is likely to influence how MEPs approach parliamentary representation.

Public and Easier to Scrutinize

The public nature of the roll call votes means that MEPs' voting choices can be scrutinized by interested actors. In contrast, scrutiny is more problematic when voting by show of hands (one has to physically observe MEPs' hand signals) and not possible when voting electronically as there are no observable manifestations of MEPs' voting choices (one has to physically see which button an MEP presses). This effectively means that roll call votes are the only voting occasions where MEPs' actual voting choices can effectively be monitored and sanctioned.

What makes the difference between roll call and non-roll call voting procedures particularly relevant, however, is that it has been widely shown that MEPs' principals – their EP party group, national party, and national electorate – differ in their desire and ability to use the roll call voting information to sanction or reward MEPs' parliamentary

behaviour. Whereas the EP party groups have considerable interest in their members' voting choices in roll call voting occasions, national parties scrutinize their representatives' roll call voting choices on only handful of voting occasions (when the issues in consideration are of special interest to them), and national electorates tend to remain virtually unaware of MEPs' voting behaviour even during roll call voting occasions (e.g., Corbett et al., 2007; European Election Study, 2012c; Hausemer, 2006; Hix and Marsh, 2011; Hix et al., 2007).

Therefore, the heightened ability to punish and reward MEPs on the basis of their voting choices by virtue of a vote being taken by roll call as opposed to by show of hands or electronically is considerably more salient for the EP party groups. It is only fair to expect that this may cause MEPs to be particularly sensitive to following the voting positions and policy preferences of their EP party group during roll call votes. No such difference in sensitivity is likely to be present among MEPs for following the interests of their national electorate or the voting instructions of their national party during roll call and non-roll call voting occasions.

Emphasis on the EP Party Groups

Roll call votes are also not the standard voting procedures in the EP; the institution's rules of procedure specify voting by show of hands as the default procedure (European Parliament, 2012a).⁹⁹ Roll call votes need to be specifically requested by a political group or at least 40 MEPs. Therefore, this rhetoric in itself carries a strong indication of heightened interest in an issue and MEPs' voting behaviour when actors call for a proposal to be voted on by roll call. In the context of the EP, however, it is the EP party groups (and their leaders) who are the driving force behind roll call proposals as they call for the vast majority of roll call votes (e.g., Carrubba et al., 2006; Epstein and O'Halloran, 1999; Hix et al., 2007; Saalfeld, 1995; Thiem, 2006).

There are a number of potential reasons why the EP party groups and their leaders might call for proposals to be voted on by roll call: to demonstrate a united front (Carrubba and Gabel, 1999; Corbett et al., 1995), to monitor and discipline its members (Carrubba et al., 2008; Raunio, 1997), to signal a policy position (Kreppel, 2002; Thiem, 2006). However, all of the reasons above imply the presence of a desire for high levels of intra-group cohesion. As the EP party groups (and their leaders) request the bulk of roll call votes, it is only fair to assume that there is more pressure on MEPs to follow the

⁹⁹ Roll call voting is required only for electing or rejecting the Commission, voting on the motion of censure on the Commission, and voting on a proposal for a legislative act (European Parliament, 2012a).

voting instructions of their EP party group during roll call voting occasions as opposed to when voting by non-roll call. What makes this heightened pressure particularly relevant is that the EP party groups are also able to reward and punish their members for loyalty and disloyalty – e.g., by allocating desired rapporteurships to MEPs who are more loyal to their EP party group (Hausemer, 2006), or by re-assigning committee positions halfway through the five-year parliamentary term (Corbett et al., 2007) – establishing a potential link between MEPs’ voting choices during roll call voting occasions and their ability to access the benefits that their EP party group has to offer.

Focus on Non-Legislative Proposals

Scholars have also noted that roll call votes disproportionately under-represent legislative proposals (Carrubba et al., 2006; Carrubba and Gabel, 1999; Hoyland, 2006). At the same time, empirical research into MEPs’ parliamentary behaviour has shown that voting on legislative issues is characterized by particularly high levels of defection from the EP party groups’ voting positions and that national delegations are more likely to have strong views about their members’ voting behaviour on these issues (e.g., Attina, 1990; Hix et al., 2007; Hoyland, 2006). This is hardly surprising, given that non-legislative proposals are frequently of a procedural nature, non-divisive, or deal with relations between different EU institutions where the EP has an incentive to present a united front. Legislative proposals, on the other hand, have the potential for direct policy influence and are more likely to divide MEPs on national lines; they more often relate to salient, defined national interests. Over-representing non-legislative votes is likely to have the effect of suggesting artificially high levels of supranational partisan voting within the EP. It may obscure the true pattern of MEPs’ parliamentary behaviour by removing disproportionate number of voting occasions where the interests of MEPs’ national electorate and national party are more likely to compete with the voting instructions of their EP party group. As a result, it is fair to expect that MEPs might be more inclined to defect from the voting instructions of their EP party group (during non-roll call voting occasions) than the literature on their roll call voting behaviour would suggest.

Expectations

The combination of the EP party groups requesting the vast majority of roll call votes and the fact that non-roll call votes are disproportionately more likely to give rise to salient national interests and national party interests, MEPs are likely to face stronger

incentives to follow the voting preferences of their EP party group when voting by roll call, as opposed to when voting by show of hands or electronically.

H6.1: In situations where MEPs perceive that the voting instructions of their EP party group are not in the best interests of their national electorate, MEPs are more likely to defect from the voting instructions of their EP party group when voting by show of hands or electronically, as opposed to by roll call.

H6.2: In situations where MEPs receive conflicting voting instructions from their EP party group and national party, MEPs are more likely to defect from the voting instructions of their EP party group when voting by show of hands or electronically, as opposed to by roll call.

6.4 Data and Methods

Despite the fact that roll call votes are the only parliamentary voting occasions where individual MEPs' actual voting choices are recorded and publicized, it is still possible to provide an empirical account of their voting behaviour across different voting procedures.¹⁰⁰ To do so, I implemented an original MEP survey among all MEPs who were serving in the EP at the start of 2011.¹⁰¹ The original MEP survey is the central feature of this chapter.

Overview of MEP Survey

The MEP survey was tailored to addressing the presence and direction of a voting procedure effect within MEPs' approach to representation in the EP.¹⁰² Since one cannot obtain objective empirical measurements to compare MEPs' actual voting choices during roll call and non-roll call voting occasions, a survey of MEPs provides a unique opportunity to collect information that can be used to test how the choice of voting procedure influences the way MEPs approach parliamentary representation. Controlling for the voting dilemmas MEPs face and their response options, while letting

¹⁰⁰ There have been other attempts to overcome the problem of non-roll call votes' unobservable nature. For example, Hug (2012) applied Heckman selection models to correct for the bias in cohesion scores generated from roll calls in the Swiss Parliament, whereas Pemstein (2009) argued that statistical natural language processing techniques may provide a possible prediction tool for voting choices from legislative texts. The ability of these techniques to test and correct for the voting procedure effect, however, remains limited. Hug's efforts, by his own acclaim, remain wanting due to a lack of available information, and Pemstein's predictions of the speakers' voting choices based on their spoken utterances only modestly outperform modal guessing.

¹⁰¹ The survey was conducted in 2011, as opposed to earlier in the parliamentary term, to canvass MEPs' opinions after they have had a chance to settle in the EP and establish their pattern of behaviour.

¹⁰² The exact survey questions and response options are listed in Table C.1 (Appendix C).

the voting procedure vary, MEP survey design allows me to tap into how the diversity of voting procedures used in the EP influences MEPs' loyalties to their principals and their approach to parliamentary representation. Although the resulting data is subjective – i.e., MEPs' voting-perception – it is, to my knowledge, a first-cut empirical effort to observe how MEPs' voting-perception changes as different voting procedures are used.

As part of data collection, 736 MEPs who served in the EP as of 01/01/2011 were approached to participate in the survey.¹⁰³ The final sample includes 181 MEPs (response rate of 25%), with 31.8% of them elected from the 2004/2007 EU accession states and the remaining 68.2% of them elected from the pre-2004 EU member states.

The sample is both representative and reliable. Based on a comparison with the full population of MEPs at the beginning of 2011, the Duncan index of dissimilarity remains 0.15 when focusing on the distribution of MEPs by the EU member states, and the index is even lower at 0.10 when comparing the distribution of MEPs by the EP party groups.¹⁰⁴ Detailed information on the distribution of the EP party groups and EU member states within the MEP survey sample is presented in Table C.2 (Appendix C).

Additional steps were also taken to validate the MEP survey findings. As part of the survey, respondents were asked about their sense of representation.¹⁰⁵ This is a standard question incorporated within existing surveys of MEPs – 2010 MEP survey and 2009 European Election Study Candidate Survey (European Election Study, 2012a; Farrell et al., 2011) – and can, therefore, be used as a benchmark question to compare MEPs' responses in the new and old surveys. Although one would expect some variation in MEPs' responses across the surveys due to variation in the composition of the sample and when MEPs are asked about their sense of representation, the responses should be relatively stable. Therefore, I calculate the mean scores for the three sub-questions of representation in the EP for the different MEP samples. The estimates, presented in Table 6.1, indicate that the mean scores for the three sub-questions of representation are similar across the recent MEP surveys and that the comparative importance of the three categories is identical.

¹⁰³ Although all 736 MEPs were contacted, the responses of Non-Inscrit MEPs were excluded from answering RQ6.1 and RQ6.2, whereas the responses of EPs who were elected to the EP as independent candidates were excluded from answering RQ6.2.

¹⁰⁴ See Chapter 5 (page 128) for an overview of the Duncan index of dissimilarity.

¹⁰⁵ How important is it to you to represent the following people in the EP?

a) all people in Europe; b) all people in your member state; c) all the people who voted for your party.

Scale: 1 – of little importance; 5 – of great importance.

Table 6.1 Sense of Representation in MEP Surveys

	Trumm MEP Survey 2011	EPRG MEP Survey 2010	EES ¹⁰⁶ 2009
All People in Europe	3.76	3.64	3.61
All People in Your Member State	4.13	4.17	4.18
All the People who Voted for Your Party	4.17	4.18	4.37

No significant bias appears to be present in the respondents' national affiliations or EP partisanship among MEPs who answered the original MEP survey that forms the basis of this chapter. Nor do the particular respondents' opinions differ meaningfully from the respondents' of past MEP surveys on a key question of representation. One can, therefore, be confident that the MEP survey sample that is used to study the voting procedure effect in this chapter is representative and reliable.

Voting Behaviour

In this chapter, voting behaviour is defined as an MEP's self-perceived likelihood of defecting from the voting instructions of his/her EP party group. To address the research questions presented earlier in the chapter, the dependent variable takes two general forms. For the purpose of RQ6.1, it is defined as an MEP's likelihood of defecting from the voting instructions of his/her EP party group when the instructions are not perceived to be in best interests of his/her national electorate. For the purpose of RQ6.2, it is defined as an MEP's likelihood of defecting from the voting instructions of his/her EP party group when the instructions conflict with the voting instructions of his/her national party.

Separate measurements for MEPs' voting behaviour are obtained for three main voting procedures in the EP – voting by roll call, show of hands, or electronically.¹⁰⁷ Each measure ranges from 1 'very unlikely to defect from the voting instructions of the EP party group' to 4 'very likely to defect from the voting instructions of the EP party group'. Therefore, the higher the value, the more likely an MEP is to defect from the voting positions of his/her EP party group when facing the specified voting dilemma and when voting by the specified voting procedure.

¹⁰⁶ Candidates who stood at the 2009 European elections, but did not enter the EP, were excluded.

¹⁰⁷ Although the EP uses four voting procedures, voting by roll call, show of hands, electronically, and secret ballot, voting by secret ballot is excluded from the analysis as those voting occasions are extremely rare and of similar nature to voting electronically (they do not produce observable manifestations of MEPs' voting choices) (European Parliament, 2012a).

Voting Procedure Effect

The presence and direction of the voting procedure effect, when MEPs face a conflict between the voting instructions of their EP party group and the voting instructions of their national party or the interests of their national electorate, is evaluated by using descriptive statistics on MEPs' voting-perception. Similar approach is employed to answer both RQ6.1 and RQ6.2 as these differ only in the situations which MEPs are asked to describe their voting behaviour in.¹⁰⁸

First, I use paired t-tests to assess whether the differences between MEPs' self-perceived likelihood of defecting across the various voting procedures are statistically significant. For both conflicts – i.e., MEPs do not believe the voting instructions of their EP party group to be in the best interests of their national electorate, or MEPs receive conflicting voting instructions from their EP party group and national party – three separate t-tests are conducted. These t-tests cover the three potential combinations of voting procedures: roll call vs. show of hands, roll call vs. electronically, show of hands vs. electronically. Collectively, they establish whether there are statistically significant differences in how MEPs approach parliamentary representation across the combinations of voting procedures and when facing the two voting dilemmas.

I then evaluate the presence and magnitude of the changes in individual MEPs' voting-perception across different voting procedures. To do so, I compare an MEP's likelihood of defecting from the voting instructions of his/her EP party group during each of the three possible combinations of voting procedures. That is, I deduct his/her likelihood of defecting from the voting instructions of his/her EP party group during one type of voting procedure from his/her likelihood of defecting when voting by another procedure.¹⁰⁹ As a result, three measures of difference are obtained for both voting dilemmas, each corresponding to the degree to which an MEP's likelihood of defecting from the voting instructions of his/her EP party group varies when two different voting procedures are used.

Since MEPs' voting-perception is measured on a 4-point scale, the differences in how MEPs approach parliamentary representation range from -3 to +3, where higher

¹⁰⁸ A multivariate analysis into how MEPs' individual-level characteristics influence their perception of the voting procedure effect could not be undertaken due to limitations in the data. Given the traditional problems with low response rates in elite surveys, and a restricted population of 736 MEPs, MEPs were not asked to provide their name to maximize the response rate. Whereas this was justified by resulting in a 25% sample, the nature of the data does limit its use.

¹⁰⁹ Likelihood of defecting when voting by roll call minus likelihood of defecting when voting by show of hands; likelihood of defecting when voting by roll call minus likelihood of defecting when voting electronically; likelihood of defecting when voting by show of hands minus likelihood of defecting when voting electronically.

values indicate a greater likelihood of defecting from the voting instructions of their EP party group when voting by the latter voting procedure. Focusing on these differences allows me to assess the direction and magnitude of a voting procedure effect in the way that individual MEPs approach representation in the EP, highlighting the percentages of MEPs who follow different voting behaviour when the various voting procedures are used.

Finally, I replicate the previous step on two sub-sets of MEPs – the ones elected from the pre-2004 EU member states and from the 2004/2007 accession countries. This additional analysis is useful for providing further insight to the effect of the 2004/2007 EU enlargements on the inner workings of the EP. As highlighted in previous chapters, the recent changes to the EP's make-up have been significant. For example, MEPs elected from the 2004/2007 accession countries are more nationality-driven than their counterparts elected from the pre-2004 EU member states (e.g., European Election Study, 2012a; Farrell et al., 2011). Comparing the voting procedure effect within the two sub-sets of MEPs adds depth to the analysis, and provides a more nuanced account of how MEPs approach parliamentary representation in the post-2004 era.

Validity of Self-Reporting

The measures of voting behaviour used in this chapter are subjective, as they are based on MEPs' self-reported voting-perception. This raises questions about their validity, as it is not possible to verify MEPs' answers. However, there are a number of reasons to suspect this is not a serious issue of concern.

First, survey data is widely used in social sciences to study the behaviour of MEPs and elected representatives in general. For example, Kirchner (1984) analysed MEPs' political experience and parliamentary behaviour on the basis of a questionnaire sent to MEPs who served in the First Parliament, Westlake (1994) conducted a survey among MEPs in the Second Parliament to study British MEPs' self-perceived role perception in the EP, and Raunio (2000) looked at MEPs' contact with their national party using data collected through a mail questionnaire. Similarly, MEP surveys conducted by Farrell et al. in 2000, 2006 and 2010 (2011) have been invaluable for providing individual-level information on MEPs, such as their role and self-perception as well as their ideological beliefs. Therefore, the data collection approach used in this chapter does not differ significantly from that of previous work.

Second, careful attention was paid to the wording of the questionnaire to ensure that it would capture the voting procedure effect, rather than the substance of the vote.

MEPs were presented with the following pre-defined voting situations: (i) the voting instructions of their EP party group are not in the best interests of their national electorate, and (ii) the voting instructions of their EP party group conflict with the voting instructions of their national party. They then had the pre-set response options that ranged from ‘very likely to defect’ to ‘very unlikely to defect’. The only aspect of the questionnaire that varied was the voting procedure used in the scenario. As a result, one can be confident that it is the voting procedure effect that the survey is measuring.

Finally, MEPs were introduced to the aim of the study prior to soliciting their voting-perception. They were made aware of the fact that the academic interest lies in testing whether/how the choice of voting procedure influences their parliamentary behaviour in two specified situations of voting dilemma. Moreover, the set-up of the survey supported the understanding that what is being tested is the effect of the choice of voting procedure, rather than the substance of the vote or the originating committee etc., on MEPs’ parliamentary behaviour.

6.5 Findings

The original MEP survey data offers important insight into how the choice of voting procedure influences the way that MEPs approach parliamentary representation. While the magnitude of the effect is not excessive, it is sufficient to confirm both H6.1 and H6.2. Moreover, it adds insight into how the 2004/2007 EU enlargements have influenced the voting dynamics in the EP, showing that the voting procedure effect is predominantly driven by MEPs elected from the 2004/2007 accession countries.

6.5.1 EP Party Group vs. National Electorate

Looking at how MEPs’ self-perceived approach to parliamentary representation varies across the different voting procedures, I find evidence to support H6.1. In situations where MEPs perceive that the voting instructions of their EP party group are not in the best interests of their national electorate, MEPs are more likely to defect from the voting instructions of their EP party group when voting by show of hands or electronically, as opposed to by roll call. At the same time, no meaningful differences exist in MEPs’ voting-perception when voting by show of hands or electronically.

Presence of the Voting Procedure Effect

Three paired t-tests, covering all potential combinations of voting procedures, allow me to assess whether the differences in MEPs’ voting-perception across different

voting procedures are statistically significant. Table 6.2 presents the statistics for the three paired t-tests – i.e., voting by roll call vs. voting by show of hands, voting by roll call vs. voting electronically, and voting by show of hands vs. voting electronically – comparing MEPs’ likelihood of defecting from the voting instructions of their EP party group when these are not perceived to be in the best interests of their national electorate. The paired t-tests clearly support the theoretical expectations regarding the presence (or lack thereof) of a voting procedure effect within MEPs’ voting-perception.

Table 6.2 Paired T-Tests: EP Party Group vs. National Electorate

Combination of Voting Procedures	T-Statistic	Degrees of Freedom	Pr(T > t)
Roll Call vs. Show of Hands	-4.57	151	.00
Roll Call vs. Electronically	-5.44	151	.00
Show of Hands vs. Electronically	-0.26	151	.80

The findings presented in Table 6.2 highlight that the differences in MEPs’ self-perceived likelihood of defecting from the voting instructions of their EP party group are statistically significant when comparing roll call voting vs. show of hands voting, and roll call voting vs. electronic voting. For both pairs, the two-tailed p-values are statistically significant at the .01 levels and the t-statistics of -4.57 and -5.44 are well above (and below) the cut-off associated with conventional levels of statistical significance, -1.96 and 1.96 respectively.¹¹⁰ Therefore, one can be confident that MEPs do approach representation in the EP differently when voting by roll call as opposed to when voting by non-roll call – i.e., show of hands or electronically.

However, no voting procedure effect was found when comparing MEPs’ voting-perception when voting by show of hands vs. electronically. The t-statistic of -0.26 does not meet the conventional criteria for statistical significance, and the two-tailed p-value of .80 illustrates that the differences in MEPs’ voting-perception are not statistically significant.

In the context of this particular voting dilemma – i.e., when MEPs believe that the voting instructions of their EP party group are not in the best interests of their national electorate – there is evidence to suggest that a voting procedure effect is present within MEPs’ voting-perception when voting by roll call, as opposed to by show of hands or electronically, but there are no discernible differences in MEPs’ voting-perception when voting by show of hands or electronically.

¹¹⁰ See for example Park (2005) and University of California (2012) for a discussion about t-statistics associated with two-tailed p-values.

Individual-Level Voting Procedure Effect

Next, I conduct an individual-level analysis to determine the extent to which MEPs approach parliamentary representation differently (and similarly) when voting by roll call vs. show of hands, by roll call vs. electronically, and by show of hands vs. electronically. This also highlights the direction of the voting procedure effect in MEPs' voting-perception.

Table 6.3 presents the counts and percentages of MEPs who consider themselves to be as likely to defect from the voting instructions of their EP party group when voting by either of the two voting procedures (score = 0), MEPs who consider themselves to be more likely to defect from the voting instructions of their EP party group when voting by the former of the two voting procedures (score = 1 / 2), and MEPs who consider themselves to be more likely to defect from the voting instructions of their EP party group when voting by the latter of the two voting procedures (score = -1 / -2). This is done for all three possible combinations of voting procedures. The findings presented in Table 6.3 confirm H6.1.

Table 6.3 Difference in MEPs' Likelihood of Defecting: EP Party Group vs. National Electorate

Score	Roll Call vs. Show of Hands		Roll Call vs. Electronically		Show of Hands vs. Electronically	
	Count	Percentage	Count	Percentage	Count	Percentage
2	3	2.0%	1	0.7%	1	0.7%
1	4	2.6%	2	1.3%	5	3.3%
0	104	68.4%	111	73.0%	140	92.1%
-1	34	22.4%	32	21.1%	5	3.3%
-2	7	4.6%	6	4.0%	1	0.7%

Positive score (1 / 2) – MEPs more likely to defect if voting by the former voting procedure
Neutral (0) – equally likely to defect
Negative score (-1 / -2) – MEPs more likely to defect if voting by the latter voting procedure

The individual-level analysis (Table 6.3) confirms that a voting procedure effect is present within MEPs' voting-perception when voting by roll call vs. show of hands or electronically. The percentage of MEPs who claim they are *equally* likely to defect from the voting instructions of their EP party group (if those instructions are perceived not to be in the best interests of their national electorate) when voting by roll call vs. by voting by show of hands or electronically is 68.4% and 73%, respectively. These percentages suggest that the majority of MEPs are equally likely to defect regardless of the voting procedure. At the same time, the percentages also indicate that roughly one-third of MEPs perceive a difference to exist in their voting behaviour depending on whether

they are voting by roll call or show of hands, and approximately one-quarter of MEPs perceive a difference to exist if voting by roll call or electronically. Thus, a considerable portion, albeit a minority, of MEPs perceive to approach parliamentary representation in the EP differently when voting by roll call as opposed to by non-roll call – i.e., show of hands or electronically.

Moreover, MEPs' likelihood of defection follows a clear pattern. Table 6.3 indicates that an MEP's likelihood of defecting from the voting instructions of his/her EP party group is greater when voting by non-roll call means – either by show of hands or electronically – as opposed to when voting by roll call. In total, 27% of MEPs (22.4% + 4.6%) consider themselves to be more likely to defect from the voting instructions of their EP party group when voting by show of hands, as opposed to by roll call. In contrast, only 4.6% of MEPs (2.6% + 2.0%) are more likely to defect if voting by roll call, as opposed to by show of hands. The same is true when comparing MEPs' voting-perception when voting by roll call or electronically. Whereas 25.1% of MEPs (21.1% + 4.0%) consider themselves to be more likely to defect if voting electronically versus by roll call, only 2% (1.3% + 0.7%) said that the reverse was true. Therefore, of MEPs who do perceive a difference to exist in their voting behaviour, as many as 85.4% (for roll call vs. show of hands comparison) and 92.6% (for roll call vs. electronically comparison) of MEPs are more likely to defect from the voting instructions of their EP party group when they are not voting by roll call. Thus, the individual-level analysis clearly supports the theoretical expectations as set out in H6.1

The individual-level analysis also confirms that there are no significant differences in MEPs' voting-perception when MEPs are voting by show of hands vs. electronically. When MEPs perceive that the voting instructions of their EP group are not in the best interests of their national electorate, the vast majority of MEPs are equally likely to defect regardless of which non-roll call voting procedure is used. As highlighted in Table 6.3, 92.1% of MEPs consider themselves to be just as likely to defect from the voting instructions of their EP party group when voting by show of hands as they are when voting electronically. More importantly, although 7.9% of MEPs indicate that their voting-perception does differ when voting by show of hands or electronically, there is no clear direction of the voting procedure effect among these MEPs. Whereas 4% (3.3% + 0.7%) of MEPs say they are more likely to defect when voting electronically, 4% (3.3% + 0.7%) say the same about voting by show of hands. By and large, MEPs suggest that they approach parliamentary representation in a similar manner when voting by show of hands or electronically.

To sum up, the individual-level analysis confirms the theoretical expectations as set out in H6.1. Considerable percentage of MEPs, albeit not a majority, perceives differences to existing in how they approach parliamentary representation when voting by roll call, as opposed to when voting by show of hands or electronically. Moreover, these differences are not random; they follow clear patterns. Namely, MEPs are more inclined to defect from the voting instructions of their EP party group when they are not voting by roll call. At the same time, no voting procedure effect is found in MEPs' self-perceived parliamentary behaviour when voting by show of hands or electronically.

Examples

To provide complementary evidence about how the voting procedure effect is linked to MEPs' EP partisanship, a few examples are provided.¹¹¹

On one hand, MEPs belonging to the ECR group are most likely to indicate differences in their voting behaviour depending on the voting procedure. In fact, these MEPs are particularly likely to defect from the voting instructions of their EP party group when voting by roll call as opposed to by show of hands or electronically (in situations where the instructions are not perceived to be in the best interests of their national electorate). I find that, on average, 33.3% of MEPs belonging to the ECR group indicate the presence of such a voting procedure effect in their voting-perception when comparing roll call voting with voting by show of hands and electronically. In contrast, the corresponding percentages are 29.8% for MEPs who belong to the EPP group, 29.7% for MEPs belonging to the S&D group, and 27% for MEPs belonging to the ALDE group.

On the other hand, the G-EFA and GUE-NGL groups stand out as the EP party groups which members are particularly unlikely to identify a voting procedure effect in how they approach parliamentary representation. The average percentages of MEPs from those EP party groups who claim to be more likely to defect from the voting instructions of their EP party group when voting by non-roll call means are 5% for the G-EFA group and even lower at 0% for the GUE-NGL group. Given that the related percentages for all other EP party groups are over 20%, MEPs belonging to the G-EFA and GUE-NGL groups stand out as being particularly unlikely to defect from the voting instructions of their EP party groups when voting by show of hands or electronically, as opposed to by roll call.

¹¹¹ Complementary evidence related to how the voting procedure effect is linked to MEPs' national affiliation is provided in 6.7.3.

6.5.2 EP Party Group vs. National Party

In the section above, I explore MEPs patterns of behaviour when the voting instructions of their EP party group are perceived to be in conflict with the interest of their national electorate. In this section, I turn my attention to another voting dilemma: situations where MEPs receive conflicting voting instructions from their EP party group and their national party. Here, I find evidence to support H6.2 – i.e., in situations where MEPs receive conflicting voting instructions from their EP party group and national party, MEPs are more likely to defect from the voting instructions of their EP party group when voting by show of hands or electronically, as opposed to by roll call. At the same time, no meaningful difference is found in MEPs’ voting-perception when voting by show of hands or electronically.

Presence of the Voting Procedure Effect

Three paired t-tests, covering all potential combinations of voting procedures, – are conducted to assess whether the differences in MEPs’ likelihood of defecting from the voting instructions of their EP party group are statistically significant. Table 6.4 presents the statistics for the three paired t-tests – i.e., voting by roll call vs. voting by show of hands, voting by roll call vs. voting electronically, and voting by show of hands vs. voting electronically – comparing MEPs’ likelihood of defecting from the voting instructions of their EP party group when these conflict with the voting instructions of their national party. The paired t-tests provide evidence that is consistent with the trends found in the previous voting dilemma and support the theoretical expectations regarding the presence (and non-presence) of the voting procedure effect within MEPs’ voting-perception.

Table 6.4 Paired T-Tests: EP Party Group vs. National Party

Combination of Voting Procedures	T-Statistic	Degrees of Freedom	Pr(T > t)
Roll call vs. Show of Hands	-4.31	140	.00
Roll call vs. Electronically	-4.69	139	.00
Show of Hands vs. Electronically	0.33	139	.74

The comparison of MEPs’ voting-perception during roll call voting occasions and non-roll call voting occasions – i.e., voting by show of hands or electronically – shows that MEPs’ self-perceived parliamentary behaviour differs in a statistically significant manner. The two-tailed p-values are statistically significant even at the .01 level for comparing roll call voting with either of the two non-roll call voting

procedures. The t-statistics of -4.31 and -4.69 (with degrees of freedom of 140 and 136) confirm the presence of the voting procedure effect within MEPs' self-perceived voting-perception. One can, therefore, be confident that MEPs approach representation in the EP differently when voting by roll call, as opposed to when voting by non-roll call, if receiving conflicting voting instructions from their EP party group and national party.

Once again, however, I find no evidence that a voting procedure effect is present in MEPs' self-perceived likelihood of defecting from the voting instructions of their EP party group when voting by show of hands versus when voting electronically. The low t-statistics score of 0.33 (with degrees of freedom of 139) and a high two-tailed p-value of .74, indicates that there are no meaningful statistically different differences in how MEPs perceive themselves to approach parliamentary representation when looking at the two non-roll call voting procedures.

Individual-Level Voting Procedure Effect

Again, an individual-level analysis is conducted to establish the direction of the voting procedure effect that does exist in MEPs' voting-perception. It determines the extent to which MEPs approach parliamentary representation differently (and similarly) when voting by roll call vs. show of hands, by roll call vs. electronically, and by show of hands vs. electronically.

Table 6.5 presents the counts and percentages of MEPs who consider themselves to be as likely to defect from the voting instructions of their EP party group when voting by either of the two voting procedures (score = 0), MEPs who consider themselves to be more likely to defect from the voting instructions of their EP party group when voting by the former of the two voting procedures (score = 1 / 2), and MEPs who consider themselves to be more likely to defect from the voting instructions of their EP party group when voting by the latter of the two voting procedures (score = -1 / -2 / -3). This is done for all three possible combinations of voting procedures. The findings presented in Table 6.5 confirm H6.2.

Table 6.5 Difference in MEPs' Likelihood of Defecting: EP Party Group vs. National Party

Score	Roll Call vs. Show of Hands		Roll Call vs. Electronically		Show of Hands vs. Electronically	
	Count	Percentage	Count	Percentage	Count	Percentage
2	1	0.7%				
1	6	4.3%	4	2.9%	5	3.6%
0	100	70.1%	106	75.7%	131	96.4%
-1	27	19.2%	24	17.1%	4	2.9%
-2	6	4.3%	5	3.6%		
-3	1	0.7%	1	0.7%		

Positive score (1 / 2) – MEPs more likely to defect if voting by the former voting procedure
Neutral (0) – equally likely to defect
Negative score (-1 / -2 / -3) – MEPs more likely to defect if voting by the latter voting procedure

Table 6.5 confirms that there is an individual-level voting procedure effect present within MEPs' voting-perception when voting by roll call, as opposed to when voting by show of hands or electronically. Although the majority of MEPs indicate that they are *equally* as likely to defect from the voting instructions of their EP party group when voting by roll call, as opposed to the two non-roll call procedures (when receiving conflicting voting instructions from their EP party group and national party) – the percentages being 70.1% (for voting by roll call vs. show of hands) and 75.7% (for voting by roll call vs. electronically) – over one-fifth of MEPs identify a voting procedure effect to be present in their voting behaviour for both comparisons. 29.9% of MEPs suggest that there is a difference in how their approach to parliamentary representation when voting by roll call or show of hands voting, while 24.3% of MEPs say that there is a difference when comparing voting by roll call and electronic voting. Therefore, considerable percentage of MEPs does claim to approach parliamentary representation differently when voting by roll call, as opposed to when voting by show of hands or electronically.

As with the previous conflict, MEPs' defections from the voting instructions of their EP party group also follow clear patterns when they receive conflicting voting instructions from their EP party group and national party. Table 6.5 indicates that an MEP's likelihood of defecting the voting instructions of his/her EP party group is greater when voting by non-roll call means – either by show of hands or electronically – as opposed to when voting by roll call. 24.2% of MEPs (19.2% + 4.3% + 0.7%) consider themselves to be more likely to defect from the voting instructions of their EP party group when voting by show of hands, as opposed to by roll call. In contrast, only 5% of MEPs (4.3% + 0.7%) say that they are more likely to defect if voting by show of

hands instead. The same is true for roll call and electronic voting, where 21.4% of MEPs (17.1% + 3.6% + 0.7%) consider themselves to be more likely to defect if voting by roll call versus electronically, and only 2.9% say that the reverse is true. Therefore, of MEPs who do perceive a difference to exist in their voting behaviour, as many as 82.9% (for roll call vs. show of hands) and 88.1% (for roll call vs. electronically) of MEPs are more likely to defect from the voting instructions of their EP party group when they are not voting by roll call. Thus, the individual-level analysis clearly supports the theoretical expectations as set out in H6.2.

The individual-level analysis also confirms that MEPs do not tend to identify significant differences in their approach to parliamentary representation when voting by show of hands as opposed to when voting electronically. Table 6.5 shows that, when receiving conflicting voting instructions from their EP party group and national party, 96.4% of MEPs admit that they are equally likely to defect from the voting instructions of their EP party group regardless of whether they are voting by show of hands or voting electronically instead. Moreover, there is no clear direction of the voting procedure effect among MEPs who do perceive a difference to exist in how they approach parliamentary representation. Whereas 2.9% of MEPs indicate that they are more likely to defect from the voting instructions of their EP party group when voting electronically, 3.6% of MEPs perceive themselves to be more willing to do so when voting by show of hands instead. Thus, voting by show of hands and electronically are effectively characterized by MEPs' similar voting-perception.

The individual-level analysis confirms H6.2 and is consistent with the findings relating to the previous voting dilemma. A considerable portion of MEPs, albeit not a majority, perceive differences in their approach to parliamentary representation to exist when voting by roll call, as opposed to when voting by non-roll call – i.e., by show of hands or electronically. In addition, these differences indicate that MEPs are more inclined to defect from the voting instructions of their EP party group when the non-roll voting procedures are used. At the same time, no voting procedure effect is found in MEPs' voting-perception when voting by show of hands or electronically.

Examples

To provide complementary evidence about how the voting procedure effect is linked to MEPs' supranational partisanship, few examples are also provided.¹¹²

¹¹² Complementary evidence about how the voting procedure effect is linked to MEPs' national affiliation is provided in 6.7.3.

On one hand, MEPs who belong to the ALDE and S&D groups are particularly likely to identify the particular voting procedure effect in their voting-perception; that is they are more likely to defect from the voting instructions of their EP party group when voting by roll call in situations where they receive conflicting voting instructions from their national party. The percentages of MEPs who highlighted the presence of such voting procedure effect are 30.8% for the ALDE group and 33.3% for the S&D group. In contrast, the next highest percentages are 25% for MEPs belonging to both the EFD and EPP groups.

On the other hand, the G-EFA and GUE-NGL groups stand out again as the EP party groups which members are particularly unlikely to identify a voting procedure effect in their approach to parliamentary representation. The average percentages of MEPs from those EP party groups who claim to be more likely to defect from the voting instructions of their EP party group when voting by non-roll call means are respectively 5% for the G-EFA group and even lower at 0% for the GUE-NGL group. Given that the average percentages for all other EP party groups is over 20%, MEPs belonging to the G-EFA and GUE-NGL groups stand out as being considerable less likely to defect from the voting instructions their EP party group when voting by show of hands or electronically, as opposed to by roll call.

The fact that it is those particular EP party groups which MEPs tend to be more or less likely to defect from the voting instructions of their EP party group is also consistent with the corresponding trends found for the previous voting dilemma. The ALDE and S&D groups were also among the EP party groups with highest percentage of members claiming to be more likely to defect from the voting instructions of their EP party group when voting by show of hands or electronically, as opposed to by roll call (in situations where these were perceived not to be in the best interests of their national electorate). At the same time, the GUE-NGL and G-EFA groups were also the EP party groups with least percentage of members claiming to be more likely to defect from the voting instructions of their EP party group when facing the previous voting dilemma and when voting by non-roll call means, as opposed to by roll call.

6.5.3 Pre-2004 MEPs vs. 2004/2007 MEPs

The empirical analysis thus far has demonstrated that a voting procedure effect is present in the role perception of a noteworthy percentage of MEPs, although not a majority. Here, I explore these patterns in greater detail, addressing the recent changes to the EP's make-up. To do so, I conduct an individual-level assessment of the presence

and direction of the voting procedure effect within MEPs elected from the pre-2004 EU member states and MEPs elected from the 2004/2007 accession countries.

Individual-Level Voting Procedure Effect: EP Party Group vs. National Electorate

I start by looking at the first of the two voting dilemmas: MEP does not believe that the voting instructions of his/her EP party group are in the best interests of his/her national electorate.

Table 6.6 presents the percentages of MEPs who consider themselves to be as likely to defect from the voting instructions of their EP party group when voting by either of the two voting procedures (score = 0), MEPs who consider themselves to be more likely to defect from the voting instructions of their EP party group when voting by the former of the two voting procedures (score = 1 / 2), and MEPs who consider themselves to be more likely to defect from the voting instructions of their EP party group when voting by the latter of the two voting procedures (score = -1 / -2). This is done for all three possible combinations of voting procedures, and separately for MEPs elected from the 2004/2007 accession countries and MEPs elected from the pre-2004 EU member states.

Table 6.6 Difference in MEPs' Likelihood of Defecting by Split Sample: EP Party Group vs. National Electorate

Score	Roll call vs. Show of Hands		Roll call vs. Electronically		Show of hands vs. Electronically	
	Pre-2004	2004/2007	Pre-2004	2004/2007	Pre-2004	2004/2007
2	3.4%		1.1%			
1	3.4%	2.4%	2.3%		4.6%	2.4%
0	75.0%	50.0%	81.8%	52.4%	89.8%	95.2%
-1	18.2%	33.3%	14.8%	35.7%	4.6%	2.4%
-2		14.3%		11.9%	1.1%	

Positive score (1 / 2) – MEPs more likely to defect if voting by the former voting procedure
Neutral (0) – equally likely to defect
Negative score (-1 / -2) – MEPs more likely to defect if voting by the latter voting procedure

Note first, that a considerably larger percentage of MEPs elected from the 2004/2007 accession countries identify a voting procedure effect in their approach to parliamentary representation when comparing voting by roll call with voting by either show of hands or electronically. Only 50% of MEPs elected from the 2004/2007 accession countries consider themselves to be *equally* likely to defect from the voting instructions of their EP party group when voting by roll call versus show of hands, compared with 75% of MEPs elected from the pre-2004 EU member states. Similar,

52.4% of MEPs elected from the 2004/2007 accession countries say that they are *equally* likely to defect when voting by roll call versus electronically, compared with 81.8% of MEPs elected from pre-2004 EU member states. Therefore, while only approximately one-fifth of MEPs elected from the pre-2004 EU member states follow different voting-perception when comparing voting by roll call and non-roll call, more than twice as many MEPs elected from the 2004/2007 accession countries admit the presence of a voting procedure effect in their approach to parliamentary representation. Therefore, latter MEPs appear to be driving the patterns associated with the voting procedure effect.

Despite the differences in the magnitude of defections, the patterns of defection, however, are very similar across both groups. Namely, both sub-sets of MEPs are more likely to defect when voting by show of hands or electronically, as opposed to by roll call. In total, 47.6% (33.3% + 14.4%) of MEPs elected from the 2004/2007 accession countries consider themselves to be more likely to defect from the voting instructions of their EP party group when voting by show of hands, as opposed to by roll call, whereas only 2.4% of them act vice versa. The corresponding percentages of MEPs elected from the 2004/2007 accession countries for voting electronically vs. roll call are 47.6% (35.7% + 11.9%) and 0%, respectively. The same pattern of defection, albeit to a considerably smaller extent, is also visible among MEPs elected from the pre-2004 EU member states. Whereas 18.2% of them consider to more likely defect from the voting instructions of their EP party group when voting by show of hands, as opposed to by roll call, 6.8% (3.4% + 3.4%) of them act vice versa. When comparing the corresponding percentages of MEPs for voting electronically vs. roll call, these are 14.8% and 3.4% (2.3% + 1.1%), respectively. The voting procedure effect – i.e., MEPs being more likely to defect from the voting instructions of their EP party group when voting by show of hands or electronically, as opposed to by roll call – is evident among both MEPs elected from the 2004/2007 accession countries and MEPs elected from the pre-2004 EU member states, although it is considerably more prevalent among the former.

Table 6.6 also shows that the non-difference in MEPs' likelihood of defecting from the voting instructions of their EP party group when voting by show of hands or electronically is largely present among both sub-sets of MEPs. Whereas 89.8% of MEPs elected from the pre-2004 EU member states are *equally* as likely to defect from the voting instructions of their EP party group when voting by either of the two non-roll call procedures, the corresponding percentage is 95.2% for MEPs elected from the

2004/2007 accession countries. By large, voting by show of hands and electronically can be clustered together under the heading of non-roll call voting among both sub-sets of MEPs.

Individual-Level Voting Procedure Effect: EP Party Group vs. National Party

A comparable individual-level analysis is also conducted for the other voting dilemma – i.e., when an MEP receives conflicting voting instructions from his/her EP party group and his/her national party. Table 6.7 presents the percentages of MEPs by their comparative voting-perception across the three combinations of voting procedures. As before, this is done separately for MEPs elected from the 2004/2007 accession countries and MEPs elected from the pre-2004 EU member states.

Table 6.7 Difference in MEPs’ Likelihood of Defecting by Split Sample: EP Party Group vs. National Party

Score	Roll call vs. Show of Hands		Roll call vs. Electronically		Show of hands vs. Electronically	
	Pre-2004	2004/2007	Pre-2004	2004/2007	Pre-2004	2004/2007
2	1.2%					
1	3.5%	5.4%	2.3%	2.7%	4.7%	2.7%
0	79.1%	51.4%	86.1%	54.1%	91.9%	94.6%
-1	16.3%	29.7%	11.6%	32.4%	3.5%	2.7%
-2		13.5%		10.8%		

Positive score (1 / 2) – MEPs more likely to defect if voting by the former voting procedure
Neutral (0) – equally likely to defect
Negative score (-1 / -2) – MEPs more likely to defect if voting by the latter voting procedure

Table 6.7 indicates that MEPs approach two voting dilemmas in rather similar manner. 51.4% of MEPs elected from the 2004/2007 accession countries claim to be *equally* likely to defect from the voting instructions of their EP party group when voting by roll call vs. show of hands, compared with 54.1% of these MEPs when looking at voting by roll call vs. electronically. The corresponding percentages of MEPs elected from the pre-2004 EU member states are 79.1% and 86.1%, respectively. At the same time, as many as 94.6% of MEPs elected from the 2004/2007 accession countries hold similar voting-perception when voting by show of hands vs. electronically, and 91.9% of MEPs elected from the pre-2004 EU member states do so. As with the previous voting dilemma, the voting procedure effect is largely restricted to voting by non-roll call – i.e., voting by show of hands or electronically – as opposed to voting by roll call. Considerable portions of MEPs elected from the 2004/2007 accession countries and MEP elected from the pre-2004 EU member states do approach parliamentary

representation differently when voting by non-roll call vs. roll call, although this voting procedure effect is particularly salient among the former.

As with the previous voting dilemma, the patterns of defection are also very similar across both sub-groups of MEPs – i.e., MEPs from both sub-groups are more likely to defect from the voting instructions of their EP party group when voting by show of hands or electronically, as opposed to by roll call. In total, 43.2% (29.7% + 13.5%) of MEPs elected from the 2004/2007 accession countries consider themselves to be more likely to defect from the voting instructions of their EP party group when voting by show of hands, as opposed to by roll call, compared with 16.3% of MEPs elected from the pre-2004 EU member states. In contrast, only 5.4% of MEPs elected from the 2004/2007 accession countries are more likely to defect if voting by show of hands, compared with 4.7% (3.5% + 1.2%) of MEPs elected from the pre-2004 EU member states. The same pattern is true for voting by roll call vs. electronically as well, where 43.2% (32.4% + 10.8%) of MEPs elected from the 2004/2007 accession countries and 11.6% of MEPs elected from the pre-2004 EU member states are more likely to defect if voting electronically, and only 2.7% and 2.3% of respective MEPs consider the reverse to be true. The voting procedure effect – i.e., MEPs' greater likelihood of defecting from the voting instructions of their EP party group when voting by show of hands or electronically, as opposed to by roll call – is present among both MEPs elected from the 2004/2007 accession countries and MEPs elected from the pre-2004 EU member states, although it is considerably more prevalent among the former.

Examples

To highlight the particular saliency of this voting procedure effect – i.e., MEPs being more likely to defect from the voting positions of their EP party group when voting by show of hands or electronically, as opposed to by roll call – among MEPs elected from the 2004/2007 accession countries, a few examples are provided.

I start by looking at the voting dilemma where MEPs do not perceive the voting instructions of their EP party group to be in the best interests of their national electorate. There are nine national delegations, which include 50% or more MEPs who claim to be more likely to defect from the voting instructions of their EP party group when voting by non-roll call, as opposed to by roll call.¹¹³ Of those nine national delegations, as many as six – Bulgaria, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Hungary, Latvia, and Poland – are the

¹¹³ This corresponds to an average percentage of MEPs who claimed to be more likely to defect from the voting instructions of their EP party group when voting by show of hands (vs. roll call) and electronically (vs. roll call).

2004/2007 accession countries, whereas only three – Belgium, Luxembourg, and Netherlands – are the pre-2004 EU member states. This comparison is particularly striking as the six and three national delegations represent, respectively, 50% and 20% of the corresponding sub-sets of the EU member states. Despite the EP incorporating MEPs from only 12 countries that joined the EU in 2004/2007, but from 15 pre-2004 EU member states, it is the national delegations from the 2004/2007 accession countries that stand out.

Similar pattern is also present when looking at the other voting dilemma where MEPs receive conflicting voting instructions from their EP party group and national party. Here, I found seven national delegations, which included 50% or more MEPs who claimed to be more likely to defect from the voting instructions of their EP party group when voting by non-roll call, as opposed to by roll call.¹¹⁴ The dominance of national delegations from the 2004/2007 accession countries is even more striking for this voting dilemma than it was for the previous one. Whereas six of the seven national delegations – Bulgaria, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Hungary, Latvia, and Poland – are the 2004/2007 accession countries, Belgium is the only pre-2004 EU member state that is represented among the seven. MEPs who are more likely to defect from the voting instructions of their EP party group when voting by show of hands or electronically, as opposed to by roll call, are concentrated to national delegations from the 2004/2007 accession countries.

Further Reasoning

The fact that the voting procedure effect is predominantly driven by MEPs elected from the 2004/2007 accession countries is hardly surprising. As shown earlier, it is non-roll call voting that provides MEPs with low-cost opportunities to discard voting instructions of their EP party group, while there are individual-level and contextual reasons why MEPs elected from the 2004/2007 accession countries ought to be more likely to use those opportunities for defection – i.e., MEPs elected from the 2004/2007 accession countries are more nationality-driven in their own role and self-perceptions, face electoral contexts that promote greater loyalty to their national electorate and national party rather than to their EP party group (e.g., Comparative Candidates Survey, 2012; European Commission, 2007, 2009; European Election Study, 2012a; Farrell et al., 2011).

¹¹⁴ This corresponds to an average percentage of MEPs who claimed to be more likely to defect from the voting instructions of their EP party group when voting by show of hands (vs. roll call) and electronically (vs. roll call).

Individual-level characteristics may lead for MEPs from 2004/2007 accession countries to defect from the voting instructions of their EP party group to a greater extent during non-roll call voting occasions. MEPs elected from the 2004/2007 accession countries assign greater priority to their national identity than MEPs elected from the pre-2004 EU member states. Recent MEP surveys show that 24% of MEPs elected from the pre-2004 EU member states prioritize the European identity over their national identity, compared with only 16% of MEPs elected from the 2004/2007 accession countries (European Election Study, 2012a; Farrell et al., 2011). Although the difference is not overwhelming, it is still evident in MEPs' comparative self-perception. MEPs elected from the 2004/2007 accession countries assign their national identity greater role in their self-perception, as opposed to the European identity.

What makes the difference in MEPs' self-perception particularly relevant is it does also translate into MEPs' different role perception. It is unsurprising that the recent MEP surveys show that MEPs elected from the 2004/2007 accession countries assign, on average, greater importance to representing national interests than MEPs elected from the pre-2004 EU member states; on a scale that ranges from 1 'little importance' to 5 'great importance', the average placement of MEPs elected from the 2004/2007 accession countries is 4.5, compared with an average of 4.1 for MEPs elected from the pre-2004 EU member states (European Election Study, 2012a; Farrell et al., 2011). Moreover, whereas 67% of MEPs elected from the 2004/2007 accession countries perceive the representation of their national interests to be of 'great importance', only 44% of MEPs elected from the pre-2004 EU member states do so (European Election Study, 2012a; Farrell et al., 2011). Given that nationality-driven role and self-perceptions are stronger among MEPs elected from the 2004/2007 accession countries, it is only fair to expect that these MEPs are also more inclined to discard the voting instructions of their EP party group in favour of the interests of national actors when there are low-cost opportunities for defection (i.e., non-roll call voting occasions).

Contextual characteristics also provide an insight into why MEPs elected from the 2004/2007 accession countries are more inclined to defect from the voting instructions of their EP party group when voting by non-roll call. MEPs elected from the 2004/2007 accession countries tend to face re-election to the EP or election to domestic political offices in countries which are economically weaker, where people are more patriotic and assign greater importance to the EP etc. (e.g., European Commission, 2005b, 2007; International Monetary Fund, 2010). For example, the average percentage of people treating the EP as important is 81% in the 2004/2007 accession countries,

compared with 75% in the pre-2004 EU member states (e.g., European Commission, 2007, 2008a).¹¹⁵ Voters' awareness of MEPs' voting choices is fundamental to their ability to reward or punish MEPs. It is fair to expect that people who consider the EP to be an important institution within the EU make more effort themselves to find out how MEPs behave when carrying out their duties in the EP. As such, there ought to be slightly greater pressure for MEPs elected from the 2004/2007 accession countries to be sensitive to the punishment powers of their national electorate.

Moreover, an MEP elected from the 2004/2007 accession countries also tends to face a more centralized nomination process for becoming a national party candidate at the European elections and belong to a national party with greater governmental participation. Empirical evidence shows that, on a scale from 1 'most centralized' to 4 'least centralized', the mean level of centralization for becoming a national party candidate for MEPs elected from the pre-2004 EU member states and MEPs elected from the 2004/2007 accession countries is 2.2 and 1.5, respectively (European Election Study, 2012a; Farrell et al., 2011). Likewise, national parties of the two sub-sets of post-2009 MEPs belonged to their respective national government, on average, 56.9% and 43.1% of the period from September 2009 to December 2010. Facing a more centralized nomination process means that MEPs elected from the 2004/2007 accession countries are particularly reliant on the electoral support of their national party leadership. As such, it is only fair to expect that they are also more sensitive to, and more inclined to follow, the voting instructions of their national party. Furthermore, given the virtual inability of European citizens to distinguish between legislation that originates from the EU and from a national legislature, it is the EP's decisions which are likely to be taken into account when casting judgements on the performances of national governments. As a result, it is the governmental parties who should be particularly interested in influencing the European-level policy-making through MEPs and, therefore, put more pressure on MEPs to vote in a particular manner. Altogether, MEPs elected from the 2004/2007 accession countries should be more sensitive to the preferences of their national electorate and those of their national party, making them more inclined to defect from the voting instructions of their EP party group in favour of the interests of their national electorate and the voting instructions of their national party, when low-costs defection opportunities in the shape of non-roll call voting are available.

¹¹⁵ As shown in Chapter 5, MEPs elected from countries where more people treat the EP as an important institution within the EU are more likely to follow the voting positions of their national delegation.

6.6 Summary

Given that the majority of the literature on the voting dynamics in the EP derives from analyses of roll call votes, there is little insight into how the choice of voting procedure influences MEPs' loyalties to their different principals and, as a result, their parliamentary behaviour. It is a shortcoming in our effort to understand the voting dynamics in the EP in their true complexity. Roll call voting occasions constitute only a minority of all parliamentary voting occasions, they are unique in their recorded and public nature, and there is a growing body of empirical evidence to suggest that roll call votes are not truly representative of all parliamentary voting occasions (e.g., Carrubba et al., 2006; Hoyland, 2010; Thiem, 2006). Thus, the possibility that MEPs approach parliamentary representation differently when voting by roll call, as opposed to by non-roll call, is plausible and needs to be addressed.

This chapter builds on the existing empirical studies on MEPs' voting behaviour and on previous chapters' analyses of how MEPs approach parliamentary representation during roll call voting occasions. It does so by using data from an original MEP survey, which looks at whether MEPs show contrasting degrees of loyalty to their principals when different voting procedures are used. It compares MEPs' self-perceived likelihood of defecting from the voting instructions of their EP party group across voting by roll call, show of hands, and electronically. The analysis also incorporates two voting dilemmas that are essential to our understanding of the comparative relevance of MEPs' principals in influencing their approach to parliamentary representation: (i) when an MEP believes that the voting instructions of his/her EP party group are not in the best interests of his/her national electorate, and (ii) when an MEP receives conflicting voting instructions from his/her EP party group and national party.

Summary of Findings

The individual-level analysis demonstrates that a limited voting procedure effect is present within MEPs' self-perceived approach to parliamentary representation when comparing their voting-perception during roll call and non-call call voting procedures. The two-tailed p-values associated t-test of the mean differences between MEPs' self-perceived likelihood of defecting from the voting instructions of their EP party group are statistically significantly at .01 levels for both voting dilemmas. When MEPs do not believe that the voting instructions of their EP party group are in the best interests of their national electorate or when they receive conflicting voting instructions from their national party, 31.6% and 29.9% of MEPs suggest that there are differences in their

parliamentary behaviour when voting by roll call versus show of hands, respectively. Similarly, 27% and 24.3% of MEPs indicate that differences exist in their parliamentary behaviour when voting by roll call versus electronically. Although the majority of MEPs do not approach parliamentary representation differently when voting by show of hands or electronically, as opposed to by roll call, there is a considerable percentage of MEPs who claim that their voting-perception and the degree of loyalty they show to their principals are influenced by whether they are voting by roll call or not.

In addition, the direction of the voting procedure effect is not random. Rather, there is a clear pattern of voting behaviour present for both voting dilemmas: MEPs are more likely to defect from the voting instructions of their EP party group when voting by non-roll call means. Among the MEPs who approach parliamentary representation differently when voting by roll call vs. show of hands and when voting by roll call vs. electronically in situations where they believe that the voting instructions of their EP party group are not in the best interests of their national electorate, the percentages of MEPs who are more likely to defect from the voting instructions of their EP party group are 85.4% and 82.9%, respectively. The related percentages of MEPs are 92.7% and 88.1% when facing the other voting dilemma. Given that more than 80% of MEPs who identify the presence of the voting procedure effect within their approach to parliamentary representation are consistently more likely to defect from the voting instructions of their EP party group when voting by show of hands or electronically, as opposed to by roll call, it is clear that non-roll call voting is characterized by MEPs' greater likelihood of defecting from the voting instructions of their EP party group.

Moreover, I find that the voting procedure effect is particularly visible among MEPs elected from the 2004/2007 accession countries. This holds across both voting dilemmas. The average percentages of MEPs elected from the 2004/2007 accession countries who are more (less) likely to defect from the voting positions of their EP party group in the two situations of voting dilemma is 47.6% (1.2%) when voting by show of hands, as opposed to by roll call, and 43.2% (4.1%) when voting electronically, as opposed to by roll call. In contrast, the corresponding percentages are 16.5% (5.1%) and 14% (3.5%) for MEPs elected from the pre-2004 EU member states. Therefore, while both groups of MEPs are more likely to defect from the voting instructions of their EP party group when voting by non-roll call, MEPs elected from 2004/2007 accession countries are the main driving forces behind this voting procedure effect.

Finally, the analysis reveals that voting by show of hands and electronically can be grouped together under a single category of non-roll call voting. T-tests indicate that

MEPs' mean likelihood of defecting from the voting instructions of their EP party group when voting by show of hands is not significantly different from when voting electronically. This holds in both situations of voting dilemma. Moreover, the percentages of MEPs who do claim to approach parliamentary representation differently when voting by show of hands or electronically in situations where they do not believe the voting instructions of their EP party group to be in the best interests of their national electorate or where they receive conflicting voting instructions from their national party are as low as 7.9% and 3.6%, respectively. By large, MEPs approach parliamentary representation in a similar manner when voting by show of hands or electronically.

Implications of Findings

The findings of this chapter build upon previous chapters' analyses of MEPs' roll call voting behaviour. They assess how the comparative loyalties that MEPs show to their principals are influenced by the voting procedure used, and suggest how the EP might be able to promote a more supranational approach to parliamentary representation among its members.

First, the findings of this chapter add depth to our understanding of how MEPs approach parliamentary representation by looking at whether their behaviour is affected by the voting procedure used. Previous studies offer theoretical reasons to suspect that roll call voting could give rise to different considerations, as well as indirect reasons to suspect that roll call samples hide votes with MEPs' higher likelihood of defecting from the voting positions of their EP party group (e.g., Carrubba et al., 2006; Kreppel, 2002; Thiem, 2006). However, to my knowledge, this is the first empirical effort to explicitly show that noteworthy portions of MEPs do in fact change their individual-level voting-perception when voting by show of hands or electronically, as opposed to by roll call. This holds for two voting situations key to our understanding of the comparative relevance of MEPs' principals in guiding their voting choices, and highlights the need to build upon the traditional empirical analyses of MEPs' roll call voting behaviour. Only by looking at MEPs' voting behaviour during roll call and non-roll call voting occasions is it possible to provide a sufficiently comprehensive account of how MEPs approach parliamentary representation in the EP.

Second, the fact that the voting procedure effect within MEPs' voting-perception is not random, but follows a clear pattern, helps us build on our understanding of how successful the different principals are in commanding loyalty from MEPs. I have shown that non-roll call voting procedures are characterized by MEPs' increased willingness to

defect from the voting instructions of their EP party group, in favour of the interests of their national electorate and the voting instructions of their national party. What this effectively means is that the traditional roll call analyses, including the findings of Chapters 4 and 5, are likely to reveal MEPs' slightly higher degrees of loyalty to their EP party group vis-à-vis their national party and national electorate than what is present during the remaining non-roll call voting occasions. This needs to be taken into account when talking about MEPs' overall parliamentary behaviour, as the EP party groups are able to command greater loyalty from their members when roll call voting is used.

The presence of the particular voting procedure effect in MEPs' self-perceived approach to parliamentary representation also offers a useful suggestion regarding the EP's potential future development. As the EP is designed to represent the interests that cross national boundaries, a greater reliance on roll call voting occasions could help empower the EP party groups, and give more impetus among MEPs to approach parliamentary representation in a supranational manner. This should be particularly useful in the post-2004 era, as increasing the reliance on roll call votes, vis-à-vis voting by show of hands or electronically, could help counter-balance the higher likelihood of MEPs elected from the 2004/2007 accession countries to defect from the voting instructions of their EP party group when voting by non-roll call means. Although the identified voting procedure effect is limited to a minority of MEPs, the choice of the voting procedure does influence how many MEPs approach representation in the EP. Using roll call voting procedure for more parliamentary voting occasions could help the EP to promote a more supranational approach to representation among its members.

Third, the findings of this chapter also shed further light on the impact that the 2004/2007 EU enlargements have had on the voting dynamics in the EP. I find that the division between MEPs elected from the 2004/2007 accession countries and MEPs elected from the pre-2004 EU member states is salient in the context of the voting procedure effect. Although the voting procedure effect is present within the voting-perception of both sub-sets of post-2004 MEPs, MEPs elected from the 2004/2007 accession countries are the main driving force behind the phenomena. These MEPs are particularly likely to prioritize their national electorate and national party over their EP party group when getting the lower-cost opportunities for doing so in the shape of non-roll call voting. This is hardly surprising given that MEPs elected from the 2004/2007 accession countries are more nationality-driven, as well as face electorates and national parties who are better able to promote loyalty to their interests (see Chapter 2). The 2004/2007 EU enlargements have contributed to the extent to which the voting

procedure effect – i.e., MEPs being more likely to defect from the voting positions of their EP party group when voting by non-roll call – is present within post-2004 MEPs' approach to parliamentary representation.

Finally, this chapter complements well the findings of the previous empirical chapters. On one hand, MEPs' slightly greater willingness to prioritize their national electorate and national party over their EP party group when voting by non-roll call, as opposed to by roll call, adds insight into the comparative relevance of post-2004 MEPs' principals in guiding their voting choices. It implies that, whereas MEPs hold their primary loyalty to their national party across all parliamentary voting occasions, the extent to which their secondary loyalty is provided by their supranational partisanship rather than their national allegiance is greater during roll call voting occasions (as opposed to non-roll call voting occasions). On the other hand, the presence of a voting procedure effect within MEPs' voting-perception adds insight into how diversity shapes the way MEPs approach parliamentary representation. Whereas heterogeneity among MEPs and the principals they face helps us understand variation in their voting behaviour, this chapter identifies the relevance of another source of diversity – i.e., voting procedure. The degree to which some MEPs are loyal to their different principals does not just vary in relation to the individual-level and contextual characteristics highlighted in Chapter 5, but it is also influenced by whether they are voting by roll call or not. Thus, the empirical chapters complement each other, looking at the comparative degree of loyalty that post-2004 MEPs show to their principals across both roll call and non-roll call voting occasions, and how their approach to parliamentary representation is shaped by the different sources of diversity.

Notes of Caution

This chapter offers important findings regarding the presence and direction of the voting procedure effect within MEPs' self-perceived approach to parliamentary representation. However, I would like to offer a few caveats.

It must be noted that the voting procedure effect should be treated as complementing our understanding of the voting dynamics in the EP. There are many aspects that influence how MEPs approach parliamentary representation; the choice of the voting procedure used is only one of them. For example, in Chapter 5, I showed that several individual-level and contextual characteristics affect MEPs' loyalty to their various principals. It has also been shown that, when MEPs' national delegation and EP party group hold contrasting voting positions, aspects such as MEPs' role and self-

perceptions influence their likelihood of prioritizing one over the other (Trumm, 2011). Although the choice of the voting procedure should be taken into account when looking into how MEPs approach parliamentary representation, it should not be interpreted as providing a full account of the differences in their behaviour. It is but one of the many aspects that influence MEPs' behaviour.

Also, the particular voting dilemmas that are used in this chapter do not characterize all the parliamentary voting occasions. It is likely that there are voting occasions where MEPs simply do not know their principals' preferences. At the same time, several proposals voted on in the EP do not give rise to competing preferences. These voting situations are not explored in this chapter and, as such, the chapter cannot provide insight into MEPs' parliamentary behaviour in these situations. Having said this, the voting dilemmas that have been incorporated in this analysis are fundamental to our understanding of the comparative relevance of MEPs' principals in guiding how MEPs approach parliamentary representation. As shown in Chapter 2, it is the three principals – the EP party groups, national electorates, and national parties – who have meaningful incentives to influence MEPs' ability to act as vote-maximizing and/or policy-maximizing agents. As such, the voting dilemmas where those principals' preferences are in conflict tap into the very heart of how MEPs' competing loyalties and their approach to parliamentary representation are influenced by the voting procedures used in the EP. Moreover, it is the divisive voting occasions that provide meaningful opportunities to test for the comparative relevance of the different principals in shaping MEPs' parliamentary behaviour. Thus, the particular voting dilemmas looked at in this chapter relate to the voting situations that allow for analyses of MEPs' comparative loyalties to the principals that are most able to influence how MEPs approach representation in the EP.

Chapter 7: Conclusion

The EP offers a fascinating setting for studying how elected representatives approach parliamentary representation. Since its establishment, the EP has evolved from a consultative body into one of the more powerful institutions within the EU (e.g., Crombez and Hix, 2011; Dinan, 2005; Hix and Marsh, 2007; Hix et al., 2007; Selck et al., 2007). It is the only directly-elected EU institution, and its members are able to enact legislation in a wide range of policy sectors, as well as significantly influence the EU's budgetary process and scrutinize the composition of the European Commission. As a result, it is important that we understand the contemporary decision-making process within the EP in its true complexity. Moreover, the EP is the only legislature where directly-elected representatives need to balance both national and supranational loyalties, which take the form of three highly salient principals: their EP party group, national electorate, and national party. These principals can affect MEPs' ability to act as vote-maximizing and/or policy-maximizing agents. Studying MEPs' voting choices in such a complex setting offers a unique opportunity to add another dimension to our understanding of elected representatives' parliamentary behaviour. It also allows us to assess how the presence of multiple loyalties operating on different levels (national and supranational) influence the way that elected representatives approach parliamentary representation, and how their interpretation of their mandate shapes European policy-making. Therefore, the EP is both an important and a unique venue for studying parliamentary representation.

Building on the Existing Literature

This dissertation contributes to our understanding of the voting dynamics in the post-2004 EP by incorporating the recent changes to the EP's institutional make-up. It provides a more up-to-date account of how contemporary MEPs approach parliamentary representation, and the comparative degree of loyalty that they show to their different principals. It also adds nuance to our understanding of how the heterogeneity among MEPs and their principals shapes MEPs' voting behaviour, and whether the voting procedures used affect how MEPs approach parliamentary representation. In summary, my aim is to build on the existing literature by providing a more comprehensive account of how contemporary MEPs behave when carrying out their duties in the EP.

In order to address these goals, it is necessary to understand the incentives that give rise to the different approaches to representation in the EP. Chapter 2 establishes

the theoretical grounds for this endeavour. Specifically, I use the principal-agent framework to explore elected representatives' motivations for choosing certain paths of parliamentary representation. It highlights the simultaneous presence of three salient principals: the EP party groups, national electorates, and national parties. These principals operate on both national and supranational levels, and are able to influence MEPs' ability to act as vote-maximizing and/or policy-maximizing agents. However, opportunities remain to build upon our understanding of how MEPs respond to this complex environment. Little is still known about how post-2004 MEPs approach representation in the EP, or how heterogeneity of the post-2004 parliaments and the variety of voting procedures used in the EP shapes their parliamentary behaviour.

Using post-2004 MEPs' individual-level roll call voting data and an original MEP survey data, I explore the following broad questions:

- (i) How likely are post-2004 MEPs to vote with their EP party group, national delegation, and national party delegation?
- (ii) How do individual- and contextual-level characteristics shape the voting behaviour of MEPs?
- (iii) How is MEPs' approach to parliamentary representation influenced by the choice of voting procedure?

Methodological Contribution

The focal point of this study – voting behaviour – is treated as an individual-level variable throughout this thesis. In Chapters 4 and 5, it is operationalized as an MEP's likelihood of following the voting positions of his/her (i) EP party group, (ii) national delegation, and (iii) national party delegation.¹¹⁶ Moreover, the way it is calculated offers a methodological contribution to the studies of voting dynamics in the EP.

Here, an MEP's voting behaviour is treated as a relative measurement, where an MEP's likelihood of following the voting positions of his/her (i) EP party group, (ii) national delegation, and (iii) national party delegation is assessed against the mean parliamentary voting unity in the voting occasions which he/she participated. Although the reliance on relative measurements is not new (e.g., Hix et al., 2007; Hix and Noury, 2009), scholars have adapted relative measurements to group-level voting cohesion,

¹¹⁶ In Chapter 6, the dependent variable of voting behaviour is treated as an individual-level measurement that characterizes an MEP's likelihood of defecting from the voting instructions of his/her EP party group (i) when perceiving these voting instructions not to be in the best interests of his/her national electorate, and (i) when receiving conflicting voting instructions from his/her national party.

treating the denominator – parliamentary voting unity – as a constant for all units of analysis within a parliamentary term. Such an approach fails to account for the fact that voting occasions do not simply differ across the parliamentary terms; they also differ *within* the parliamentary terms.

In addition, MEPs choose to participate in different sets of voting occasions. The mean parliamentary voting unity within the sets of voting occasions that post-2004 MEPs participated in is unique for all post-2004 MEPs, with the difference between the lowest and highest mean parliamentary unity that post-2004 MEPs faced being as high as 27.5%. Therefore, applying the same denominator to calculate MEPs' likelihood of following the voting positions of their (i) EP party group, (ii) national delegation, and (iii) national party delegation would provide a distorted picture of their parliamentary behaviour. Analysing an MEP's voting behaviour as an individual-level measurement that is relative to the mean parliamentary voting unity in the particular voting occasions that he/she participated increases the accuracy of this study's interpretations of his/her voting behaviour and approach to parliamentary representation.

Democratic Input, but with More Volatility

In Chapter 4, I shed light to how frequently post-2004 MEPs follow the voting positions of their EP party group, national delegation, and national party delegation. I also look at how post-2004 MEPs' loyalty to these parliamentary sub-groups fares in comparison to the corresponding voting behaviour of their predecessors (i.e., pre-2004 MEPs). As such, Chapter 4 provides a general account of how contemporary MEPs interpret their mandate and approach representation in the EP. Using descriptive statistics and a time series analysis of MEPs' individual-level roll call voting data between September 1979 and December 2010, I find that (i) MEPs continue to follow the voting positions of their national party delegation most frequently, and that (ii) voting along the EP party group lines is still preferred to voting along national delegation lines. However, the findings also show that (iii) the traditional gradual increase in the dominance of ideology-laden voting is not present in the post-2004 era.

The 2004/2007 EU enlargements, and the corresponding changes to the EP's make-up, have not fundamentally altered the voting dynamics in the EP. The individual-level analysis into post-2004 MEPs' likelihood of following the voting positions of their EP party group, national delegation, and national party delegation conform to our traditional understanding of the comparative relevance of MEPs' different principals in guiding their agents' voting behaviour (e.g., Coman, 2009; Hix and Noury, 2009; Hix et

al., 2007; Kreppel, 2002; Thiem, 2007). National parties remain MEPs' primary principal in the post-2004 era; MEPs' defections from the voting positions of their national party delegation remain the rarest. Moreover, MEPs' secondary loyalty tends to be to their transnational party group rather than to their national electorate. Thus, the recent 2004/2007 EU enlargements, and the corresponding changes to the EP's make-up, have not fundamentally altered the voting dynamics in the EP. That is, post-2004 MEPs do not approach parliamentary representation in an inherently different manner than their predecessors.

Though the recent changes to the EP's make-up have not fundamentally altered the voting dynamics in the EP, they have been influential nonetheless. The post-2004 parliaments are characterized by the presence of volatility with regards to how frequently MEPs follow the voting positions of their EP party group versus those of their national delegation. Whereas the traditional understanding of the over-time developments in MEPs' voting behaviour perceives the dominance of ideology-laden voting to be gradually increasing (e.g., Hix and Noury, 2009; Hix et al., 2007), this has not been the case in the post-2004 era. Instead, I find a steep decline in the dominance of ideology-laden voting when comparing MEPs' voting behaviour between the Fifth and Sixth Parliaments, and an unusual increase between the Sixth and Seventh Parliaments.

Diversity among MEPs Shapes Their Approach Parliamentary Representation

In Chapter 5, I build on the general account of how post-2004 MEPs approach parliamentary representation in the EP by turning my attention to the heterogeneity that is a salient feature of the post-2004 parliaments. I do so by looking at how individual-level and contextual diversity shapes post-2004 MEPs' parliamentary behaviour. Using multivariate OLS regression alongside multilevel modelling on MEPs' individual-level roll call voting data from September 2004 to December 2010, I show that (i) the frequency by which post-2004 MEPs follow the voting positions of their EP party group, national delegation, and national party delegation varies, (ii) this variation is related to characteristics specific to MEPs, their interactions with the parliamentary sub-groups they belong to, as well as the general contexts in which they operate, and (iii) characteristics such as MEPs' role perception and the degree of ideological diversity in the parliamentary sub-groups they belong to are particularly relevant for explaining differences in how MEPs approach representation in the EP.

The findings in Chapter 5 suggest that the heterogeneity within the post-2004 parliaments must be taken seriously when talking about the voting dynamics in the EP. A univocal interpretation of the European mandate is not sufficient for understanding post-2004 MEPs' voting behaviour. Significant differences exist among post-2004 MEPs, the way they interact with the parliamentary sub-groups they belong to, and the contexts in which they operation, and more importantly, these differences are systematically related to how post-2004 MEPs approach representation in the EP. For example, an MEP who assigns greater relevance to the European identity in his/her self-perception also tends to show greater loyalty to the voting positions of his/her EP party group, whereas an MEP who belongs to a national party delegation that is more diverse on ideological lines tends to follow the voting positions of his/her national party delegation less frequently. One, therefore, should be highly cautious about making generalizations about MEPs' parliamentary behaviour, as diversity among post-2004 MEPs influences them to approach parliamentary representation in a different manner.

Voting Procedures Matter

Finally, in Chapter 6, I turn my attention to how the choice of voting procedure influences MEPs' approach to parliamentary representation. The chapter complements the empirical analyses of roll call voting behaviour in Chapters 4 and 5 by looking at how voting procedures affect MEPs' voting-perception. Using descriptive statistics on original MEP survey data, I show that (i) MEPs approach parliamentary representation in a slightly different manner when voting by roll call, as opposed to when voting by show of hands or electronically, (ii) a noteworthy portion of MEPs consider themselves more likely to defect from the voting instructions of their EP party group when voting by non-roll call procedures in situations where the voting instructions of their EP party group conflict with the voting instructions of their national party or the interests of their national electorate, and (iii) this voting procedure effect is mostly driven by MEPs elected from the 2004/2007 accession countries.

These findings constitute a significant contribution to the understanding of MEPs' parliamentary behaviour. To my best knowledge, it is the first effort that shows MEPs to change their voting-perception when different voting procedures are used after all. Moreover, rather than being random, the voting procedure effect that MEPs identify follows a clear pattern. Namely, non-roll call voting procedures are characterized by MEPs' greater willingness to prioritize the interests of their national electorate and the voting instructions of their national party over those of their EP party group. Therefore,

it is necessary that scholars acknowledge that roll call analyses of MEPs' voting behaviour are likely to reveal slightly lower levels of defections from the voting positions of the EP party groups than MEPs' non-roll call voting choices. This discrepancy needs to be accounted for in order to provide an accurate account of how MEPs approach representation in the EP across all parliamentary voting occasions.

These findings, however, also show that it is justifiable to group voting by show of hands and electronically together under a single category of non-roll call voting. This is not surprising as both voting procedures result in manifestations of MEPs' voting choices that are extremely difficult, if not impossible, to observe. The non-presence of a substantial voting procedure effect between voting by show of hands and electronically does support our understanding of how voting procedures link with MEPs' behaviour.

Implications of Findings

The findings of this research have significant implications for our understanding of how MEPs act when carrying out their duties in the post-2004 EP. It builds on the literature by offering a more up-to-date account of MEPs' parliamentary behaviour, as well as a more comprehensive understanding of how heterogeneity in the post-2004 parliaments and the variety of voting procedures used in the institution shape the way MEPs approach parliamentary representation.

First, the findings of this research indicate that the post-2004 EP continues to provide democratic input to the EP through its members' voting behaviour. The EP was designed to be a supranational institution where inner workings are guided by ideological debates and partisan politics, and by and large, contemporary MEPs largely conform to this ideal. This is evident in the fact that national parties remain MEPs' primary principal in the post-2004 era, but mostly in MEPs' secondary loyalty being to the voting positions of their EP party group rather than to the voting positions of their national delegation. As explained in Chapter 2, it is the EP party groups and national delegations which are able to account for only one part of the ideology/nationality combination. Thus, post-2004 MEPs' ideology-driven, rather than nationality-driven, approach to parliamentary representation suggests that the EP can instil a degree of democratic input to the EU also in the post-2004 era.

Second, several findings presented here indicate that the 2004/2007 EU enlargements, and the corresponding changes to the EP's make-up, have influenced the voting dynamics in the EP. On one hand, the post-2004 parliaments have witnessed rather unique developments regards to the dominance of ideology-laden voting in MEPs'

voting behaviour. For example, the steep decline in the dominance of ideology-laden voting in the Sixth Parliament was driven largely by MEPs elected from the 2004/2007 accession countries. On the other hand, the voting procedure effect that is present within MEPs' voting-perception is also particularly salient among MEPs elected from the 2004/2007 accession countries. Although one should not overstate the effect that the 2004/2007 EU enlargements have had on the voting dynamics in the EP, there are clear indications that the recent changes to the EP's make-up have influenced certain aspects of voting behaviour. These need to be accounted for to provide a more accurate account of how post-2004 MEPs approach parliamentary representation.

Third, I show that roll call votes tell only part of the story about how MEPs approach parliamentary representation. Though number of scholars argue that roll call votes are not representative of all parliamentary voting occasions (e.g., Carrubba et al., 2006; Hoyland, 2010; Kreppel, 2002; Thiem, 2006), to my knowledge, the findings presented here are the first effort to explicitly demonstrate that noteworthy portions of MEPs change their voting-perceptions when voting by show of hands or electronically, as opposed to by roll call. Roll call voting is not just used for a minority of parliamentary voting occasions and unique in its nature (e.g., European Parliament, 2012a), but it is also characterized by MEPs' slightly different approach to parliamentary representation. One needs to account for this voting procedure effect and go beyond the roll call analyses to truly understand the complex voting dynamics in the EP and to interpret them accurately.

Fourth, the presence and direction of the particular voting procedure effect also suggests how the EP might be able to promote a more supranational approach to parliamentary representation among its members. Given that MEPs are more inclined to defect from the voting positions of their EP party group in favour of the voting instructions of their national party and the interests of their national electorate when voting by show of hands or electronically, as opposed to by roll call, increasing the reliance on roll call voting in the EP could encourage MEPs to show greater loyalty to their supranational party group. As discussed in Chapter 6, it is also the EP party groups rather than national electorates or national parties which tend to make the most use of the unique ability of being able to scrutinize individual MEPs' voting choices during roll call voting occasions themselves. Thus, using roll call voting procedure more frequently could help empower the EP party groups, and give more impetus among MEPs to approach parliamentary representation in a supranational manner.

Finally, the findings of this research, however, are not just interesting to the scholars of the EP and of MEPs' voting behaviour. In fact, they also engage with the broader field of studies on representation. As the principal-agent approach identified the simultaneous presence of three particularly salient principals who can influence MEPs' ability to act as vote-maximizing and/or policy-maximizing agents, studying voting dynamics in the EP offers valuable insight into the comparative saliency of the different motivations that guide the actions of elected representatives. For example, I showed in Chapter 5 that diversity shapes how elected representatives approach parliamentary representation, whereas in Chapter 6 I assessed under which conditions – i.e., voting procedures – can actors associated with promoting representatives' vote-maximizing ambitions enjoy greater voting loyalty from their members vis-à-vis actors associated with promoting elected representatives' policy-maximizing ambitions. These insights complement well the existing studies on representation and the parliamentary behaviour of elected representatives.

Paths for Future Research

The unique nature of the EP offers a fascinating setting for studying the parliamentary behaviour of elected representatives. MEPs face three salient principals who operate on both national and supranational levels, and can influence MEPs' ability to act as vote-maximizing and/or policy-maximizing agents. While this dissertation sheds further light on how contemporary post-2004 MEPs approach representation in the EP, as well as on how heterogeneity of the post-2004 parliaments and the variety of voting procedures used in the EP shapes their parliamentary behaviour, it is not a final product in the efforts to understand the voting dynamics in post-2004 parliaments. Indeed, it also highlights the relevance of further questions.

I demonstrate that diversity shapes the way MEPs approach representation in the EP. This is an important aspect of the voting dynamics in the EP and one that should be explored by future work. As the 2014 European elections approach, there will soon be a larger sample of post-2004 MEPs and their manifestations of representation – i.e., voting choices – available to study. With a larger sample, it is possible to build a more comprehensive explanation of how diversity shapes the parliamentary behaviour of MEPs. For example, one could add explanatory characteristics, such as the frequency of contacts that MEPs have with their parliamentary sub-groups, or their position in national party's electoral list to the models of voting behaviour in the EP. This would

further improve our understanding of how diversity shapes the way that MEPs approach representation in the EP.

The salience of variation in post-2004 MEPs' voting behaviour also highlights the relevance of looking at their approach to parliamentary representation from another angle. Whereas diversity among MEPs matters, it is also conceivable that individual MEPs may approach parliamentary representation in a different manner at different points of time *within* the parliamentary terms. A recent study by Lindstädt et al. (2011) offers a valuable insight into how MEPs' voting behaviour varies in relation to election proximity. However, the study focuses on the 1999-2004 period and does not look at the degree of loyalty that MEPs hold to all their three principals. Therefore, there is a clear opportunity to provide an even more comprehensive account of the voting dynamics in the EP by looking at whether and how MEPs change their approach to parliamentary representation during the parliamentary terms.

Finally, the voting procedure effect within MEPs' voting behaviour provides an important avenue for future research. While much has been said about the nature of roll call vote samples and indirect inferences have been made about the potential bias in those (e.g., Carrubba et al., 2009; Hoyland, 2010; Hug, 2010; Thiem, 2006), this research is, to my knowledge, only the first effort to establish an explicit individual-level link between MEPs' voting-perception and the voting procedure used. Although this is a valuable first step, the presence of the slight voting procedure effect highlights the utility of expanding upon this research design further and applying it to other voting dilemmas. Doing so would allow scholars to address questions such as: Are MEPs more or less likely to prioritize the interests of their national electorate over those of their national party when voting by non-roll call means, as opposed to by roll call? Are MEPs more likely to prioritize the interests of their national electorate as opposed to the voting instructions of their EP party group toward the end of the parliamentary term? These questions are important for improving the understanding of how voting procedures can shape the way that MEPs approach parliamentary representation.

Concluding Thoughts

Representation is a central concept in politics; it is ever-present in studies on political decision-making and legislative behaviour. Virtually all contemporary political decision-making is effectively undertaken by representatives and is, by its very nature, based on continuous acts of representation. The EP offers a very fascinating venue for studying parliamentary representation. The institution has grown remarkably in stature

since its conception, with its purview gradually broadened and its powers strengthened. Moreover, it offers a unique setting for elected representatives to act in by linking their vote-maximizing and/or policy-maximizing ambitions to three principals that operate on both national and supranational levels. As a result, additional efforts to enhance our understanding of representation in the EP are desirable, as well as necessary to help us better interpret the processes that influence the lives of millions of people.

Studying how MEPs approach representation in the EP also has implications beyond the institution itself. As the European elections remain ‘second-order’ (e.g., Hix and Marsh, 2011; Marsh, 2005; Schmitt, 2005), accounts of post-2004 MEPs’ parliamentary behaviour are essential to evaluating whether MEPs can help remedy the perceived democratic deficit in the EU and help it satisfy the crucial functions of responsiveness and accountability associated with democratic representation. Moreover, looking at how diversity among MEPs and the voting procedures used in the EP affects MEPs’ voting behaviour adds useful insight to our understanding of how elected representatives approach parliamentary representation, and under which conditions are different principals more (or less) successful in promoting loyalty to their preferences.

Appendix A: Chapter 4

Table A.1 Sample of Post-2004 MEPs: National Delegations' Voting Positions

Country	MEPs (%)	Sample (%)	EP Party Group	MEPs (%)	Sample (%)
Austria	2.3	2.2	ALDE (EP6)	6.8	7.5
Belgium	3.0	2.8	EPP-ED (EP6)	18.7	20.2
Bulgaria	2.3	2.8	G-EFA (EP6)	2.8	2.6
Cyprus	0.8	0.7	GUE-NGL (EP6)	2.7	2.8
Czech Republic	3.0	2.8	IND/DEM (EP6)	1.4	1.6
Denmark	1.8	1.9	NI (EP6)	1.9	2.4
Estonia	0.8	0.8	PES (EP6)	14.1	15.7
Finland	1.8	1.8	UEN (EP6)	2.6	3.1
France	9.7	9.7	ALDE (EP7)	5.5	5.1
Germany	12.9	12.3	ECR (EP7)	3.4	3.2
Greece	3.0	3.2	EFD (EP7)	2.2	1.9
Hungary	3.0	2.8	EPP (EP7)	17.6	15.8
Ireland	1.6	1.6	G-EFA (EP7)	3.8	3.3
Italy	9.7	11.1	GUE-NGL (EP7)	2.2	2.1
Latvia	1.1	1.1	NI (EP7)	1.9	1.7
Lithuania	1.6	1.6	S&D (EP7)	12.3	11.0
Luxembourg	0.8	0.7			
Malta	0.6	0.7			
Netherlands	3.4	3.4			
Poland	6.8	6.6			
Portugal	3.0	2.9			
Romania	4.4	5.9			
Slovakia	1.8	1.6			
Slovenia	0.9	0.9			
Spain	6.8	6.6			
Sweden	2.4	2.4			
UK	9.7	9.2			
Duncan Index		0.03	Duncan Index		0.05

Table A.2 Sample of Post-2004 MEPs: EP Party Groups' Voting Positions

Country	MEPs (%)	Sample (%)	EP Party Group	MEPs (%)	Sample (%)
Austria	1.8	1.9	ALDE (EP6)	7.0	7.8
Belgium	2.8	2.6	EPP-ED (EP6)	19.5	21.0
Bulgaria	2.0	2.6	G-EFA (EP6)	2.9	2.8
Cyprus	0.8	0.8	GUE-NGL (EP6)	2.8	2.9
Czech Republic	3.0	2.8	IND/DEM (EP6)	1.5	1.7
Denmark	1.8	2.0	PES (EP6)	14.7	16.4
Estonia	0.8	0.8	UEN (EP6)	2.7	3.2
Finland	1.8	1.9	ALDE (EP7)	5.7	5.3
France	9.5	9.4	ECR (EP7)	3.5	3.4
Germany	13.4	12.8	EFD (EP7)	2.3	1.9
Greece	3.1	3.3	EPP (EP7)	18.3	16.5
Hungary	2.9	2.8	G-EFA (EP7)	4.0	3.4
Ireland	1.7	1.6	GUE-NGL (EP7)	2.3	2.2
Italy	9.9	11.2	S&D (EP7)	12.8	11.5
Latvia	1.5	1.1			
Lithuania	1.7	1.6			
Luxembourg	0.8	0.8			
Malta	0.7	0.7			
Netherlands	3.2	3.3			
Poland	6.6	6.9			
Portugal	3.1	3.0			
Romania	4.4	5.6			
Slovakia	1.6	1.5			
Slovenia	0.9	0.9			
Spain	7.0	6.8			
Sweden	2.5	2.5			
UK	9.7	8.9			
Duncan Index		0.04	Duncan Index		0.05

Table A.3 Sample of Post-2004 MEPs: National Party Delegations' Voting Positions

Country	MEPs (%)	Sample (%)	EP Party Group	MEPs (%)	Sample (%)
Austria	2.3	1.9	ALDE (EP6)	6.8	5.5
Belgium	3.0	0.8	EPP-ED (EP6)	18.7	24.7
Bulgaria	2.3	1.7	G-EFA (EP6)	2.8	1.7
Cyprus	0.8	0.0	GUE-NGL (EP6)	2.7	1.8
Czech Republic	3.0	2.7	IND/DEM (EP6)	1.4	0.8
Denmark	1.8	0.5	NI (EP6)	1.9	0.9
Estonia	0.8	0.0	PES (EP6)	14.1	18.6
Finland	1.8	1.0	UEN (EP6)	2.6	2.3
France	9.7	11.8	ALDE (EP7)	5.5	3.6
Germany	12.9	18.4	ECR (EP7)	3.4	4.3
Greece	3.0	3.7	EFD (EP7)	2.2	1.8
Hungary	3.0	3.2	EPP (EP7)	17.6	17.7
Ireland	1.6	0.5	G-EFA (EP7)	3.8	2.4
Italy	9.7	12.4	GUE-NGL (EP7)	2.2	0.7
Latvia	1.1	0.0	NI (EP7)	1.9	0.5
Lithuania	1.6	0.0	S&D (EP7)	12.3	12.6
Luxembourg	0.8	0.0			
Malta	0.6	0.0			
Netherlands	3.4	2.5			
Poland	6.8	6.4			
Portugal	3.0	3.2			
Romania	4.4	7.1			
Slovakia	1.8	0.5			
Slovenia	0.9	0.0			
Spain	6.8	8.5			
Sweden	2.4	1.4			
UK	9.7	11.9			
Duncan Index		0.17	Duncan Index		0.12

Table A.4 Descriptive Statistics for MEPs' Relative Voting Behaviour

Time Period and Voting Behaviour	Mean	Std. Dev.	Median	Min.	Max.
<u>2004-2010</u>					
National Delegation	1.04	0.19	1.07	0.04	1.37
EP Party Group	1.23	0.11	1.26	0.08	1.42
National Party Delegation	1.29	0.05	1.30	0.64	1.63
<u>1979-1984</u>					
National Delegation	1.09	0.18	1.11	0.38	1.51
EP Party Group	1.22	0.15	1.27	0.52	1.66
National Party Delegation	1.31	0.07	1.32	0.95	1.60
<u>1984-1989</u>					
National Delegation	1.03	0.15	1.06	0.49	1.35
EP Party Group	1.19	0.09	1.21	0.54	1.40
National Party Delegation	1.24	0.04	1.25	0.99	1.40
<u>1989-1994</u>					
National Delegation	1.01	0.15	1.04	0.46	1.33
EP Party Group	1.19	0.07	1.20	0.70	1.42
National Party Delegation	1.22	0.03	1.23	0.99	1.29
<u>1994-1999</u>					
National Delegation	1.03	0.15	1.07	0.45	1.36
EP Party Group	1.20	0.10	1.23	0.66	1.36
National Party Delegation	1.27	0.06	1.28	0.71	1.37
<u>1999-2004</u>					
National Delegation	1.04	0.20	1.04	0.07	1.57
EP Party Group	1.26	0.13	1.30	0.52	1.57
National Party Delegation	1.35	0.04	1.35	1.06	1.58
<u>2004-2009</u>					
National Delegation	1.04	0.19	1.08	0.04	1.34
EP Party Group	1.21	0.12	1.25	0.08	1.41
National Party Delegation	1.28	0.05	1.29	0.64	1.43
<u>2009-2010</u>					
National Delegation	1.04	0.20	1.05	0.24	1.37
EP Party Group	1.25	0.11	1.28	0.61	1.42
National Party Delegation	1.30	0.04	1.30	0.72	1.63

Table A.5 Descriptive Statistics for MEPs' Absolute Voting Behaviour

Time Period and Voting Behaviour	Mean (%)	Std. Dev. (%)	Median (%)	Min. (%)	Max. (%)
<u>2004-2010</u>					
National Delegation	78.4	14.6	80.4	2.9	100
EP Party Group	92.4	8.6	95.1	6.2	100
National Party Delegation	97.2	3.2	97.9	48.9	100
<u>1979-1984</u>					
National Delegation	78.0	12.9	79.4	29.9	100
EP Party Group	87.4	10.8	91.3	36.8	100
National Party Delegation	93.7	4.3	94.3	67.1	100
<u>1984-1989</u>					
National Delegation	79.8	11.9	81.8	37.9	99.1
EP Party Group	91.8	7.1	94.1	41.3	99.5
National Party Delegation	96.0	3.1	96.6	77.0	99.6
<u>1989-1994</u>					
National Delegation	79.3	12.2	82.4	36.7	97.9
EP Party Group	93.5	5.3	94.8	54.5	100
National Party Delegation	96.4	2.4	96.8	78.3	100
<u>1994-1999</u>					
National Delegation	78.0	11.7	81.4	33.5	99.7
EP Party Group	90.8	7.3	93.3	49.2	100
National Party Delegation	95.9	4.5	96.9	54.3	99.7
<u>1999-2004</u>					
National Delegation	74.4	14.3	74.8	5.3	100
EP Party Group	90.5	9.1	93.6	37.0	100
National Party Delegation	96.8	2.4	97.4	76.5	100
<u>2004-2009</u>					
National Delegation	78.5	14.5	81.6	2.9	100
EP Party Group	90.7	8.8	94.2	6.2	99.6
National Party Delegation	96.7	3.4	97.6	48.9	100
<u>2009-2010</u>					
National Delegation	78.2	14.8	79.0	14.7	100
EP Party Group	93.9	8.0	96.3	47.0	100
National Party Delegation	97.8	2.8	98.5	56.8	100

Appendix B: Chapter 5

Table B.1 Descriptive Statistics for Post-2004 MEPs' Voting Behaviour

Voting Behaviour	Mean	Std. Dev.	Median	Min.	Max.
<u>Full Sample of Post-2004 MEPs</u>					
<u>Relative Voting Behaviour</u>					
National Delegation	1.04	0.19	1.07	0.04	1.37
EP Party Group	1.23	0.11	1.26	0.08	1.42
National Party Delegation	1.29	0.05	1.30	0.64	1.63
<u>Absolute Voting Behaviour (%)</u>					
National Delegation	78.5	14.6	80.4	2.9	100
EP Party Group	92.4	8.5	95.1	6.2	100
National Party Delegation	97.2	3.2	97.9	48.9	100
<u>Samples of Post-2004 MEPs: Used in the Multivariate Regression Models</u>					
<u>Relative Voting Behaviour</u>					
National Delegation	1.05	0.18	1.07	0.24	1.34
EP Party Group	1.23	0.10	1.26	0.68	1.36
National Party Delegation	1.29	0.04	1.30	0.99	1.38
<u>Absolute Voting Behaviour (%)</u>					
National Delegation	79.1	13.8	80.2	14.7	100
EP Party Group	92.4	7.7	94.9	52.4	100
National Party Delegation	97.1	3.2	97.9	74.7	100

Table B.2 Explanatory Variables for National Delegations' Voting Positions

Explanatory Variable	Operational Definition
<u>Control</u>	
EP Term	Parliamentary term that MEP served in Scale: 6 – EP6; 7 – EP7; Source: European Parliament, 2012c
Gender	Gender of MEP Scale: 0 – male; 1 – female; Source: European Parliament, 2012c
Age	Age of MEP (EP6 – as of 01/01/05; EP7 – as of 01/01/10) Scale: 0; ∞; Source: European Parliament, 2012c
<u>MEP</u>	
Career	Was MEP a returning MEP? Scale: 1 – yes; 0 – no Sources: European Election Study, 2012a; Farrell et al., 2011
Future	Are MEP's career aspirations linked to national actors' support? 1 – yes; 0 – no Sources: European Election Study, 2012a; Farrell et al., 2011
Left-Right	MEP's self-perceived position on the left-right spectrum 1 – left; 10 – right Sources: European Election Study, 2012a; Farrell et al., 2011
Identity	MEP's self-perceived sense of identity Scale: 1 – country only; 4 – European only Sources: European Election Study, 2012a; Farrell et al., 2011
Representation	MEP's self-perceived importance of representing constituents' interests Scale: 1 – little importance; 5 – great importance Sources: European Election Study, 2012a; Farrell et al., 2011
<u>Interaction</u>	
Ideological Difference	Cumulative ideological difference (left-right and pro-anti) between MEP's ideal position and his/her national delegation's mean position Note: National delegations' mean positions are calculated as the mean ideal positions of their members Scale: 0 – no difference; ∞ Sources: European Election Study, 2012a; Farrell et al., 2011
Voting Instructions	Frequency of receiving voting instructions from national delegation ¹¹⁷ Scale: 1 – never; 5 – almost every vote Source: Farrell et al., 2011
<u>Context</u>	
EU Member	Length of country's EU membership (EP6 – prior to 2004; EP7 – prior to 2009) Scale: 0 - no prior membership; ∞ Source: European Parliament, 2012c
Fractionalization	Institutional fractionalization of the national delegation that MEP belongs to Note: Cumulative number of different EP party groups and national party delegations that MEPs from the national delegation belong to Scale: 0 – no fractionalization; ∞ Source: European Parliament, 2012c
Ideological Diversity	Ideological diversity within the national delegation that MEP belongs to Note: Cumulative std.dev. (left-right + pro-anti) of its members' ideal positions Scale: 0 – no ideological diversity; ∞ Sources: European Election Study, 2012a; Farrell et al., 2011
EP Importance	Importance of the EP (EP6 – 2007; EP7 – 2008) Note: Percentage of people in the country perceiving the EP to be important Scale: 0 – not at all important; 100 – extremely important Sources: European Commission, 2007; European Commission, 2008a

¹¹⁷ Frequency of receiving voting instructions from national delegation is measured through a proxy – national party delegation – as the former is not asked in MEP surveys (European Election Study, 2012a; Farrell et al., 2011). National party delegations are sub-sets of national delegations and close proxies.

Table B.3 Explanatory Variables for the EP Party Groups' Voting Positions

Explanatory Variable	Operational Definition
<u>Control</u>	
EP Term	Parliamentary term that MEP served in Scale: 6 – EP6; 7 – EP7; Source: European Parliament, 2012c
Gender	Gender of MEP Scale: 0 – male; 1 – female; Source: European Parliament, 2012c
Age	Age of MEP (EP6 – as of 01/01/05; EP7 – as of 01/01/10) Scale: 0; ∞; Source: European Parliament, 2012c
<u>MEP</u>	
Career	Was MEP a returning MEP? Scale: 1 – yes; 0 – no Sources: European Election Study, 2012a; Farrell et al., 2011
Future	Are MEP's career aspirations linked to EP party group's support? 1 – yes; 0 – no Sources: European Election Study, 2012a; Farrell et al., 2011
Left-Right	MEP's self-perceived position on the left-right spectrum 1 – left; 10 – right Sources: European Election Study, 2012a; Farrell et al., 2011
Identity	MEP's self-perceived sense of identity Scale: 1 – country only; 4 – European only Sources: European Election Study, 2012a; Farrell et al., 2011
Representation	MEP's self-perceived importance of representing EU-wide interests Scale: 1 – little importance; 5 – great importance Sources: European Election Study, 2012a; Farrell et al., 2011
<u>Interaction</u>	
Ideological Difference	Cumulative ideological difference (left-right and pro-anti) between MEP's ideal position and his/her EP party group's mean position Note: EP party groups' mean positions are calculated as the mean ideal positions of their members Scale: 0 – no difference; ∞ Sources: European Election Study, 2012a; Farrell et al., 2011
Voting Instructions	Frequency of receiving voting instructions from the EP party group Scale: 1 – never; 5 – almost every vote Source: Farrell et al., 2011
<u>Context</u>	
EU Member	Length of country's EU membership (EP6 – prior to 2004; EP7 – prior to 2009) Scale: 0 - no prior membership; ∞ Source: European Parliament, 2012c
Fractionalization	Institutional fractionalization of the EP party group that MEP belongs to Note: Cumulative number of different national delegations and national party delegations that MEPs from the EP party group belong to Scale: 0 – no fractionalization; ∞ Source: European Parliament, 2012c
Ideological Diversity	Ideological diversity within the EP party group that MEP belongs to Note: Cumulative std.dev. (left-right + pro-anti) of its members' ideal positions Scale: 0 – no ideological diversity; ∞ Sources: European Election Study, 2012a; Farrell et al., 2011

Table B.4 Explanatory Variables for National Party Delegations' Voting Positions

Explanatory Variable	Operational Definition
<u>Control</u>	
EP Term	Parliamentary term that MEP served in Scale: 6 – EP6; 7 – EP7; Source: European Parliament, 2012c
Gender	Gender of MEP Scale: 0 – male; 1 – female; Source: European Parliament, 2012c
Age	Age of MEP (EP6 – as of 01/01/05; EP7 – as of 01/01/10) Scale: 0; ∞; Source: European Parliament, 2012c
<u>MEP</u>	
Career	Was MEP a returning MEP? Scale: 1 – yes; 0 – no Sources: European Election Study, 2012a; Farrell et al., 2011
Future	Are MEP's career aspirations linked to national actors' support? 1 – yes; 0 – no Sources: European Election Study, 2012a; Farrell et al., 2011
Left-Right	MEP's self-perceived position on the left-right spectrum 1 – left; 10 – right Sources: European Election Study, 2012a; Farrell et al., 2011
Pro-Anti	MEP's self-perceived position on the pro-anti spectrum 1 – left; 10 – right Sources: European Election Study, 2012a; Farrell et al., 2011
Representation	MEP's self-perceived importance of representing national party voters' interests Scale: 1 – little importance; 5 – great importance Sources: European Election Study, 2012a; Farrell et al., 2011
<u>Interaction</u>	
Ideological Difference	Cumulative ideological difference (left-right and pro-anti) between MEP's ideal position and his/her national party delegation's mean position Note: National party delegations' mean positions are calculated as the mean ideal positions of their members Scale: 0 – no difference; ∞ Sources: European Election Study, 2012a; Farrell et al., 2011
Voting Instructions	Frequency of receiving voting instructions from national party Scale: 1 – never; 5 – almost every vote Source: Farrell et al., 2011
<u>Context</u>	
Ideological Diversity	Ideological diversity within the national party delegation MEP belongs to Note: Do MEPs belong to multiple EP party groups? Scale: 0 – no; 1 – yes Source: European Parliament, 2012c
Electoral System	Does country use closed lists for European elections? Scale: 0 – no; 1 – yes Sources: National Electoral Commissions' Websites
Government	Proportion of parliamentary term MEP's national party was in government Scale: 0 – no time; 1 – all the time Sources: National Governments' Websites
Party Taxes	Proportion of salary national party requires its MEPs to donate Scale: 0 – none of the salary; 100 – full salary Source: Bolleyer et al., 2012
Financial Dependency	Proportion of campaign spending provided by national party to its candidates Scale: 0 – none; 100 – all Sources: Comparative Candidates Survey, 2012; European Election Study, 2012a
Candidate Selection	How important is national party leadership in candidate selection? Scale: 1 – not at all important; 5 – extremely important Sources: European Election Study, 2012a; Farrell et al., 2011

Table B.5 Descriptive Statistics for the Explanatory Variables

Voting Behaviour and Explanatory Variable	Mean	Std. Dev.	Median	Min.	Max.
<u>National Delegation</u>					
Control: EP Term	6.5	0.5	6	6	7
Control: Gender	0.4	0.5	0	0	1
Control: Age	51.2	10.0	52	25	76
MEP: Career	0.5	0.5	0	0	1
MEP: Future	0.5	0.5	0	0	1
MEP: Left-Right	5.4	2.1	5	1	10
MEP: Identity	2.2	0.5	2	1	4
MEP: Representation	4.3	1.0	5	1	5
Interaction: Ideological Difference	3.3	1.8	3	0.3	10.2
Interaction: Voting Instructions	3.7	1.2	4	1	5
Context: EU Member	30.8	22.4	31	0	58
Context: Fractionalization	15.0	6.1	13	4	29
Context: Ideological Diversity	4.0	1.1	4	0	7.1
Context: EP Importance	76.7	8.2	78	55	92
<u>EP Party Group</u>					
Control: EP Term	6.5	0.5	6	6	7
Control: Gender	0.4	0.5	0	0	1
Control: Age	51.2	10.1	52	25	76
MEP: Career	0.5	0.5	0	0	1
MEP: Future	0.1	0.3	0	0	1
MEP: Left-Right	5.3	2.1	5	1	10
MEP: Identity	2.2	0.5	2	1	4
MEP: Representation	3.6	1.2	4	1	5
Interaction: Ideological Difference	2.1	2.1	1.8	0	13
Interaction: Voting Instructions	4.1	1.2	5	1	5
Context: EU Member	30.1	22.6	31	0	58
Context: Fractionalization	58.6	17.9	61	18	80
Context: Ideological Diversity	3.1	0.6	3	2.4	5.7
<u>National Party Delegation</u>					
Control: EP Term	6.4	0.5	6	6	7
Control: Gender	0.3	0.5	0	0	1
Control: Age	50.6	10.4	52	21	81
MEP: Career	0.4	0.5	0	0	1
MEP: Future	0.4	0.5	0	0	1
MEP: Left-Right	5.3	2.2	5	1	10
MEP: Pro-Anti	6.4	2.3	7	1	10
MEP: Representation	4.2	1.0	4.3	1	5
Interaction: Ideological Difference	1.6	1.7	1	0	16
Interaction: Voting Instructions	2.2	1.0	2	1	5
Context: Ideological Diversity	1.1	0.2	1	1	2
Context: Electoral System	0.6	0.5	1	0	1
Context: Government	0.4	0.4	0.4	0	1
Context: Party Taxes	6.7	11.9	3.1	0	100
Context: Financial Dependency	47.2	27.0	47.5	0	100
Context: Candidate Selection	3.6	1.2	4	1	5

Table B.6 Robustness Check: Choice of the Clustering Variable

Explanatory Variable	National Delegation		EP Party Group		National Party Delegation	
	Model 1	Model 2	Model 1	Model 2	Model 1	Model 2
<u>MEP</u>						
Career	-0.00 (.02)	.00 (.02)	.01 (.01)	.01 (.01)	.00 (.01)	.00 (.01)
Future	-0.01 (.02)	-0.01 (.02)	.01 (.01)	.01 (.01)	.00 (.01)	.00 (.01)
Left-Right	.00 (.01)	.00 (.01)	-.01** (.00)	-.01** (.00)	-.00 (.00)	-.00 (.00)
Identity	-0.00 (.02)	-0.00 (.02)	.03** (.02)	.03** (.00)		
Representation	.02** (.01)	.02** (.01)	.01 (.00)	.00 (.00)	.01** (.00)	.01*** (.00)
Pro-Anti					.00 (.00)	.00 (.00)
<u>Interaction</u>						
Ideological Difference	-.04*** (.01)	-.04*** (.01)	-.01** (.00)	-.01** (.00)	.00 (.00)	.00 (.00)
Voting Instructions	.02*** (.01)	.02*** (.01)	.01** (.00)	.01** (.00)	.01** (.00)	.01** (.00)
<u>Context</u>						
EU Member	.00 (.00)	.00 (.00)	-.00 (.00)	-.00 (.00)		
Fractionalization	.00 (.00)	.00 (.00)	.00 (.00)	.00 (.00)		
Ideological Diversity	-0.01 (.01)	-0.01 (.01)	-.07*** (.02)	-.07*** (.02)	-.07*** (.01)	-.07*** (.01)
EP Importance	.01*** (.00)	.01*** (.02)				
Electoral System					.01 (.01)	.01 (.01)
Government					.01 (.01)	.01 (.01)
Party Taxes					.00 (.00)	.00 (.00)
Financial					.0003**	.0003**
Dependency					(.0001)	(.0001)
Candidate Selection					-.00 (.00)	-.00 (.00)
<u>Control</u>						
EP Term	.02 (.04)	.02 (.03)	.01 (.02)	.07 (.02)	.01 (.01)	.01 (.01)
Gender	.02 (.02)	.01 (.02)	.00 (.01)	.00 (.01)	-.00 (.01)	-.00 (.01)
Age	-.00 (.00)	-.00 (.00)	-.00 (.00)	-.00 (.00)	-.00 (.00)	-.00 (.00)
Constant	.40 (.33)	.39 (.34)	1.30*** (.15)	1.33*** (.17)	1.34*** (.06)	1.34*** (.06)
Observations	422	411	433	419	227	227
Nr of groups	62	182	62	188	43	57
R-squared	.29	.28	.38	.38	.29	.29

Standard errors in parentheses

***p<.01; **p<.05

Model 1: Multivariate OLS with Standard Errors Clustered by EP Party Groups and National Delegations

Model 2: Multivariate OLS with Standard Errors Clustered by National Party Delegations

Table B.7 Robustness Check: Choice of the Statistical Test

Explanatory Variable	National Delegation		EP Party Group		National Party Delegation	
	Model 1	Model 2	Model 1	Model 2	Model 1	Model 2
<u>MEP</u>						
Career	-0.00 (.02)	-0.00 (.01)	.01 (.01)	.01 (.01)	.00 (.01)	.00 (.01)
Future	-0.01 (.02)	-0.02 (.01)	.01 (.01)	.01 (.00)	.00 (.01)	.00 (.01)
Left-Right	.00 (.01)	-0.00 (.00)	-.01** (.00)	-.01*** (.00)	-0.00 (.00)	-0.00 (.00)
Identity	-0.00 (.02)	.01 (.01)	.03** (.02)	.03*** (.01)		
Representation	.02** (.01)	.02** (.01)	.01 (.00)	.01 (.00)	.01** (.00)	.01** (.00)
Pro-Anti					.00 (.00)	.00 (.00)
<u>Interaction</u>						
Ideological Difference	-.04*** (.01)	-.03*** (.00)	-.01** (.00)	-.01*** (.00)	.00 (.00)	.00 (.00)
Voting Instructions	.02*** (.01)	.02*** (.01)	.01** (.00)	.01** (.00)	.01** (.00)	.00 (.00)
<u>Context</u>						
EU Member	.00 (.00)	-0.00 (.00)	-0.00 (.00)	-0.00 (.00)		
Fractionalization	.00 (.00)	-0.00 (.00)	.00 (.00)	.00 (.00)		
Ideological Diversity	-0.01 (.01)	-0.01 (.01)	-.07*** (.02)	-.06*** (.01)	-.07*** (.01)	-.07*** (.01)
EP Importance	.01*** (.00)	.01*** (.00)				
Electoral System					.01 (.01)	.01 (.01)
Government					.01 (.01)	.01 (.01)
Party Taxes					.00 (.00)	.00 (.00)
Financial					.0003**	.0003**
Dependency					(.0001)	(.0001)
Candidate Selection					-0.00 (.00)	-0.00 (.00)
<u>Control</u>						
EP Term	.02 (.04)	.04 (.03)	.01 (.02)	.01 (.01)	.01 (.01)	.01 (.01)
Gender	.02 (.02)	.02 (.01)	.00 (.01)	.00 (.01)	-0.00 (.01)	-0.00 (.01)
Age	-0.00 (.00)	-0.00 (.00)	-0.00 (.00)	-0.00 (.00)	-0.00 (.00)	0.00 (.00)
Constant	.40 (.33)	.35 (.23)	1.30*** (.15)	1.24*** (.12)	1.34*** (.06)	1.34*** (.05)
Observations	422	422	433	433	227	227
Nr of groups	62	62	62	62	43	43
R-squared	.29	LL -1699	.38	LL -1489	.29	LL -622

Standard errors in parentheses

***p<.01; **p<.05

Model 1: Multivariate OLS with Standard Errors Clustered by EP Party Groups and National Delegations

Model 2: Multilevel Model with the EP Party Groups and National Delegations as Level 2 Variables

Table B.8 Sample of Post-2004 MEPs: National Delegations' Voting Positions

Country	MEPs (%)	Sample (%)	EP Party Group	MEPs (%)	Sample (%)
Austria	2.3	2.4	ALDE (EP6)	6.8	8.3
Belgium	3.0	3.8	EPP-ED (EP6)	18.7	17.1
Bulgaria	2.3	1.7	G-EFA (EP6)	2.8	1.2
Cyprus	0.8	0.5	GUE-NGL (EP6)	2.7	2.4
Czech Republic	3.0	4.3	IND/DEM (EP6)	1.4	1.4
Denmark	1.8	3.1	NI (EP6)	1.9	1.7
Estonia	0.8	1.4	PES (EP6)	14.1	14.0
Finland	1.8	2.6	UEN (EP6)	2.6	3.8
France	9.7	9.0	ALDE (EP7)	5.5	7.4
Germany	12.9	13.3	ECR (EP7)	3.4	4.0
Greece	3.0	1.2	EFD (EP7)	2.2	1.9
Hungary	3.0	0.9	EPP (EP7)	17.6	16.8
Ireland	1.6	3.1	G-EFA (EP7)	3.8	4.0
Italy	9.7	10.7	GUE-NGL (EP7)	2.2	1.0
Latvia	1.1	1.7	NI (EP7)	1.9	1.0
Lithuania	1.6	1.7	S&D (EP7)	12.3	13.3
Luxembourg	0.8	0.5			
Malta	0.6	0.5			
Netherlands	3.4	1.7			
Poland	6.8	9.0			
Portugal	3.0	2.6			
Romania	4.4	1.9			
Slovakia	1.8	1.9			
Slovenia	0.9	1.4			
Spain	6.8	3.1			
Sweden	2.4	3.8			
UK	9.7	12.6			
Duncan Index		0.15	Duncan Index		0.07

Table B.9 Sample of Post-2004 MEPs: EP Party Groups' Voting Positions

Country	MEPs (%)	Sample (%)	EP Party Group	MEPs (%)	Sample (%)
Austria	1.8	1.9	ALDE (EP6)	7.0	9.7
Belgium	2.8	3.0	EPP-ED (EP6)	19.5	17.8
Bulgaria	2.0	2.3	G-EFA (EP6)	2.9	2.3
Cyprus	0.8	0.9	GUE-NGL (EP6)	2.8	2.3
Czech Republic	3.0	4.2	IND/DEM (EP6)	1.5	1.6
Denmark	1.8	3.2	PES (EP6)	14.7	14.3
Estonia	0.8	1.6	UEN (EP6)	2.7	3.5
Finland	1.8	2.5	ALDE (EP7)	5.7	7.9
France	9.5	9.2	ECR (EP7)	3.5	2.9
Germany	13.4	12.9	EFD (EP7)	2.3	1.9
Greece	3.1	1.2	EPP (EP7)	18.3	16.6
Hungary	2.9	1.4	G-EFA (EP7)	4.0	3.9
Ireland	1.7	3.5	GUE-NGL (EP7)	2.3	1.1
Italy	9.9	10.2	S&D (EP7)	12.8	13.2
Latvia	1.5	1.6			
Lithuania	1.7	1.9			
Luxembourg	0.8	0.5			
Malta	0.7	0.9			
Netherlands	3.2	1.9			
Poland	6.6	8.6			
Portugal	3.1	2.5			
Romania	4.4	2.5			
Slovakia	1.6	1.6			
Slovenia	0.9	1.4			
Spain	7.0	2.8			
Sweden	2.5	3.7			
UK	9.7	12.2			
Duncan Index		0.13	Duncan Index		0.08

Table B.10 Sample of Post-2004 MEPs: National Party Delegations' Voting Positions

Country	MEPs (%)	Sample (%)	EP Party Group	MEPs (%)	Sample (%)
Austria	2.3	2.2	ALDE (EP6)	6.8	4.0
Belgium	3.0	0.9	EPP-ED (EP6)	18.7	21.2
Bulgaria	2.3	1.3	G-EFA (EP6)	2.8	0.9
Cyprus	0.8	0.0	GUE-NGL (EP6)	2.7	0.9
Czech Republic	3.0	4.4	IND/DEM (EP6)	1.4	0.0
Denmark	1.8	1.8	NI (EP6)	1.9	0.4
Estonia	0.8	0.0	PES (EP6)	14.1	17.2
Finland	1.8	1.3	UEN (EP6)	2.6	2.2
France	9.7	11.9	ALDE (EP7)	5.5	3.5
Germany	12.9	19.8	ECR (EP7)	3.4	7.1
Greece	3.0	1.3	EFD (EP7)	2.2	1.8
Hungary	3.0	0.4	EPP (EP7)	17.6	20.3
Ireland	1.6	0.9	G-EFA (EP7)	3.8	2.6
Italy	9.7	13.2	GUE-NGL (EP7)	2.2	0.4
Latvia	1.1	0.0	NI (EP7)	1.9	0.0
Lithuania	1.6	0.0	S&D (EP7)	12.3	17.6
Luxembourg	0.8	0.0			
Malta	0.6	0.0			
Netherlands	3.4	2.2			
Poland	6.8	11.9			
Portugal	3.0	5.7			
Romania	4.4	0.0			
Slovakia	1.8	0.9			
Slovenia	0.9	0.0			
Spain	6.8	2.6			
Sweden	2.4	0.0			
UK	9.7	17.2			
Duncan Index		0.29	Duncan Index		0.15

Figure B.1 Residuals: National Delegation

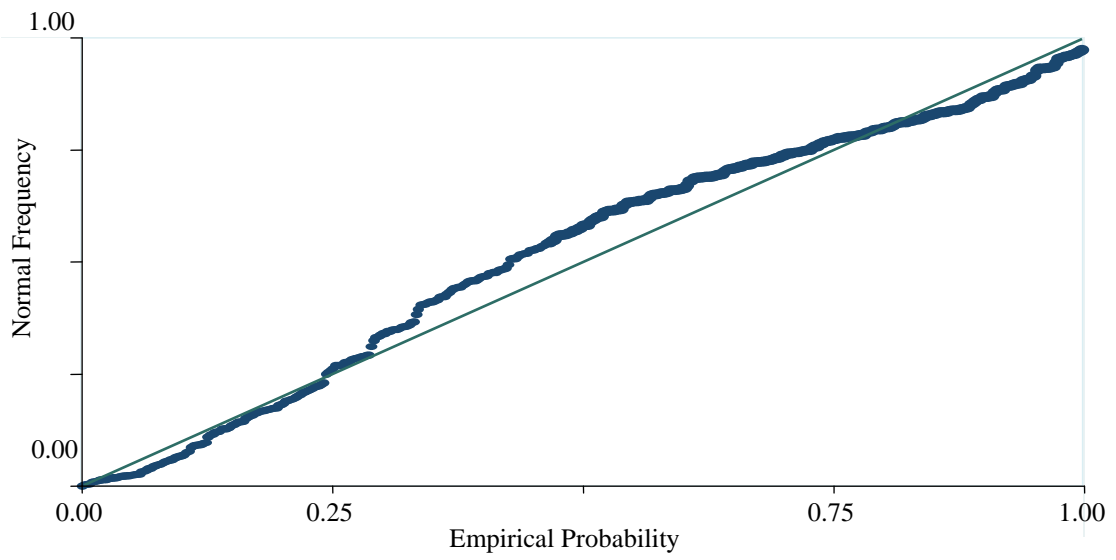
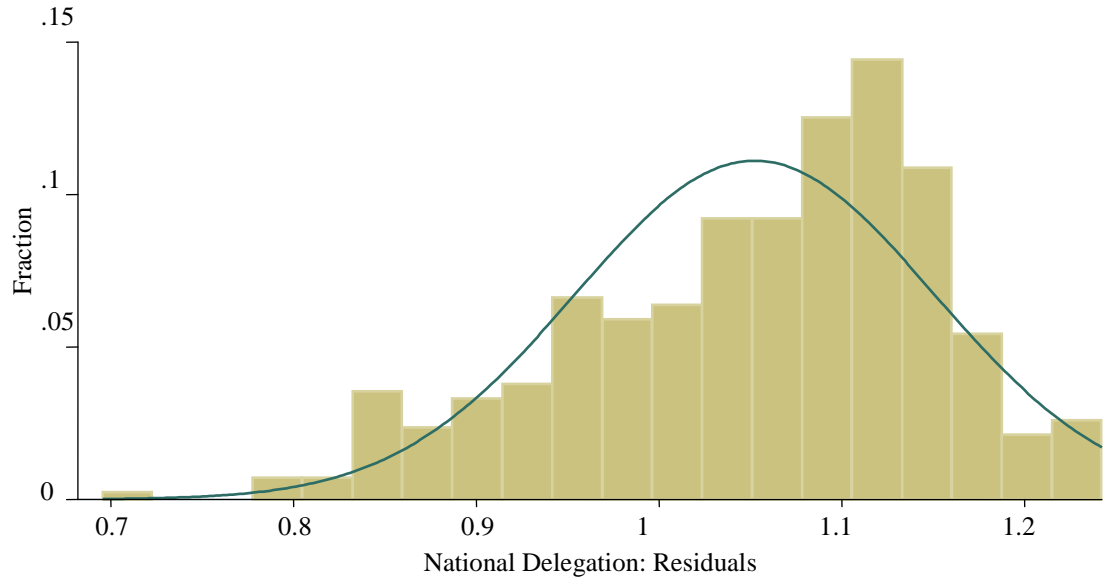


Figure B.2 Residuals: EP Party Group

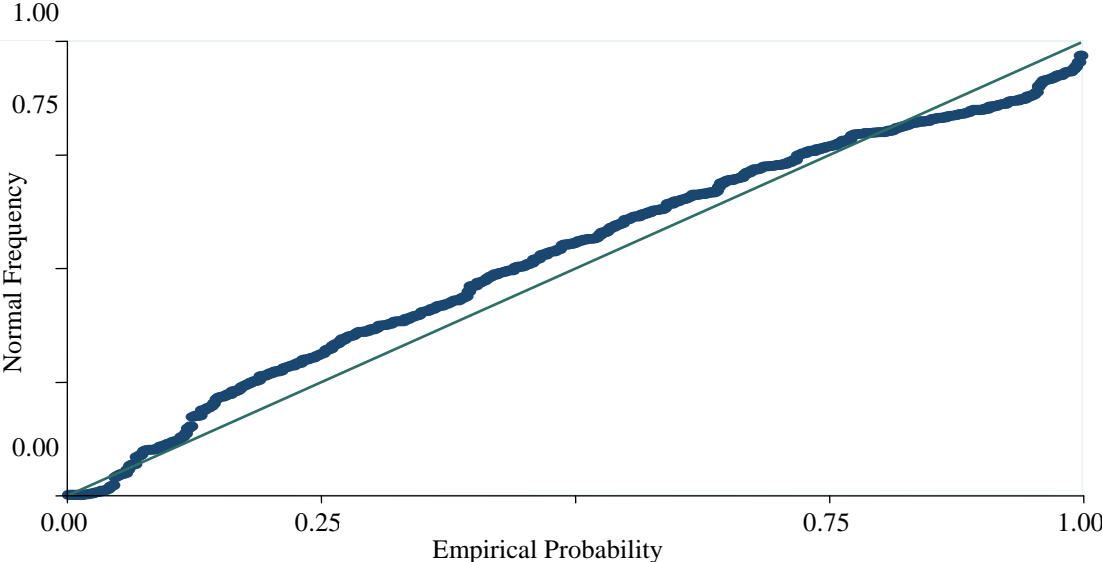
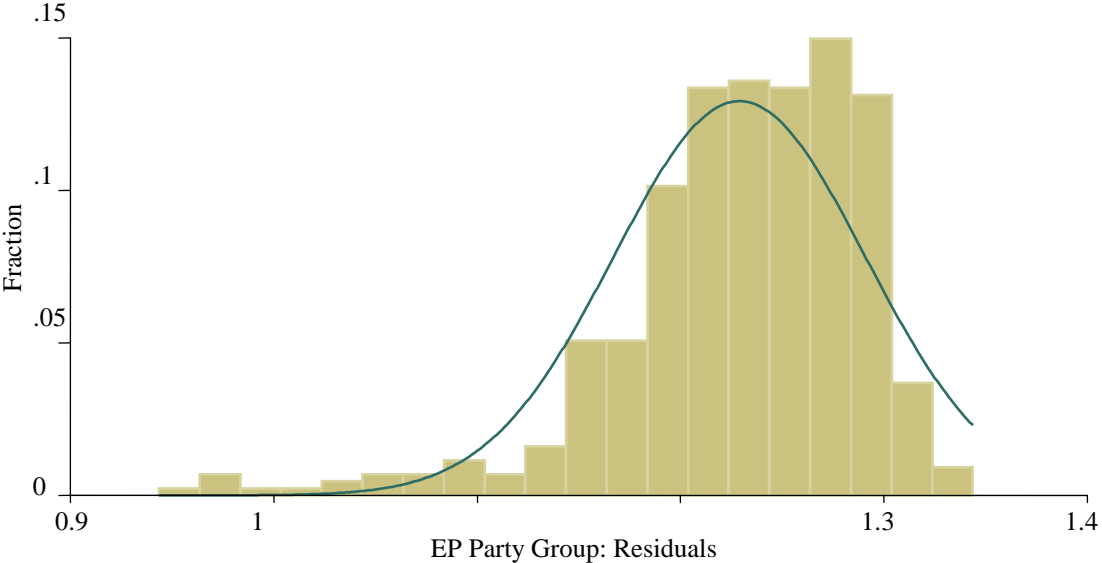


Figure B.3 Residuals: National Party Delegation

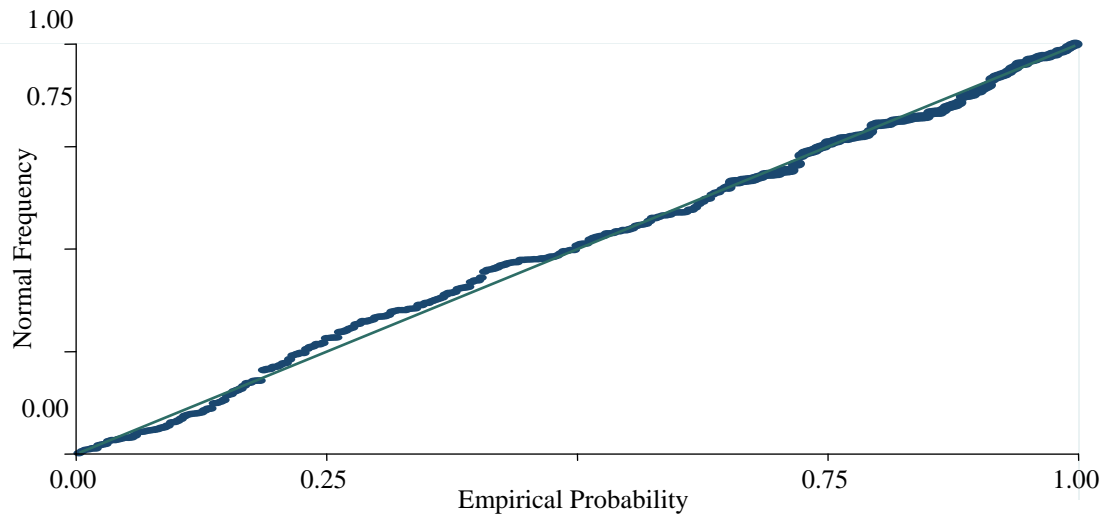
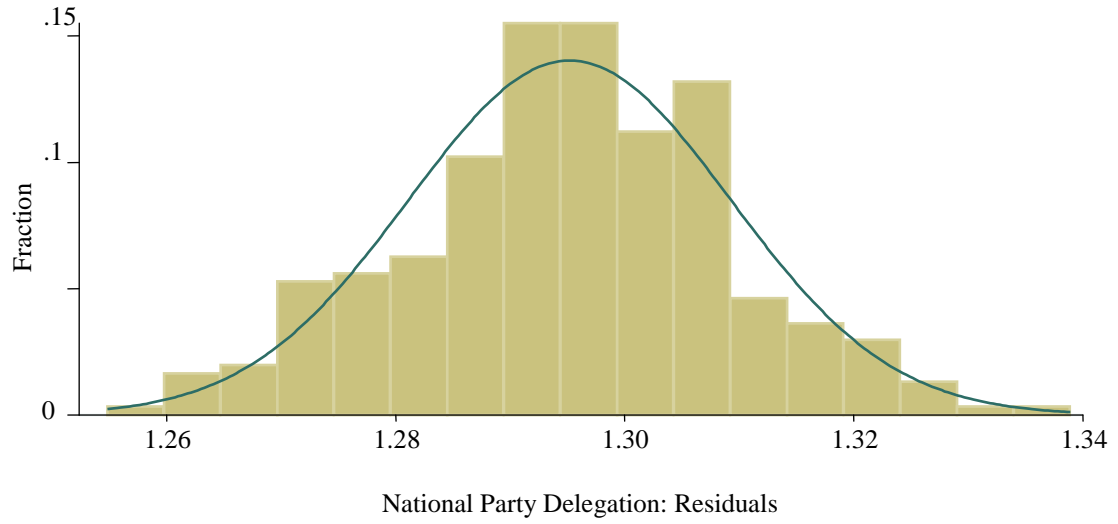


Figure B.4 Predicted Values: National Delegation by Representation

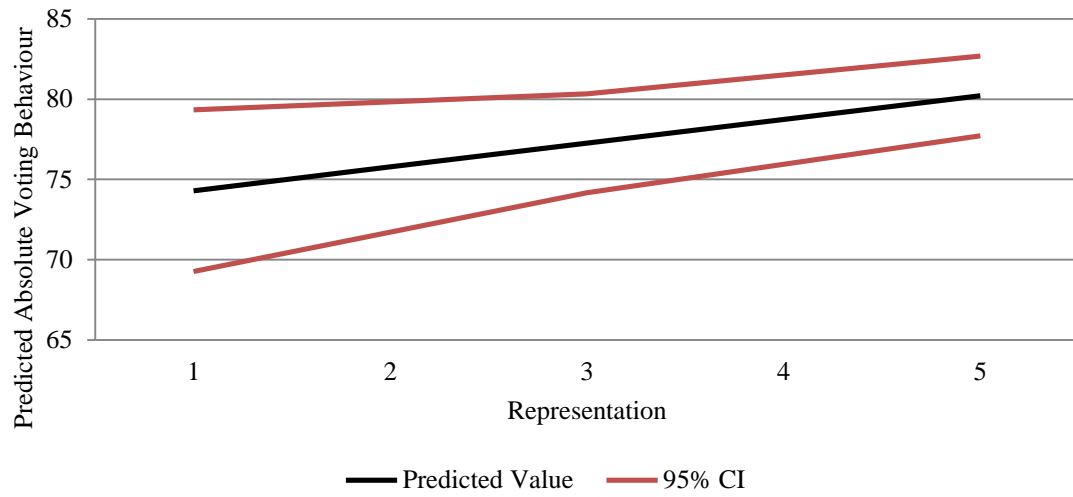


Figure B.5a Predicted Absolute Voting Behaviour: National Delegation by Ideological Difference

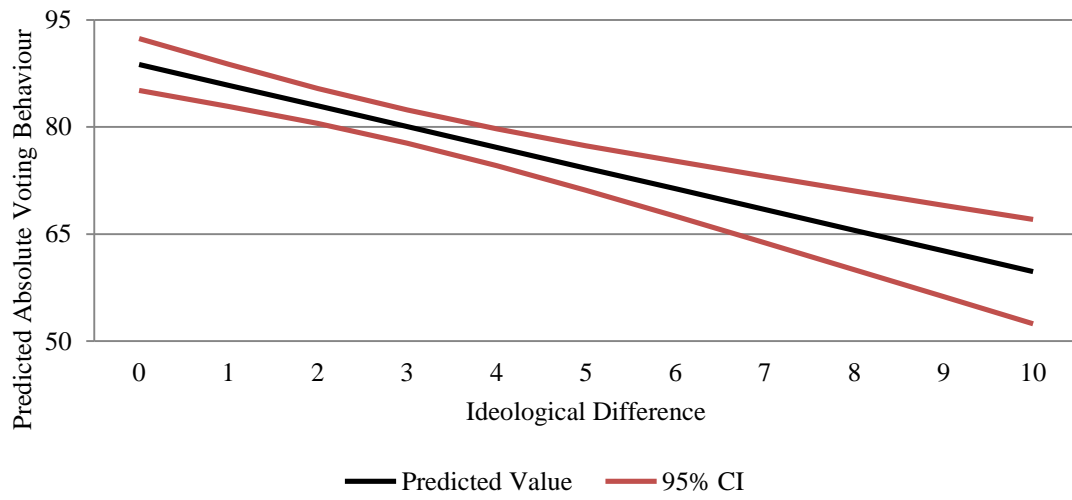


Figure B.5b Predicted Absolute Voting Behaviour: National Delegation by Voting Instructions

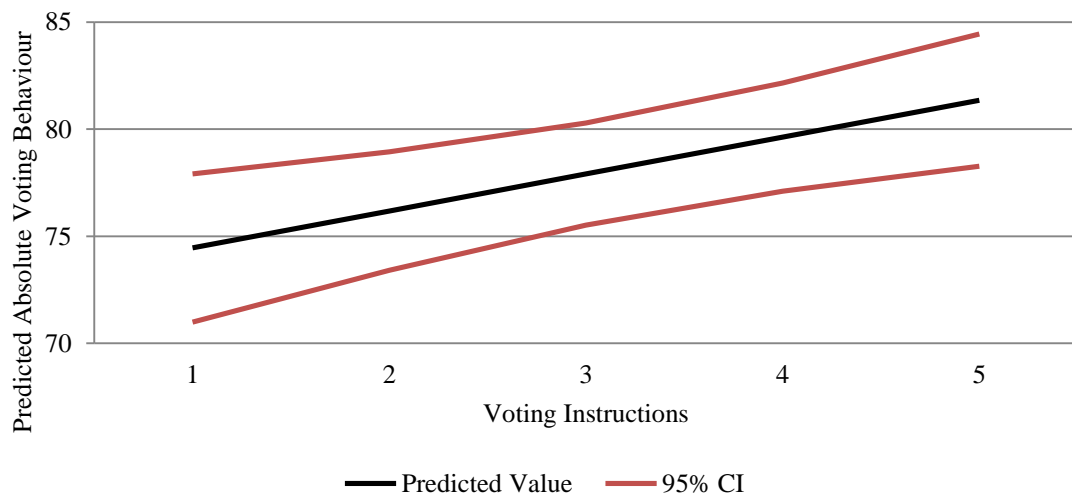


Figure B.6 Predicted Absolute Voting Behaviour: National Delegation by EP Importance

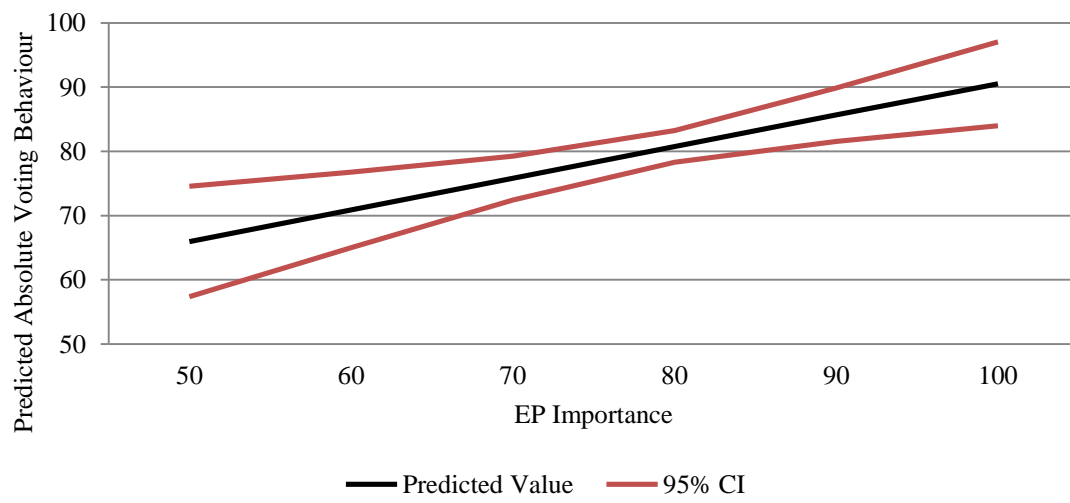


Figure B.7a Predicted Absolute Voting Behaviour: EP Party Group by Left-Right

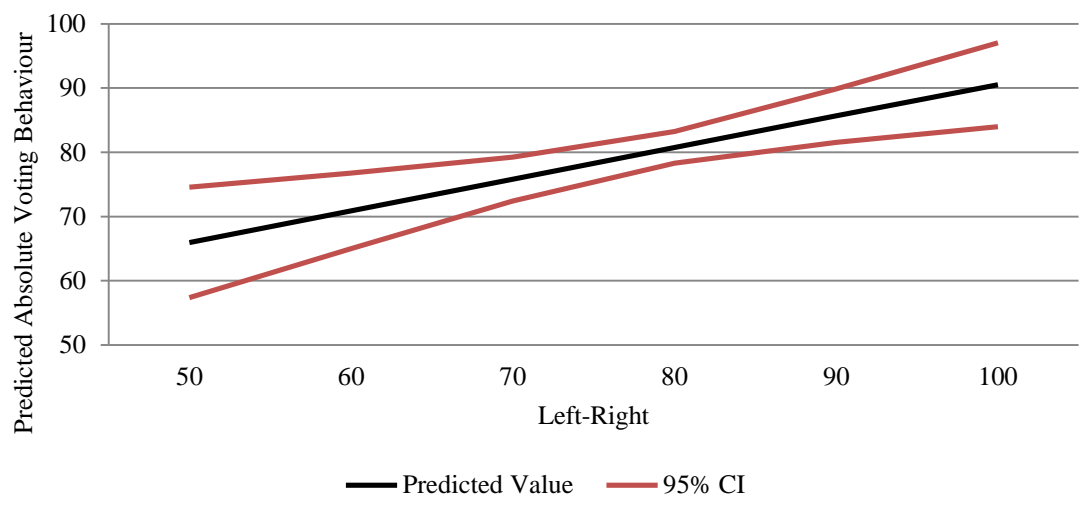


Figure B.7b Predicted Absolute Voting Behaviour: EP Party Group by Identity

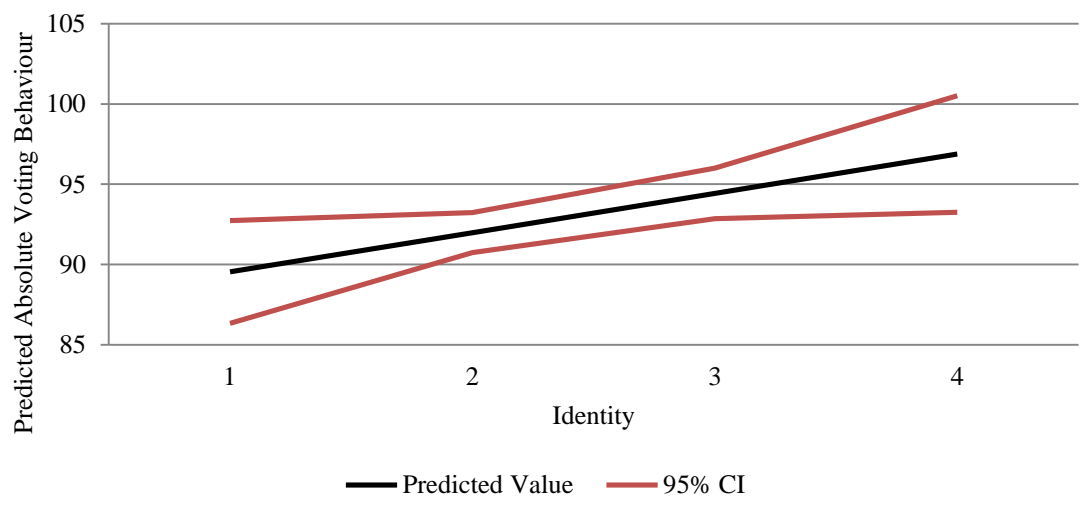


Figure B.8a Predicted Absolute Voting Behaviour: EP Party Group by Ideological Difference

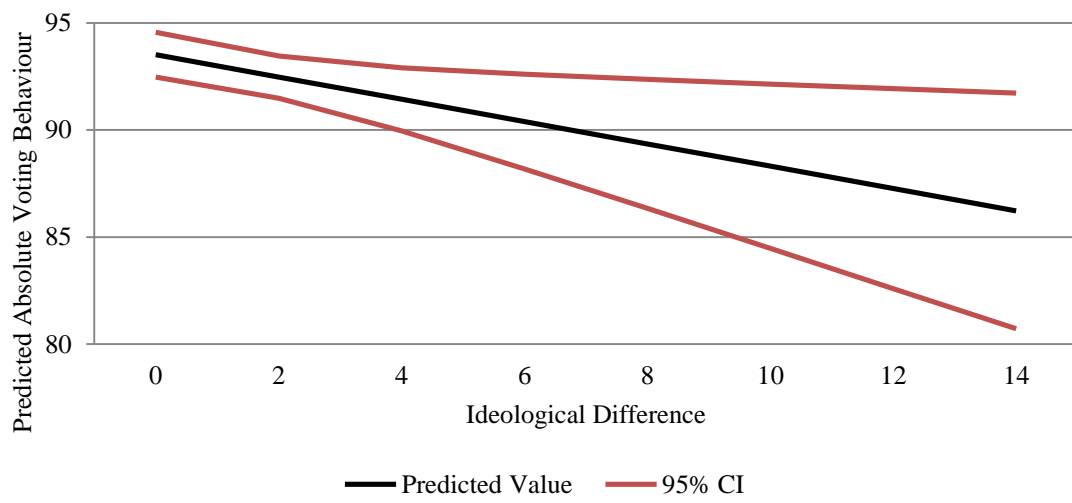


Figure B.8b Predicted Absolute Voting Behaviour: EP Party Group by Voting Instructions

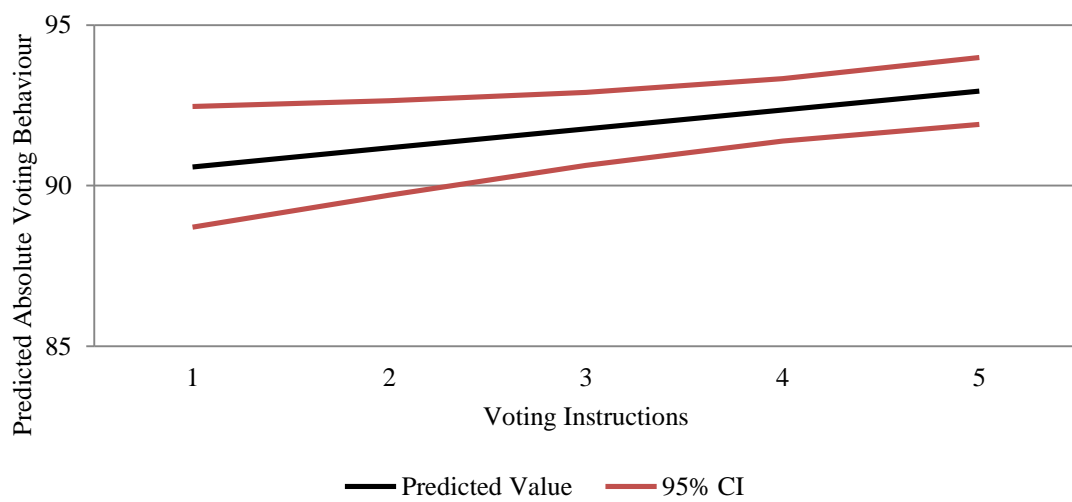


Figure B.9 Predicted Absolute Voting Behaviour: EP Party Group by Ideological Diversity

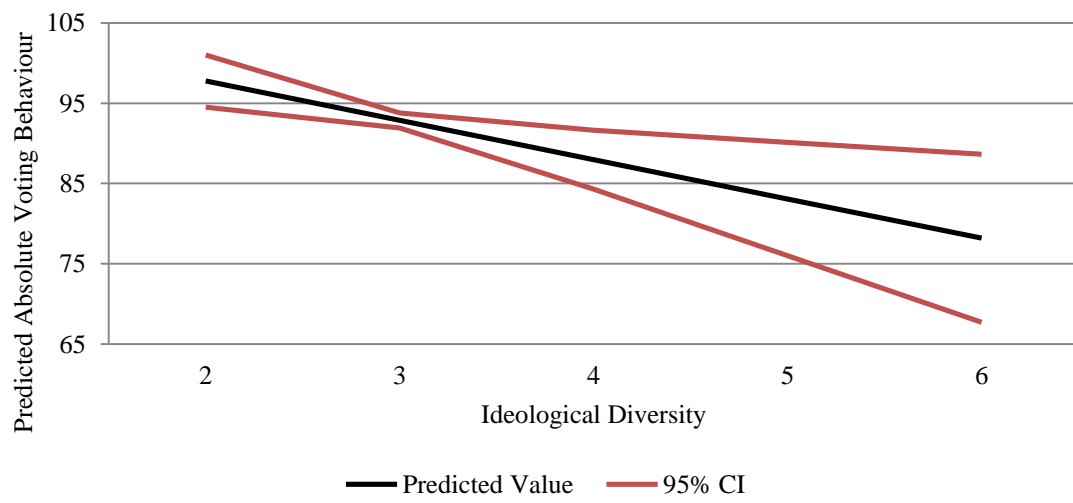


Figure B.10 Predicted Absolute Voting Behaviour: National Party Delegation by Representation

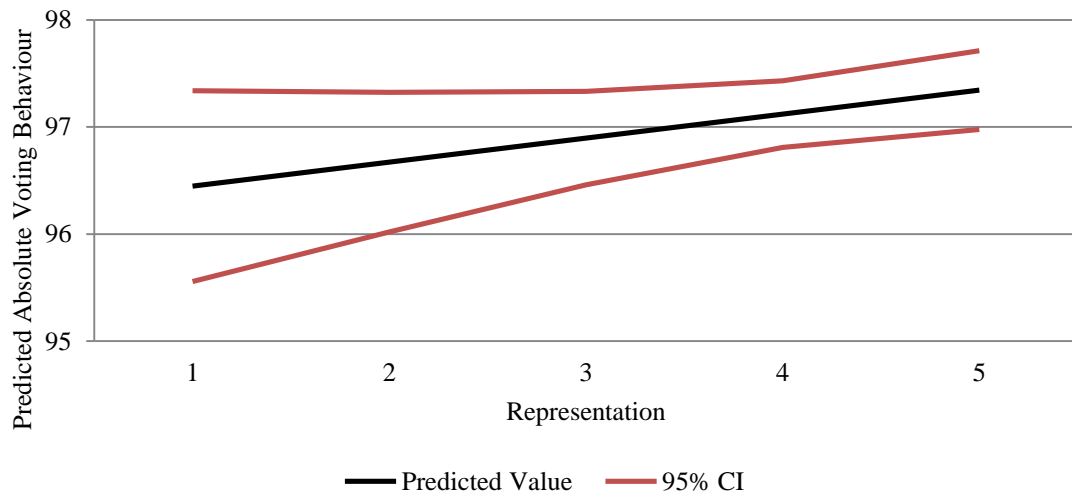


Figure B.11 Predicted Absolute Voting Behaviour: National Party Delegation by Voting Instructions

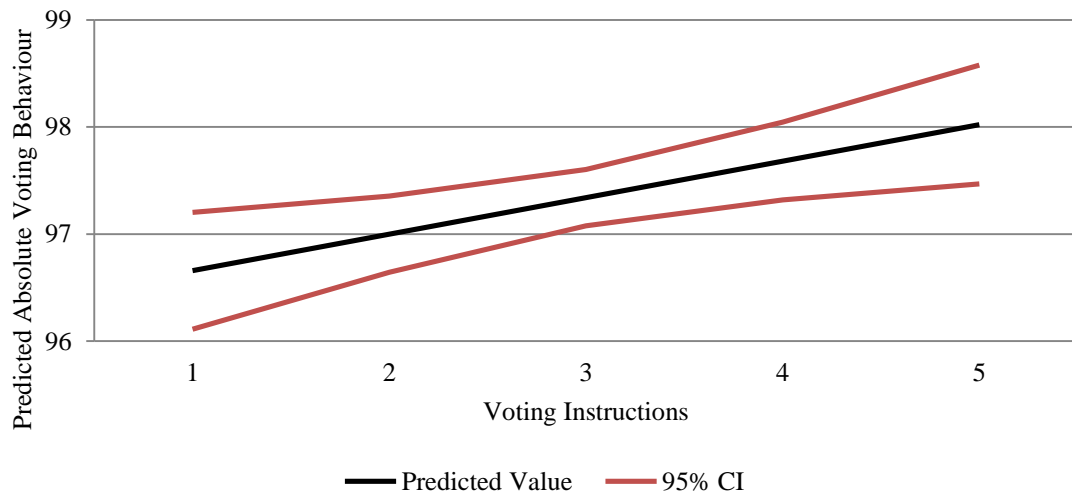


Figure B.12a Predicted Absolute Voting Behaviour: National Party Delegation by Ideological Diversity

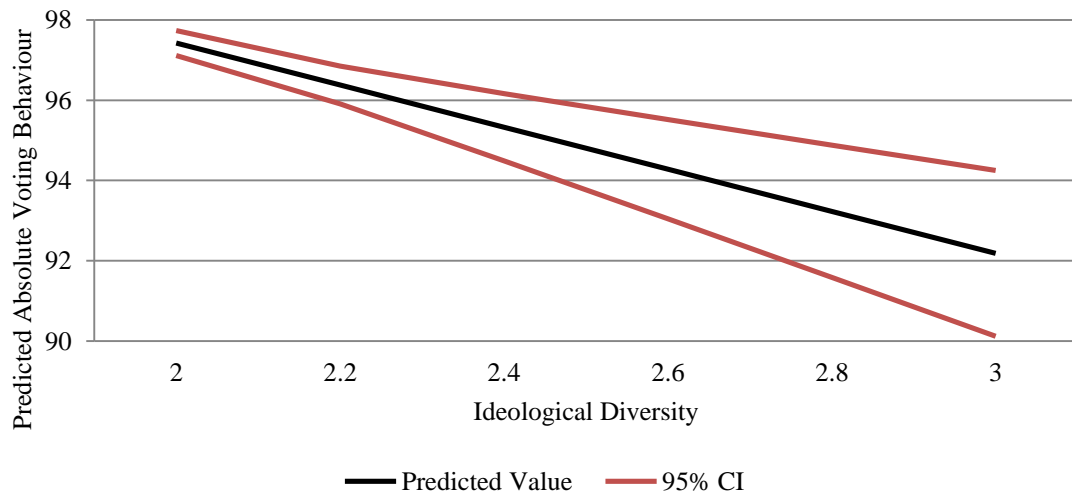
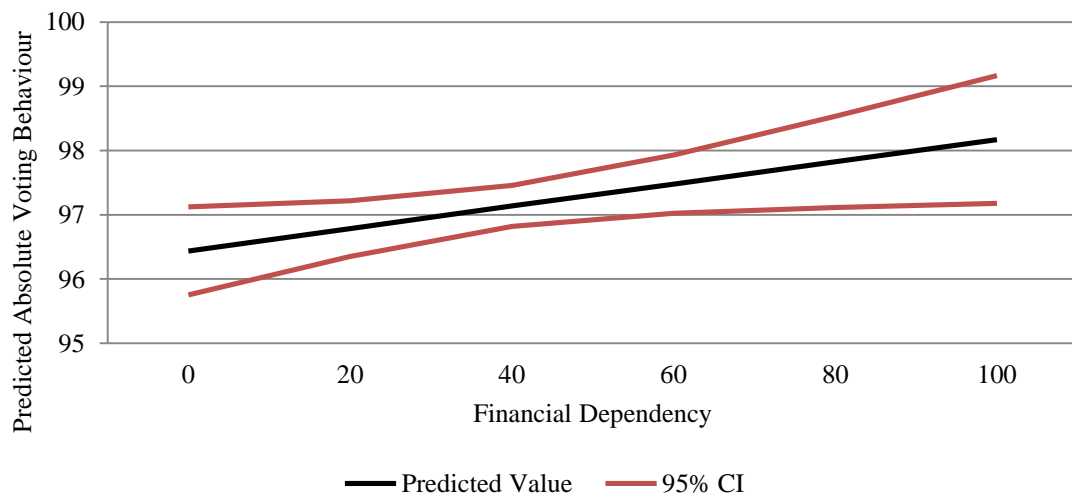


Figure B.12b Predicted Absolute Voting Behaviour: National Party Delegation by Financial Dependency



Appendix C: Chapter 6

Table C.1 MEP Survey Questionnaire

MEP Survey Questionnaire
<p>Question 1. How important is it to you to represent the following groups of people in the EP?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a) All people in Europeb) All people in your member statec) All people who voted for your party <p>Scale: 1 - of little importance; 5 - of great importance</p>
<p>Question 2. There are likely to be occasions when you do not believe that your EP political group's voting instructions are in the best interests of your national electorate. Please tick the appropriate box to indicate how likely you are in such occasions to defect from your EP political group's voting instructions when the vote is taken by roll call, show of hands, and electronically.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a) Voting by roll callb) Voting by show of handsc) Voting electronically <p>Scale: 1 – very unlikely to defect; 2 – unlikely to defect; 3 – likely to defect; 4 – very likely to defect</p>
<p>Question 3. There are likely to be occasions when you receive different voting instructions from your EP political group and your national party. Please tick the appropriate box to indicate how likely you are in such occasions to defect from your EP political group's voting instructions when the vote is taken by roll call, show of hands, and electronically.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a) Voting by roll callb) Voting by show of handsc) Voting electronically <p>Scale: 1 – very unlikely to defect; 2 – unlikely to defect; 3 – likely to defect; 4 – very likely to defect</p>

C.2 MEP Survey Sample

Country	MEPs (%)	Sample (%)	EP Party Group	MEPs (%)	Sample (%)
Austria	2.3	3.0	ALDE (EP7)	11.4	10.7
Belgium	3.0	3.0	ECR (EP7)	7.3	7.4
Bulgaria	2.3	3.0	EFD (EP7)	4.3	5.0
Cyprus	0.8	0.8	EPP (EP7)	36.0	27.3
Czech Rep.	3.0	4.6	G-EFA (EP7)	7.5	9.1
Denmark	1.8	2.5	GUE-NGL (EP7)	4.8	9.9
Estonia	0.8	1.5	S&D (EP7)	25.0	27.3
Finland	1.8	1.5			
France	9.8	7.6			
Germany	13.5	15.2			
Greece	3.0	2.3			
Hungary	3.0	3.8			
Ireland	1.6	3.8			
Italy	9.8	5.3			
Latvia	1.1	0.8			
Lithuania	1.6	0.8			
Luxembourg	0.8	0.8			
Malta	0.7	0.8			
Netherlands	3.4	4.6			
Poland	6.8	9.1			
Portugal	3.0	2.3			
Romania	4.5	5.3			
Slovakia	1.8	0.8			
Slovenia	1.0	0.8			
Spain	6.8	3.8			
Sweden	2.4	3.8			
UK	9.8	9.1			
Duncan Index		0.15	Duncan Index		0.10

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