

organising the european parliament

the role of committees and
their legislative influence

Nikoleta Yordanova



© Nikoleta Yordanova 2013

Table 2.1: Summary of Models is reproduced from *Competing Principals: Committees, Parties, and the Organization of Congress*, Forrest Maltzman (Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 1998). Reproduced with kind permission from The University of Michigan Press.

Committee Assignments in the European Parliament: Distributive, Informational and Partisan Rationales', *European Union Politics*, 2009, 10(2): 253–280. Reproduced with kind permission from SAGE Publications.

'Inter-institutional Rules and Division of Power in the European Parliament: Allocation of Consultation and Codecision Reports', *West European Politics*, 2011, 34(1): 97-121. Reproduced with kind permission from Taylor & Francis.

The ECPR Press is the publishing imprint of the European Consortium for Political Research (ECPR), a scholarly association, which supports and encourages the training, research and cross-national cooperation of political scientists in institutions throughout Europe and beyond.

ECPR Press
University of Essex
Wivenhoe Park
Colchester
CO4 3SQ
UK

All rights reserved. No part of this book may be reprinted or reproduced or utilised in any form or by any electronic, mechanical, or other means, now known or hereafter invented, including photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, without permission in writing from the publishers.

Typeset by ECPR Press

Printed and bound by Lightning Source

British Library Cataloguing in Publication Data

A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library

Paperback ISBN: 978-1-907301-39-1

www.ecpr.eu/ecprpress

| contents

List of Figures and Tables	ix
List of Abbreviations	xi
Acknowledgements	xiii
Preface	xv
Chapter One: Introduction	1
Chapter Two: Theoretical Framework on Legislative Organisation	11
Chapter Three: The Rationale Behind Committee Assignment	37
Chapter Four: Distribution of Legislative Tasks	61
Chapter Five: Legislative Influence of the European Parliament Committees	85
Chapter Six: Main Findings and Empirical Implications	113
Chapter Seven: Towards a Combined Theoretical Framework	129
Chapter Eight: Concluding Remarks	139
References	147
Appendices	163
Index	191

| preface

The European Parliament (EP) acts as an equal co-legislator with the Council of Ministers in adopting many policies that affect over 500 million European citizens on a daily basis. However, despite its profound consequences for EU policies and policy-making, our knowledge of the parliamentary legislative organisation is limited. Addressing this gap, this book studies the internal setup and legislative impact of the EP committees.

Drawing on congressional literature, I adapt and confront distributive, informational and partisan theoretical approaches to answer the research questions of this project, namely whether and why the EP committees and their legislative output are dominated by preference-outlying legislators with special interests, experts serving the informational needs of the plenary, or loyal members of the working majority party group (coalition). Statistical analyses of committee assignments, allocation of legislative tasks, and adoption of committee reports in plenary are conducted using data on the 6th European Parliament (2004-2009). They are complemented with evidence from semi-structured interviews.

The results show that, depending on the predominant character of a committee's legislative output (distributive or regulatory), legislators' special interests or expertise play a dominant role in the formally regulated committee assignment process. In contrast, party group affiliation and loyalty shape the allocation of important legislative tasks in committees, owing to the informal allocation process. Furthermore, committee reports are more successful on the floor if drafted by rapporteurs from the working majority party group – perhaps a natural consequence of the EP's open amendment rule. Thus, the parliamentary legislative output is ultimately controlled by the working majority party group and not the committees. The congressional theories fail to account for the committees' legislative influence when an informal early agreement is reached with the Council of Ministers. This occurs increasingly often, rendering decision-making in committees largely obsolete.

The observed regularities are used to advance the theoretical literature on legislative organisation by identifying conditions under which each of the main existing rationales can explain committee setup and influence, namely: 1) the policy areas a committee covers; 2) the parliamentary rules regulating committee-party and committee-plenary relationships; and 3) the balance of power and mode of negotiation between the legislative chambers.

More substantively, the EP committees are not conducive for pursuing particularistic policies. Instead, they promote left-right party politics. This has important implications for EU legislative politics, interest representation, legitimacy, and more generally the EU democratic deficit.

chapter | introduction one

Parliaments are essential, if not the most important, institutions in democratic political systems (Lijphart 1991: ix). The internal set-up of a parliament is crucial to its ability to perform its tasks effectively and efficiently, and shapes the adopted policies. Thus, a large body of literature has been dedicated to the study of legislative organisation. The organisation of the European Parliament (EP), however, has not received due scholarly attention. While that is slowly changing, the EP has been ignored for a long time on the grounds that it is a weak institution.¹ However, despite the fact that it is a relatively young legislature, over the past thirty years the EP has been given substantive powers in an attempt to reduce the democratic deficit of the European Union (EU). These powers include discretion over the EU budget, control over the EU executive, i.e. the European Commission, and, crucially, the power to determine the content of most EU policies, which affect over 500 million European citizens on a daily basis. Thus, for the most part, the EP now acts as an equal co-legislator in the bicameral EU legislature together with the Council of Ministers, which represents member state governments. That makes very timely the study of its internal structures, dynamics and decision-making mechanisms, which affect the quality of EU legislation and how representative this legislation is of the views of EU citizens. This book focuses on the study of the standing EP committees in recognition of the general agreement that it is within these committees that the parliamentary legislative positions are *de facto* developed.

For a legislature situated in the context of the European Union, the EP is puzzlingly different from any other international assembly or national parliament in Europe and very similar to the US Congress instead. It thus presents an interesting empirical case and an important opportunity to refine the theoretical literature on legislative organisation, which constitutes the second aim of this book.

The case of the European Parliament and its committees

The European Parliament provides a unique laboratory for the study of legislative organisation. It has been developing dynamically since its establishment in 1957 as a joint parliamentary assembly of the European Coal and Steel Community, the

1. While in some theoretical literature ‘institutions’ are referred to as ‘sets of rules that structure social interaction’ and organisational actors are defined as ‘sets of actors united in pursuit of a common goal’ (North 1990: 3), the convention in the literature on the European Union is to refer to bodies such as the EP, the European Commission and the Council of Ministers as institutions (Farrell and Héritier 2003: 596, note 4; see also Héritier 1999). The latter convention is adopted throughout the book.

European Atomic Energy Community, and the European Economic Community, and subsequently as the Parliament of the European Union (1992). During the past two decades its powers increased with each EU treaty (Collins *et al.* 1998). The EP thus transformed quickly from a symbolic assembly meeting once a year into a fully-fledged parliament, comparable to and in some respects, notably policy influence, more powerful than a national legislature (Scully 2000; Corbett *et al.* 2007; Ringe 2009).

Powers of the European Parliament

The European Parliament was first given budgetary powers in two consecutive treaty amendments in 1970 and 1975, allowing it to decide together with the Council of Ministers on the non-compulsory expenditure in the EU budget. This parliamentary veto power was recently extended to the adoption of the entire EU budget when the Lisbon Treaty (or the Treaty of the European Union (TEU) and the Treaty of the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU)) came into force in 2009. In 1979, the EP became the first directly elected international assembly. While hitherto appointed by their national legislatures, its members were for the first time elected in each EU member state by their countrymen. Yet, the EP had only rather symbolic legislative power under the so called ‘consultation procedure’ at that point. This changed with the introduction of the ‘cooperation procedure’ and the ‘assent procedure’ in the Single European Act (1987)², the ‘codecision procedure’ in the Treaty of the European Union (1992), and the extension of the latter procedure to ever more areas in the Amsterdam (1999), Nice (2003) and Lisbon (2009) treaties, which gradually placed the EP on an equal footing with the Council of Ministers in shaping most EU legislation (Hix 2002b).³ Under

-
2. The ‘cooperation procedure’ gave the EP the right to reinstate its opinion in a second reading. A rejection of a legislative proposal by the EP at that point required a unanimous Council to overrule. The cooperation procedure originally covered legislation related to the creation of the Single Market but its scope of application was severely limited in favour of the codecision procedure in the Amsterdam Treaty, while the Lisbon Treaty abolished it altogether. The assent procedure gave the EP veto powers but it was applied only to very few policy areas, such as the signing of international treaties. In the Treaty of Lisbon, it was renamed as ‘consent’ and brought together with the ‘consultation’ procedures under the ‘special legislative procedure’. This special procedure now applies to legislation in some areas of justice and home affairs (policy cooperation, approximation of criminal laws and regulations), budget (own resources, multiannual financial framework, etc.), taxation (harmonisation of legislation on indirect taxation, movement of capital to or from third countries), environmental measures of a fiscal nature, research and technological development programmes, combating discrimination, social security and social protection for workers, membership of the Union and methods of withdrawal from it.
 3. After prolonged debates, most scholars have converged on the opinion that the EP and the Council of Ministers now stand on equal footing under the codecision legislative procedure. The study of Hagemann and Høyland (2010) presents an exception. They show that the Council of Ministers has the advantage of a conditional agenda-setting power due to the change of the majority threshold needed to adopt legislation in the Parliament between the first and the second reading of the

the codecision procedure, to adopt EU legislation both institutions have to agree on the legislative proposals of the European Commission (which retains the exclusive right to initiate legislation) at first reading, second reading or, if not possible, in a Conciliation Committee (see König *et al.* 2007). Until 2009, the codecision legislative procedure was applied primarily to legislative proposals related to the functioning of the EU internal market, but also to proposals in the areas of transport, environment, employment and social policy, culture, public health, consumer protection, industry, and development. With the Lisbon Treaty ratification, the powers of the EP increased further as the codecision procedure became the ‘ordinary legislative procedure’ of the EU and was extended to more than twice as many policy areas (forty new articles), including agriculture, fisheries, structural funds, international trade, and some justice and home affairs policies.⁴ The parliamentary legislative empowerment has important, yet largely unexplored, substantive implications because the adopted EU legislation is binding in all member states and supreme to national law.

Finally, while the EP does not select a government as national parliaments do and is not subject to a governmental vote of confidence (Huber 1996), it exerts executive oversight over the European Commission. The Commission is the closest equivalent to an executive in the EU and while its members are selected by the member states, they are expected to be politically neutral and act in the general interests of the Union and its citizens. Besides its powers to censure the European Commission as a whole, introduced already in the Treaty of Rome (1958)⁵, since the Amsterdam Treaty the appointment of the President of the European Commission and the College of Commissioners must be approved by the EP (European Parliament 2009b, Rule 105 and Rule 106).⁶ The EP has been able to strategically use its power of investiture and censure of the European Commission to further its institutional goals (for an overview see Judge and Earnshaw 2008; see also Gabel and Hix 2002; Hix *et al.* 2004, 2006b).⁷

codecision procedure. Thus, the authors argue that the Council still holds the upper hand in the legislative process even under codecision.

4. The ‘ordinary legislative procedure’ is outlined in Article 294 of the TFEU, which is also ex Article 251 of the Treaty establishing the European Community (TEC).
5. The European Parliament can censure the European Commission as a whole by double majority, consisting of an absolute majority of its votes and two-thirds of the votes cast (Article 234 TFEU, ex Article 201 TEC).
6. The European Parliament elects the EP President suggested by the Council of Ministers by a majority of its component members. If it fails to approve the candidate, the Council, acting by a qualified majority, has to suggest a new one within a month. The EP also gives its consent on the final composition of the Commission (Article 17, point 7 TEU).
7. The European Parliament has been creative in inventing other mechanisms to exercise scrutiny over the European Commission. For instance, recent research demonstrates that opposition parties in the EP use the written parliamentary questions to specific Commissioners as a means of exerting inexpensive executive scrutiny (Proksch and Slapin 2011).

chapter | distribution of legislative tasks four

Most of the existing studies on the European Parliament's legislative organisation have examined the internal parliamentary rules and division of resources in isolation from the external institutional environment in which the EP operates. In contrast, this chapter aims at capturing the effect of the inter-institutional locking on the internal EP organisation. It examines how the different inter-institutional legislative procedures shape the internal power struggle and division of tasks among parliamentary groups and individual actors. The factors influencing the allocation of legislative reports falling under the codecision and consultation legislative procedures are compared in light of the substantively different distribution of power between the EP and the Council of Ministers under these two procedures as specified in the European Union treaties.

Committee positions on the legislative proposals of the European Commission are prepared into so-called reports, in which amendments may be proposed for consideration in plenary. Drafting legislative reports on the Commission's proposals by individual committee members constitutes probably the most influential individual legislative task within the EP. The rapporteurs serve *de facto* as the primary intra-institutional agenda-setters and the main parliamentary representatives in the inter-institutional negotiations. Thus, they can largely shape the content of adopted legislative acts. The choice of a rapporteur, therefore, can influence the level of expertise embodied in draft legislation, the breadth of party group and plenary support it attracts, and its representativeness of the preferences of the median member of the EP or bias toward certain interests outside the plenary. Nevertheless, it is not formally governed by the EP Rules of Procedure. Instead, complex informal rules guide the division of reports among party groups and, subsequently, within party groups by their committee coordinators. This procedural ambiguity could lead to violations of the prevalent proportionality norm in the EP and give disproportionate advantage to certain party groups and legislators in obtaining the more competitive reports, i.e. the reports falling under the codecision procedure where the Parliament has equal legislative powers with the Council of Ministers. Thus, the main questions this chapter addresses are whether any systematic differences between the allocation of codecision and consultation reports exist and, if so, who wins and who loses in the division of parliamentary resources.

While stemming from the partisan, distributive, and informational rationales of legislative organisation, as discussed in Chapter Two, the hypotheses developed here are further qualified to unveil the conditions under which each rationale holds. They are centred on the specific incentive structures of MEPs and party group coordinators given the EP rules and the EU's legislative procedures shaping the inter-chamber balance of power.

Following the partisan theory, the primary motivation of party group coordinators in selecting individual rapporteurs is to promote group cohesion. Thus, they are expected to reward loyal members with reports, while avoiding allocating codecision reports to members with special interests and, hence, outlying policy preferences in certain areas. Therefore, such ‘interested’ members are rather expected to draft more consultation reports. While MEPs with expertise are likely to be advantaged in the report allocation, due to the substantive power of party group coordinators in selecting rapporteurs, partisan considerations take precedence over informational ones. Therefore, expertise is expected to facilitate obtaining mostly consultation reports for which competition is lower.

These hypotheses are examined via count regression models with the use of a data set on the legislative reports allocated during the first term of the 6th European Parliament (2004–2007) and data on the individual MEPs’ profiles used in Chapter Three. The semi-structured interviews complement this data. To give the reader a taste of the findings, the results show that indeed the different parliamentary empowerment under the consultation and codecision procedures shaping intra-parliamentary completion affects the division of resources within the EP.

In what follows, background information on the complex system of report allocation is provided, followed by a presentation of the academic literature on the topic. The hypotheses of the study are developed thereafter. Subsequently, the data and methods are described and the results are outlined. The chapter concludes with a discussion of the theoretical and empirical contributions, the limitations of the study and suggestions for future research.

Role of the rapporteur and the system of report allocation

The legislative powers of the EP vary depending on the inter-institutional procedure required for adopting legislation in a given policy area. Since the introduction of the codecision procedure in the Treaty of the European Union (1993), the extension of its application to ever more policy areas in the Amsterdam (1999), Nice (2003) and Lisbon (2009) treaties, and the gradual abolition of the cooperation procedure, the two main procedures used in adopting EU legislation have become consultation¹ and codecision (renamed since the Lisbon Treaty (2009) to ‘ordinary legislative procedure’ and ‘special legislative procedure’, respectively). The balance of power between the EP and the Council of Ministers in the bi-cameral legislative system of the EU varies greatly between the two procedures. Under consultation the EP’s powers are confined to giving its opinion, bar the exceptional cases in which it is supported by the Commission and is able to exert limited pressure by delaying proposals or linking them to codecision draft legislation (Kardasheva 2009). In contrast, under codecision the EP has an unconditional veto

1. The consultation procedure was merged with the assent procedure in the Treaty of Lisbon (2009) into the ‘special legislative procedure’.

power, placing it on equal footing with the Council of Ministers.² Not surprisingly, the EP allocates more time to drafting its codecision than consultation legislative positions as a result, at least in the first reading (Rasmussen and Toshkov 2010). The differential powers of the EP under the two procedures influence the level and type of external and internal pressure it attracts. The primary focus of such pressure is on the parliamentary legislative committees, where most of the formal parliamentary deliberation takes place, which are open to the public. The committees draft reports on the Commission proposals in which they propose amendments to the plenary for consideration in formulating the final EP position. However, there are substantial differences in the type and number of legislative reports that each committee writes depending on the policy area it covers.³ The differences in legislative power between the committees affect the competitiveness of their working environment, the leverage their members have in advancing special interests, and the incentives national parties and party groups have to exert control over them.

Within a committee, usually one rapporteur is assigned to write each incoming draft report. The rapporteurs are the primary legislators responsible for organising discussions and hearings on legislative proposals within the committees, proposing draft amendments and building majority support for their draft reports. They have to present the committee reports to the plenary after the final committee vote and give an opinion on changes proposed on the floor. The rapporteur also follows the report's development through later readings, sits on the conciliation committee if one is formed (in the third reading of the codecision procedure), and – since the Lisbon Treaty came into force or whenever the Regulatory Procedure with Scrutiny applied before that – follows the legislative act in the implementation stage.⁴

In all these activities, the rapporteur is expected to represent the common committee position rather than a personal view or partisan stance. However, limited time resources give the rapporteurs a powerful 'agenda-setting' role. For instance, they can negotiate the parliamentary positions on legislative proposals in secluded trilogue meetings with representatives of the Commission and the Council of Ministers. That sometimes leads to an informal inter-institutional agreement without a clear committee mandate, e.g. before the responsible committee has adopted a draft report on the proposal (Farrell and Héritier 2004; Héritier 2007). To control the development of reports, other party groups appoint shadow rapporteurs, who are normally invited to such meetings. However, the smaller party groups often

-
2. See Rasmussen and Toshkov (2010) for a review of the literature on the power of the EP under different legislative procedures.
 3. Some committees do not operate in policy areas falling under the codecision procedure as specified in the EU treaties. In the examined period, about 90 per cent of all codecision reports were drafted by nine standing legislative committees (European Parliament 2007a).
 4. The Lisbon Treaty made the regulatory procedure with scrutiny, which the 2006 Comitology reform introduced (Eurlex 2006), redundant. It introduced Delegated Acts (Article 290 TFEU) that give the EP rights of oversight (Kaeding and Hardacre 2010).

chapter | concluding remarks eight |

This book brings a number of contributions to the theoretical and empirical literature on legislative organisation and the European Parliament. Yet, it has also its limitations. Acknowledging this, in this concluding chapter a number of suggestions for future research on the EP's legislative organisation are outlined. The final lines are dedicated to recapitulating the main achievements of the book.

Suggestions for future research

This book has contributed to our knowledge about the EP committees. Full understanding of the rationale behind the EP organisation and its consequences, however, requires further scholarly attention. Since analytical studies on the topic are relatively recent, unexplored aspects are numerous. Two directions for future research are suggested below. The first one entails explaining variation in organisational design over time. The second one involves a shift of focus from organisational aspects to their consequences for policy-making in the EP and European Union policies more broadly.¹

Explaining variation over time

In this book factors explaining various organisational aspects of the EP's committees and their legislative output in a single parliamentary term (2004–2009) have been examined. Analytical research on the explanatory power of such factors over time is still limited (for a recent study in that direction, see Whitaker 2011; see also Kreppel 2002a). The progressive empowerment of the EP with each EU treaty revision and the consecutive enlargements of the EU could have hardly left its legislative organisation intact. This raises important questions regarding the impact of the changes in the EU's external environment on the internal EP set-up.

Thus, extensive research covering a longer span of time is necessary to evaluate how the gradual empowerment of the Parliament has affected its committees and their work through time. Only thus can we fully understand how and why the EP set-up has evolved to its present state. As Maltzman and Smith (1995: 257) have hypothesised, 'the relative importance [for legislators] of various principals – home constituencies, party, the parent chamber – is likely to differ across committees and vary over time'. Why do party groups dominate the EP's committee organisation today and did they always dominate over it? Alternatively, was in-

1. For a more exhaustive discussion of the gaps in our knowledge on the EP organisation and suggestions for future research, refer to Yordanova (2011b).

formational or distributive behaviour prevalent in the past when the Parliament was still a weak legislature? According to the predictions of Maltzman (1997), increased salience causes a shift from distributive to party-driven behaviour. Yet, in the EP case, why would distributive concerns be important at all at a time when the committees served as purely consultative bodies and could not determine legislative output?

Similarly, little is known about the impact of changes in the external environment on the links between MEPs and their national parties and governments. How were these links affected by the change of the MEPs' selection mechanism from appointment by national parliaments to direct elections in 1979? Have national parties been strengthening their control over MEPs as the parliamentary powers increased with each treaty revision? For instance, Whitaker (2005: 25) asks whether the committee contingents of national party delegations have become more representative of their delegations as the EP gained greater influence. In a later study on voting in the 6th EP he found evidence that this is indeed the case (Whitaker 2011: 106–24). Yet, the more general question, regarding the channels national parties have used over time to maintain control over their MEPs, remains open. Have they systematically exercised their electoral control over legislators as generally assumed in the literature? Or, have they relied on other reward and punishment mechanisms?

Little is known about how EU enlargements have affected the parliamentary internal organisation and decision-making. With the almost doubled number of EU member states following the 2004 and 2007 enlargements, the pressure to reform the EP's internal set-up and operation to accommodate new members in the office allocation and policy formation process undoubtedly increased. For instance, the ever more frequent resort to informal trilogues and inter-institutional agreements at the early stage of the codecision procedure could have served as a solution to the decreased bargaining success of the EP *vis-à-vis* the Council of Ministers following the big Eastern enlargement (Costello and Thomson 2011). Not only is the Parliament generally more successful in advancing its position in the first reading of the codecision procedure than in the conciliation committee in third reading (Häge and Kaeding 2007; Costello and Thomson 2011), but also informal negotiations outside the traditional parliamentary arenas, i.e. outside its committees and plenary sittings, *de facto* limit the number of legislative participants (Reh *et al.* 2010). It seems, therefore, that the resulting decreased legislative influence of the EP committees was the price paid to circumvent prolonged bargaining within the EP and between the EP and the Council of Ministers that the enlargements could trigger. We know little of the myriad of other institutional adaptations the Parliament has undergone in the period.

Finally, the collection of longitudinal data would for the first time allow studying some hitherto unexplored phenomena. An example is the career advancement of incumbent legislators within the EP, and, linked to it, the institutionalisation of the EP. Are senior parliamentary members more active and productive legislators? For instance, Cox and Terry (2008: 603) examine the determinants of 'legislative success' in the Congress by analysing the causal effect of becoming a chair or part

of the majority party caucus/conference on a legislator's productivity. Upon the collection of panel data, analyses like that could be easily conducted in the study of MEPs' parliamentary work. Automated data collection repositories, such as the one Høyland *et al.* (2009) offer, now greatly facilitate such research.

Consequences of organisational design for policies and policy-making

Our knowledge of the substantive consequences of the EP's legislative organisation is fairly limited. In order to explain, for instance, the level of inclusion and influence of different actors in the policy-making process as well as policy outcomes and their responsiveness to voters' preferences, the hitherto dependent variables like committee assignment, report allocation, etc., have to become independent ones.

For instance, how does the choice of a rapporteur affect the procedural development and content of legislation? In his model on legislative bargaining in the EU, Tsebelis (1995: 84–8) argues that rapporteurs enable co-operative decision-making in the EP. However, Kaeding (2005: 100–01) justly points out that the importance of rapporteurs in EU policy making should not be just assumed or modelled in theoretical accounts but also empirically demonstrated. Initial steps in this direction are offered in Chapter Five. Yet, it leaves it unclear why committees allow rapporteurs to negotiate with the Council of Ministers outside the committee arena. The analysis showed that agreements reached in informal inter-institutional negotiations tend to pass unamended through committee and plenary. Why do committees accept the deals negotiated by rapporteurs in these arenas? Does that mean that rapporteurs are acting as honest brokers of committees rather than furthering their individual policy goals or the policy goals of their national parties or party groups? There is mixed evidence on this question in the recent literature. On the one hand, Rasmussen (2011) shows that rapporteurs with biased views are unlikely to even strike early agreements. On the other hand, Costello and Thomson (2010) demonstrate that they manage to influence the EP's opinion in 'fast track legislation' under the codecision procedure and this influence is motivated primarily by their national interests rather than those of the EP median (or even of their party groups).² In contrast, if the EP position is formed following the formal decision-making process, it generally reflects the preferences of the median MEP rather than those of the rapporteur (Costello and Thomson 2010) and there is no evidence that the rapporteurs defect in second reading from the adopted EP

2. The impact of the rapporteur's nationality is not stronger if the rapporteur comes from a governing party represented in the Council of Ministers rather than an opposition party (Costello and Thomson 2010). More generally, the governing status of the rapporteur's national party does not affect the bargaining success of the EP in bicameral negotiations (Costello and Thomson 2011). According to a recent study (Rasmussen 2011) and contrary to previous expectations (Høyland 2006b), it also does not affect the likelihood of an early agreement with the Council under codecision.