Essays on the career paths and legislative activity of Members of the European Parliament

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Declaration

I certify that the thesis I have presented for examination for the MPhil/PhD degree of the London School of Economics and Political Science is solely my own work.

The work presented in chapter two of this thesis was published in the Journal of Common Market Studies (2016, volume 54, issue 4) as "*Impact of Career Paths on MEPs' Activities*".

I warrant that this authorisation does not, to the best of my belief, infringe the rights of any third party.

I declare that my thesis consists of 54,764 words.

Abstract

Being a politician has become a profession for many. With the development of the European Parliament (EP) into an influential institution at the European level, building a career in the EP has become an interesting option for politicians. This thesis studies the different career paths of Members of the European Parliament (MEPs) and explores how these career paths and MEPs' ambitions have an impact on their participation in the legislative process and thereby the way they represent citizens. This thesis is based on three empirical research papers.

The first paper identifies two career paths that MEPs might follow, in addition to the three others which are generally used, and links these to the activities of MEPs in parliament. I find that an MEP's career path and ambitions are relevant in explaining certain legislative behaviour across member states and party groups.

The second paper looks at the career ambitions of MEPs and finds that MEPs' career paths are also the result of expressed ambitions by politicians themselves, despite their dependence on party leadership and the second-order nature of EP elections. MEPs looking to pursue a career in the EP are more actively involved in the parliament's activities. This higher level of participation and acquired policy influence is rewarded when MEPs stand for re-election.

The third paper looks at the group of MEPs who become lobbyists after their time in parliament. Building on what is known from Washington, this paper finds that being on a powerful committee, from a smaller political group and having a longer tenure make it more likely that an MEP becomes a lobbyist.

The findings across the three papers support the idea that the career paths and ambitions of politicians provide an important explanation when trying to understand an MEP's willingness to invest resources in the EP's legislative process.

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Contents

List of tables

List of figures

1

Introduction

1.1. Career ambitious politicians

Being a politician has become a profession for many and this is the same for the European Parliament (EP). Weber predicted some politicians to be living 'for' politics. Others would consider being a politician to be a profession. They would live 'from' politics (Weber, 1921). With the development of the EP into an influential institution at the European level, building a career in the EP has become an interesting option for politicians. This thesis studies the different career paths of Members of the European Parliament (MEPs) and shows how these career paths and the MEPs' career ambitions impact their participation in the legislative process. The three papers in this thesis show that MEPs adjust, to some extent, their behaviour in line with their career ambitions. These findings are relevant for anyone studying the functioning of the EP as the EU's main democratic institution. These findings can also be of interest to those studying democratic representation and political careers more generally.

The reasons for pursuing a career as an MEP are numerous and can also change over time. After having spent some time in the EP, politicians can aim for a career elsewhere, in national politics or outside of politics altogether. Although politicians are likely to say publicly that their career will depend on the outcome of democratic elections, such a thing as individual career-planning in politics does exist (Borchert, 2011).

The career ambitions of politicians can take different forms and are an important motivational factor, as shown by the extensive US literature on this topic. Some might seek to stay in their current position for longer. Others might look to move up the political ladder. Further, others might want to use their time in politics to prepare for a career in the private sector. This results in different career trajectories that politicians will follow. Of course, politicians will be constrained in the extent to which they can decide about their future career steps; they need to be realistic and operate, as Schlesinger (1966) put it, within a 'structure of opportunities' provided. These exogenous factors, such as the positions which are available and the electoral rules they are faced with, have an impact on the opportunities for a politician to achieve his or her career objectives.

Within this structure of opportunities though, politicians possess some key tools to influence their own career path. Besides some personal aspects which might be difficult to change, such as charisma and appearance, politicians can take key decisions about their own behaviour and the extent to which they decide to participate in the legislative process, thereby seeking to influence the future career steps they want to make. The ambition of politicians to pursue a certain office, whether it is staying in their current role or moving to a different one, can be expected to influence the way in which they behave. In fact, as Maestas (1993) put it: "*the idea that ambition for office shapes the behaviour of political leaders is hardly new, nor is it often disputed*". Politicians are likely to adjust their behaviour to optimise the chances of achieving their career ambitions and making the most of the opportunities provided. The career ambitions can, therefore, be expected to influence the *participation* of politicians in the current political process they are active in.

Politician's participation will also be influenced by past experience. The experiences built up in previous careers will impact the ability of politicians to fulfil the tasks in their current role, which in turn will impact how successful they will be in achieving their career ambitions. With both past experience and future ambitions having an impact on the participation of politicians, it is important to take the full career trajectory into account when looking at its impact on politicians' participation.

The EP has developed into a powerful legislative institution over recent decades. Several treaty reforms, of which the Lisbon Treaty is the most recent example, have placed the EP on an equal footing with the Council in many policy areas. At the same time as the EP has become more important, we have witnessed the development of a growing group of MEPs who pursue a longer-term career in this institution (Scarrow, 1997; Beauvallet and Michon, 2010; Whitaker, 2014). The growing powers of the EP are likely to have played a role in this by making the EP a more interesting institution to work in with an increasing number of important political decisions being taken there.

For citizens in a representative democracy, such as the EU, it is important to know who represents them. However, it is certainly also important to know more about *how* citizens are being represented. When the career ambitions of politicians affect their behaviour and participation in the political process, it is important to understand how the different career ambitions of MEPs affect the way in which they decide to represent the citizens who have elected them. Do different types of MEPs, including a growing group of politicians who consider the EP to be their main political arena, behave differently and adjust their participation in the EP's legislative process to optimise their chances in achieving their career ambitions?

Despite a considerable amount of literature on the impact of career ambitions on the behaviour of members of the US Congress, this topic has attracted relatively limited attention in the context of the EP. This thesis contributes to addressing this gap. In three papers, this thesis seeks to expand our existing knowledge about the presence of career ambition in the EP and how this relates to MEPs' behaviour in the EP. The first paper identifies a number of career paths that exist among MEPs and shows how they relate to different ways of participating in the legislative work of the EP. The second paper goes into more detail on the way that those pursuing a longer career in the EP can behave best to optimise their chances of staying in the EP. Finally, the third paper sheds more light on an issue that has hardly been studied before in the EP context: the revolving door of MEPs who become lobbyists. The general argument supported throughout this thesis is that the career path and ambitions provide an important explanation of an MEP's willingness to invest time and resources in participating in the EP's legislative process.

This chapter will proceed as followers. First, I will discuss why it is important and relevant to study the career paths of politicians in the first place. Then I will give an overview of the extensive literature that is available in the US on politicians' career paths and their activities in the political arena. Third, I will discuss the literature on careers in the EP followed by the hypotheses of this thesis. Finally, I will provide an overview of and introduction into the data used in this thesis using a Cox hazard model, concluding this chapter with an overview of the findings from the three papers.

1.2. The importance of understanding politicians' career paths

Before trying to better understand the relationship between career paths and legislative participation, it is important to answer: *why we should be interested in a politician's career path at all in addition to the potential impact on behaviour. What are the other reasons to care about the career movements of politicians?*

There would seem to be three key reasons to care about the career paths of politicians. First, longer tenure is associated with higher quality politicians. Building a longer career in the EP gives politicians the opportunity to develop policy expertise which they can use to improve the quality of legislation. Measuring the quality of politicians is not easy and often subjective measurements are used. The quality of politicians contains a number of factors such as competence and integrity. Already in the late 19th century, US politicians who were considered to be of higher quality because of their experience, had a higher chance of getting elected into the House of Representatives (Carson, Engstrom and Roberts, 2007). Mondak (1995) found that politicians who are considered to be of lower quality – according to content analysis of the *Almanac of American Politics* and *Politics in America* which describes the members of the House of Representatives – are more likely to voluntarily retire or be defeated in an election. Luttberg (1992) used the rankings of news organisations to define which politicians are of higher or lower quality. News organisations use rankings of politicians on a scale of "best/most effective" to "worse/least effective". Using these subjective rankings, Luttberg found that those who score higher, have a higher probability of being re-elected than those with the lowest ranking. Miquel and Snyder (2006) find that politicians' effectiveness rises sharply with tenure and highly talented politicians are able to move more quickly into positions of responsibility and power. Also, they find that

effectiveness has a positive impact on an incumbent's electoral success and the likelihood of politicians moving to a higher office. Particularly in environments where politicians face limited formal sanctions, personal qualities of politicians are potentially important (Besley et al., 2005). The EP election process is an example of a situation where politicians face weaker formal sanctions as voters are less well informed about the activities of MEPs than they are when it comes to politicians in domestic politics. Making sure that the quality of the politicians who serve is high is then particularly important for the citizens they represent.

The second reason we should care about the career paths of politicians is that a politician's career path can tell us something about who controls policymaking influence. This is related to the ability of politicians to stay in their current role. Turnover in EP membership at each election is relatively high (Corbett et al., 2003; Whitaker, 2014). Tenure is associated with securing greater levels of influence over a legislative process. Therefore, MEPs with a longer career path in the EP are in a more powerful position against the European Commission and the Council than their peers with less experience in the EP (Beauvallet and Michon, 2010). If MEPs with a certain background are better able at making sure they stay longer in the EP and obtain more influence, this is a relevant factor to consider, in particular, when trying to understand the policymaking process and seeking to ensure that the interests of all EU citizens are equally represented in the legislative process.

The third reason we should care about the career paths of politicians is that, besides providing an indication of the quality of politicians, the length of a career in a legislature can also provide information about the legislative body in which the politician serves. As argued by Polsby (1968), the longer the careers of politicians

in a legislature the more institutionalised a legislature can be said to be. This is particularly the case when there is more internal than external promotion into leadership positions. Politicians only staying in a legislature for a short period of time indicates that a legislature is not institutionalised. The emergence of career politicians is strongly associated with party system development and legislative institutionalisation, which are two important aspects of democratisation (Shabab and Slomczynski, 2002). Studying political careers can improve our understanding of institutional stability and change (Borchert, 2011). Therefore, features of the legislative careers of politicians in an institution become important indicators of the nature and the developmental stage of the legislature itself, although this is likely to vary by legislative body (Hibbing, 1999).

1.3. The study of career paths

The career paths of politicians have attracted the attention of political scientists both in the EU and outside, with particular attention being given to career paths in the US Congress. There are a number of findings from the US literature, which is significantly more developed on this topic, that can inspire our thinking about the career paths of MEPs and their participation in the legislative process.

One of the earlier contributions in the field is made by Barber (1965) who argued that the different career path decisions of politicians could be explained by the differences in personalities and psychologies. Studying the behaviour of politicians in the Connecticut state legislature, he found that politicians in the same institution with similar prospects for promotion to higher offices showed different ambitions for promotions. Barber explains this by different types and personalities of politicians. After Barber though, studying the career paths of politicians

following a rational choice approach gains traction, in line with a broader trend in political science.

A common starting point in the area of political career trajectories is Schlesinger (1966) who considered a politician to be a rational actor operating in a structure of opportunities. He argued that career ambition is an important motivation for politicians and that there are three broad categories of politicians who pursue their political ambitions. The first category of 'progressive' politicians is those aiming for a higher political office. In the US this includes, for example, politicians looking to move from a state legislature to the federal level. The second category is those politicians with a 'static ambition' who are looking to stay in the office they are in and pursue a long-term career there. The third category is the one of 'discrete' politicians who do not pursue a long-term political career. Schlesinger argued that the career path of a politician is the result of rational individual career decisions and that politicians adjust their behaviour in line with these ambitions.

Since Schlesinger, an extensive body of literature further developed his theory of the role that ambition plays in politics, particularly in the context of the US Congress. This literature shows that the career choices of Congressmen are affected by a combination of the opportunities provided and the potential benefits of a career choice (Black, 1972; Rohde, 1979; Kiewiet and Zeng, 1993). Black (1972) looked at the extent to which the structures in which politicians need to compete for office (here defined as the size of the community and the degree of competition) have an impact on the risks that ambitious politicians face and the investments they need to make in order to reach a certain political office. Black does not suggest that these structures directly cause a politician to have ambition and be successful or not. Instead, the structures create barriers for politicians and

thereby indirectly influence the type of politician that will make it to the political office he or she is competing for. Black's findings also support the idea that career changes can broadly be explained by rational choices.

When first looking at politicians with progressive career ambitions, Rohde (1979) identified a number of key factors that predict whether someone will seek a higher office and leave their current position. One of the factors he finds to be important is the margin of the incumbent's last election victory. Another factor is the prospective opposition that a candidate will face. Also, party members and the margin of electoral victory of the politician's current seat are factors that play a role in a politician's decision to aim for a higher office. Abramson, Aldrich and Rohde (1987) looked at the motivations of US Senators who pursue a progressive career path by running for President in the 1972-1988 period. They find that those with relatively low costs of running a campaign, no political liabilities and willingness to take risk are more likely to aim for the Presidency. Brace (1984) also finds evidence that the nature of the opportunities provided to run for a higher office (for example incumbency and redistricting) have an important influence on the progressive ambition of Congressmen to decide to run for the higher office. Copeland (1989) looked at the motivations of House Representatives to run for a Senate seat. He finds that those who already have powerful positions in the House are less likely to run for the Senate and those who do run, do this with a strong personal support base rather than consider it as an opportunity that they need to take.

Instead of trying to move up the political ladder (i.e. having a progressive ambition), some politicians decide to leave politics (i.e. have a discrete ambition). Jacobson and Kernell (1983, cited in Masthay and Overby, 2017) find that decisions

to stand for re-election or retire from Congress were based on cost-benefit calculations by the individual politician. Theriault (1998) finds that reaching the career ceiling in Congress is the key predictor of why politicians decide to retire voluntarily. Looking at the careers of members of the House of Representatives in the second half of the twentieth century, Moore and Hibbing (1998) explain that those who are not achieving their goals are more likely to retire voluntarily than others. Being of higher age, in less senior positions, more at risk of losing the next election and with greater distance from the party's ideology all increase the likelihood of voluntary retirement (Moore and Hibbing, 1998). This result is confirmed by Kanthak (2011) who finds that legislators with an ideological position further away from their party are more likely to leave the House of Representatives to satisfy their ambition elsewhere. Those closer to the party's ideology, on the other hand, are less likely to leave and more likely to obtain a more senior position inside the House (Kanthak, 2011).

There are also differences between political parties, with Republican representatives retiring more quickly than their Democratic colleagues (Ang and Overby, 2008). Strategic retirements because of financial incentives or redistricting also take place in the House (Groseclose and Krehbiel, 1994). Analysing retirements in the US Senate during the last four decades of the 20th century, Bernstein and Wolak (2002) find that age and minority party status are predictors of retirements. These findings are confirmed by Masthay and Overby (2017). They also find that, unlike in the House, there are no differences between the Republicans and the Democrats in the Senate in terms of politicians' likelihood to retire.

After considering those with progressive and discrete ambitions, the third category in Schlesinger's categorisation is those with a static ambition. Some have

looked at why politicians decide to pursue a career inside the institution they are elected in (Fenno, 1996; Loomis, 1988; among others cited in Hibbing, 1999). Squire (1988) finds that advancement prospects in the legislature, as well as pay, are important motivations for politicians to continue pursuing a career in the same institution. Spending energy and resources on trying to 'move up' only makes sense when career opportunities to do so exist (Squire, 1988).

Kiewiet and Zeng (1993) made an important contribution by combining all three career trajectories – progressive, static and retirement – into one analysis. As they argued, a binary analysis of each separate career option is less useful as politicians will normally face the three career options simultaneously. In contrast to Moore and Hibbing's later study, they find that age has no effect on an incumbent's decision to run for re-election. Also, leadership positions and vote margins have no effect. Those who were going to lose their seat because of redistricting but who had an opportunity to progress to a higher office were likely to do so.

The career paths of politicians have attracted only limited academic attention outside of the US. Where scholars have focused on career politicians, their analysis has been mainly descriptive of the career paths found without linking these career paths to politicians' activities. In Canada for example, it has been found that the phenomenon of politicians staying in the same role for longer is less common than in the US and turnover rates in Canadian assemblies are higher than in their southern neighbours (Moncrief, 1994).

So far, I have only looked at the factors influencing the career movements of politicians as described in the US literature. I will now turn to the literature which links the career paths of politicians with their behaviour. Bernick (2001) concludes

that legislative careers are complex phenomena. The length and quality of the political career as well as how it fits into someone's overall career path are different for every individual. Bernick argues that legislative career orientations can explain differences in attitudes of politicians towards how they believe they should behave in their role, suggesting that career orientation has an impact on behaviour. Politicians' career ambitions influence the way in which they participate in their current position as politicians adapt their behaviour to enhance the chances of obtaining the position they ultimately desire.

Analysing the behaviour of politicians in parliament can be done either by looking at the voting behaviour of politicians or considering how actively politicians participate in the legislative process, for example through their participation in plenary votes, debates and tabling motions or amendments. Hall (1996) examined the motivation of Congressmen to become legislatively active in a number of (sub)committees. He argues that members of a parliament face two decisions on every issue that comes up: which policy position to take and how active to participate. Hall makes the distinction between revealed preferences and revealed intensities of a parliamentarian. By intensities, he means the time and legislative effort one puts in an issue (Hall, 1996). Politicians are limited in how much time and effort they can invest in certain legislative activities. It can be expected that the professional background of a politician has led to the development of certain skills which the politician can use once elected to office. Having certain skills is likely to influence which type of legislative activity a politician is better at getting involved in. Politicians also face strategic choices about how to deploy the resources they have to achieve their future goals, including those of re-election and promotion to higher office (Strøm, 1997).

Research linking politicians' career path with participation in Congress has mainly focused on the *political* experience of members of Congress but the results from these analyses have been inconclusive. Frantzich (1979) concluded that those who entered the House of Representatives with no previous political experience, were introducing more legislative proposals than colleagues who did have experience in politics. This was argued to be the case as those without previous political experience lack the appreciation of how difficult it can be to get legislation passed, underestimating the importance of building coalitions and trust with colleagues. Those with past political experience have a greater understanding of policy development and the functioning of the legislative institution impacting the way they behave when elected into parliament, for example when it comes to committee assignments (Berkman, 1993). Experienced politicians are better able at being appointed to and maintaining their positions on influential committees throughout their time in Congress (Berkman, 1993). Looking at the number of bills introduced and speeches given by newly elected Congressmen in the 84^{th}-99^{th} congresses, Little and Moore (1996) find no evidence that previous political experience has a positive impact on legislative participation in terms of bills introduced and speeches given. Francis (2014) however finds that Members of Congress with legislative experience, are more active in the legislative process. For example, they introduce more bills and are more successful in seeing their bills become law. She shows that newly elected Congressmen from certain non-political backgrounds are active in introducing and co-sponsoring bills on policy topics that relate to their non-political experience. Those without political experience are found to be less well able to follow accepted political norms in Congress such as

cooperating with other members (Payne, 1980) and may, therefore, struggle to participate actively in certain areas of the legislative process.

Besides the fact that participation is impacted by past experience, participation is also expected to have an impact on future career steps. As cited before, Schlesinger (1966) argued that politicians can, therefore, be expected to adjust their behaviour in line with their ambition. As Frantzlich (1979) put it, for most Congressmen, the desire for re-election controls behaviour. Congressional scholars studying the impact of career ambition on legislative activity have found that ambitions have an impact on the policy positions that politicians take who are looking to move up (Francis and Kenny 1996, 2000; Francis et al. 1994; Hibbing 1986; Van Der Slik and Pernacciaro 1979; as cited in Maestas, 2003). The ambition of these politicians also influences the way they allocate their resources and participate in certain legislative activities (Herrick and Moore, 1993; Meastas, 2003). Mayhew (1974) shows that Congressmen adapt their behaviour and positions to their static ambition of seeking to become re-elected. Much of the legislative activity in Congress can be explained by this desire to become re-elected. In fact, a growing concern in the US has been the impact of careerism on legislative behaviour and policy outcomes (Opheim, 1994).

Herrick, Moore and Hibbing (1994) compare US representatives who are seeking re-election with those who do not. They find that the two groups are involved in different forms of legislative activity, suggesting that future career prospects and objectives have an influence on the current behaviour of politicians. They find that politicians seeking re-election are more selective in which roll-call votes they participate in and are more active in proposing legislation. Those

planning to leave Congress have a more tightly focused legislative agenda being more successful in getting legislation passed.

Herrick and Moore (1993) find that politicians with the career ambition to move to a higher political office are more active than colleagues seeking to stay and pursue their career in Congress. These progressively ambitious politicians introduce more bills, are more active on the floor and are more likely to specialise in a certain legislative area. Those who seek to secure a more senior political position outside of their current legislative arena focus more on their constituents while those looking to get promoted inside their current political arena are more effective in getting legislation passed, despite tabling fewer bills.

Considering the level of activity of House of Representatives between 1975 and 1995, by using bill and amendment sponsorship and co-sponsorship, Wawro (2000) finds that Democratic representatives with higher levels of activity are more likely to obtain leadership positions in the House than their Democratic colleagues who are less active. This effect was not found for Republicans. Once in these leadership positions, it has been found that these Democratic representatives continue to be active. This is confirmed by Schiller (1995) who shows that senior senators and senators who chair committees, sponsor more bills than their, more junior, colleagues. Similar results were found at lower levels of government in the US by Hamm, Harmel and Thompson (1983) who looked at the state legislatures in South Carolina and Texas where they found that those more senior politicians in leadership positions show more legislative activity. Wawro's (2000) findings contradict with Payne's (1980) who finds no evidence that active participation in committee work helps in advancing a Congressman's political future.

While a number of studies have been conducted on the impact of legislative participation on future *political* careers (either inside the current institution or outside in a different political role), the body of research on how legislative participation influences what politicians do after they have left politics altogether is more limited. Borders and Dockery (1995) provide an overview of the variation in post-congressional careers but their work does not include an analysis explaining why this variation occurs. In their study of post-Congressional careers, Herrick and Nixon (1996) find that there is considerable variation in post-congressional careers that are being picked up. They explain this variation by the expressed interests of former Congressmen and the opportunities provided to them. Members' behaviour while in Congress may also have an impact on their employment options after they leave, with age being a relevant factor. A number of studies in the US have also looked at the impact of behaviour in Congress on politician's ability to get a job in the private sector after having left politics, in particular as a lobbyist (Butler and Sovey, 2010; Kim, 2013). They find that having served on powerful committees is an important explanatory factor with *participation* in the legislative process being an underexposed issue.

To summarise, there are a number of findings from the US that can inspire our thinking about the career paths of MEPs and their participation in the legislative process. The US literature shows that politicians *do* adjust their behaviour in line with their career ambitions. A number of studies find that dependent on the career objectives, politicians are involved in different legislative activities and also show different levels of activity. At the same time, also the external factors that influence which career movements are realistic and within reach for politicians are relevant to consider as well. The analysis from the US shows some mixed results on the

impact of past political experience on the way politicians participate in their current position. The findings on how future career steps can be related to being actively involved in certain types of legislative activity are more consistent with those politicians having progressive career ambitions being more likely to participate actively.

One question is whether these findings are likely to be applicable in the EP as well. There are some important differences between the EP and the US Congress that can have an influence on whether the US observations are likely to be found in the EP context. First, the electoral connection between voters and MEPs is relatively weak. One aspect of this is the lack of public scrutiny which is much more prominent in the US and is likely to play a more important role when trying to understand Congressmen's behaviour. Second, the EU is different from the US with respect to the EP's party group system and the electoral rules. Also, an MEP has two principals, namely the national party and European Party Group (EPG) leadership. This might shape the opportunities provided to politicians. Third, for many politicians in the EU, being an MEP is not considered to be the highest political office. Instead, a career in national politics is often considered to be 'first-order'. It is therefore worth considering how the career paths of MEPs and their participation have been studied so far to see which findings resemble those in the US.

1.4. Existing research on careers in the European Parliament

There have been some interesting examples of how career paths can differentiate between MEPs. For some MEPs, being elected to the EP follows from having had a senior political position in national politics. An example of this in the current EP

is Guy Verhofstadt, the leader of the ALDE group, who used to be prime-minister of Belgium (1999-2008). Jean-Luc Dehaene is another example of a former Belgian prime-minister who got elected to the EP and stayed until he passed away in 2014. Some MEPs, however, start their political career in the EP before moving to a (senior) position in domestic politics. The Finnish politician Alexander Stubb was an MEP between 2004 and 2008 before becoming Minister of Foreign Affairs and eventually even Prime Minister of Finland. Jeanine Hennis-Plasschaert was a member of the EP from 2004-2010 after which she moved to a career in domestic politics in the Netherlands. She became an MP in the Dutch Parliament before being appointed as Minister of Defence in the Dutch government. Other MEPs do not get involved in national politics at all, but decide to pursue a long-term career in the EP. Hans-Gert Pöttering, German MEP and former President of the EP, is an example of this. He has been an MEP since the EP's first direct elections in 1979.

There is a growing academic interest in the experience and career paths of MEPs. The first step in this area was taken by Westlake (1994) who studied British MEPs who were active in the EP from 1979 until 1992. He examined whether direct elections of the EP have led to the socialisation of MEPs into a group of true Europeans with a distinctive European career path. Westlake describes several possible career paths which an MEP can follow and identifies two main categories: the Westminster-oriented stereotypes and the Strasbourg-oriented stereotypes. Westlake took the previous political career of MEPs into account and considered the interest of politicians in pursuing a career in Westminster or in the EP. He concluded that Westminster acted as a considerable drain on youthful talent who were first elected to Strasbourg (Westlake, 1994). Having a position as MEP would help to get elected for Westminster. Kauppi's study (1996) focused on political

careers of French MEPs and he finds that French MEPs tend to play a marginal role in national politics and only a few of them are able to use their experience in the EP to step up to a career in national politics.

Following Westlake and Kauppi, Scarrow (1997) studied political experience and the career paths of MEPs from the four countries with the largest delegations in the EP (France, Germany, Italy and the UK). The focus of her study was on the *political* career paths of MEPs and how their EP membership fits in this. She looked at previous elective office experience both at national and sub-national level. In her work, she identifies three different categories of MEPs. First, a group of MEPs who use their EP membership as a 'stepping-stone' for winning national political offices. Second, a group of MEPs who are committed to their European position for a longer term, the 'European careerists'. Third, a group of MEPs who only stay in the EP for a short period of time after retirement from national elected office or who use their short EP membership to get a position to a non-elective public office or to a career in the private sector. Scarrow's study shows that there are considerable differences between the four member states which she examined in the types of MEPs who are elected, but that it has become more likely that:

"*future EPs will be filled with careerist MEPs who will view the parliament as their principal political arena, and who will seek to increase the institution's prestige and power relative to other European and domestic institutions*" (Scarrow, 1997).

This view was also shared by Beauvallet and Michon (2010) who find an emerging EP elite who dominate the work in the institution. They argue that, whereas in the first directly elected EP in 1979, the typical European political profile was one of the end-of-career MEP, in more recent parliaments a younger

group of politicians has been elected who stay in the EP for longer periods and choose to build a career in the institution. These EP careerists specialise in the European political arena and tend to dominate leadership positions in the EP. Whitaker (2014), too, finds that MEPs are indeed building careers in the EP and greater proportions of MEPs aspire to stay than was previously the case.

As Ting (2016) explains, previous political experience has enabled a politician to build up a network and develop skills which are necessary when elected to parliament. Studies on the US Congress have shown that the political experience of candidates has a significant electoral impact in elections and Hobolt and Høyland (2011) have demonstrated that political experience is even valued in less candidate-centred elections such as those for the EP. In their study on the EP elections, they show, first, that voters prefer candidates with more political experience and, second, that parties that choose experienced candidates for the European elections are rewarded by the electorate. This leads to the conclusion that not only national political cleavages and the attitudes towards the national governments matter in European elections (Hobolt and Høyland, 2011), but also the competences of the candidates.

A recent contribution to the literature about the career paths of MEPs comes from Daniel (2015). The focus in his work is on how the changing nature of the EP has affected political careers. He tries to explain which MEPs follow which pathway and under what conditions. He confirms the findings of others that the EP has become a more attractive institution to work. The increases in legislative power, the professionalism of the work and the compensation are all factors making it more likely that MEPs will seek re-election. He also showed that there are considerable country-specific differences in the ways that national political parties select their

EP candidates. He argues that in federalised countries national parties are more accustomed to nominating candidates across multiple levels of government and therefore might select different types of politicians for the EP than the national level. In this, he tries to link national institutional variations with the differences that can be observed in the career paths of MEPs at the EU level. Through his work, Daniel not only contributes to the literature of politicians' career paths and candidate selection but also to the literature on political parties as organisations.

Although Daniel's main focus is on the career paths of MEPs and the institutional development of the EP, he also links the career paths that MEPs follow with their behaviour in the EP. He argues that MEPs who are seeking a long-term career in the EP are more likely to specialise within the institution, occupy leadership positions and are able to progress policy initiatives in a way that one-off MEPs would not be able to. He finds that more senior MEPs are more likely to be active as rapporteur as they are able to deliver on policy development. In this way, more senior long-serving MEPs are better able at contributing to both the power and content of the EP's work (Daniel, 2015).

Meserve, Pemstein and Bernhard (2015) show that the political parties play an important role in selecting candidates for EP elections and take their decisions based on their desire to accomplish either electoral, organisational or policy goals. Their findings show that the role of national parties in the election process should not be underestimated. The ability of an MEP to pursue a career in the EP depends on both the national and European party leadership. The national and European party leaderships are of influence on how well MEPs are able to gain re-election, whether they are able to build careers inside the chamber and which options they have outside parliament – either in politics or elsewhere. When applying a

principal-agent structure, the MEP as an agent has two principals. The two principals, being the national and European party leadership, decide about different aspects which are of importance to an MEP. The EPG leadership allocates rapporteurships, decides about the speaking time of the MEP and decides about committee membership, but the ultimate sanction of nominating (or not) a member for re-election is reserved for the national party leadership (Scully, 2007). In all member states, the party leadership of the national parties have some control over the selection of the candidates for the EP elections by determining the list of candidates or approving the regionally selected candidates (Hix, 2002).

With the presence of two principals, MEPs clearly face a dilemma: if they want to be re-elected or promoted in national politics they need to act in line with the national party, but in order to be promoted within the EP and secure certain policy outcomes they need to follow the EPG discipline (Hix, 2005). The policy position an MEP takes will then be important in the context of their career ambitions. But how does this effect work for the level of *participation* in the legislative process? It can be expected that national parties prefer MEPs who stay closer to the national party line, but do they reward MEPs who are very active in the EP's by making their re-election more likely?

Most others who have studied career paths in the EP have not linked these career paths to the legislative participation of MEPs (e.g. Westlake, 1994; Scarrow, 1997; Verzichelli and Edinger, 2005; Meserve, Pemstein and Bernhard, 2009a and b; Beauvallet and Michon, 2010; Hobolt and Høyland, 2011; Whitaker, 2014). They have mainly provided descriptive analyses of the career paths that exist in the EP by for example showing the tenure in the EP by member state and committee. Some of them, for example Whitaker (2014), went further by also conducting quantitative

analysis on the factors that influence whether an MEP stays in the EP or not. Variables controlled for in Whitaker's analysis include, for example, the electoral system used in EP elections, whether an MEP's party formed part of the national government and whether an MEP was a member of a key EP committee in the previous term. He finds that being an MEP from one of the two largest groups (EPP and S&D), membership of the most important committees and holding an EP leadership position all increase the chance of returning to the EP after an election.

Hix, Hobolt and Høyland (2017) identify in their study, which focuses on how career trajectories are associated with different levels of legislative activity in the EP, electoral institutions and candidate selection rules as important factors that moderate the association between career ambitions and legislative activity. They show that MEPs who seek to move from the European to the national (state) level participate less in legislative activities than those looking to stay at the European political level. This effect of career ambitions on legislative participation is stronger in candidate-centred systems than in party-centred systems (Hix et. al. 2017).

To sum up, the main focus in the literature on the EP has been on identifying the different career paths that exist among MEPs. Several scholars, with Scarrow (1997) being a prominent example, have shown how politicians move around from the European to the national level and vis-versa. These politicians consider the EP to be a stepping-stone to national politics, a place to retire or a long-term option. A number of authors find that there is a growing category of MEPs who stay in the EP for longer and consider it to be their main political arena to operate in. National specificities and other exogenous factors do have an impact on the career trajectories that are available for MEPs. Some of these exogenous factors, such as the differences in the way political parties select their candidates, are much less

present in the US which makes it harder to make an explicit EU-US comparison on those factors.

From the US literature, we know that a relationship exists between the career paths of politicians and their behaviour in Congress. It is however relatively unknown how the career paths of MEPs relate to their behaviour in the EP. We only understand, to a limited extent, why MEPs behave in the way they do. Extensive research has been conducted on the voting behaviour of MEPs (and even there the focus has not been predominantly on the MEPs' career paths) but the literature is limited with respect to the MEPs' level of legislative *participation* in the form of tabling amendments, motions and participating in plenary votes.

Similar to Richard Hall's approach when studying the behaviour in the US Congress (Hall, 1996), this thesis will focus on the participation of MEPs in parliament instead of examining the voting behaviour, ideology or policy preferences of MEPs. When studying members of parliament, the focal point should not be limited to a politician's legislative objectives but should also include his or her willingness and ability to pay for achieving them. Participation is not the same as the motivation for being elected. It is about the question of why, and to what extent, parliamentarians become active and participate once they are elected to parliament. As Bauer, Pool and Dexter (1963) formulate, the member's principal dilemma is "*not how to vote but what to do with his time, how to allocate his resources and where to put his energy*" (quoted in Hall, 1996). Hall argues that participation might not always be rational. In some cases, free-riding could be a better alternative than to actively participate in the legislative process. Nevertheless, we see that parliamentarians spend considerable amounts of time on participating, albeit to varying degrees. Better understanding why some MEPs participate more

actively than others would increase our knowledge about the functioning of the EP. This is why the primary focus of my research is on seeking to understand why certain MEPs participate more actively than others in the EP's work by focusing on the different career paths and ambitions of MEPs as an explanatory factor.

1.5. Main hypotheses for the research

Building on the existing body of literature, a number of hypotheses are prepared which set out areas that are worth exploring in more detail. One of the objectives of this thesis is to increase our knowledge about the different career paths that exist in the EP. As others have shown, over time, in line with the increase of powers of the EP, the number of MEPs pursuing a long-term career in the EP has increased and it is likely that the data in this thesis will show a similar trend:

> *H1: Over time, the number of MEPs with a long-term career in the EP has increased*

The key focus of the analysis in this thesis, however, is on trying to understand how a politician's career path relates to his or her participation in the EP's legislative process. The underlying assumption used in this thesis is based on the rational choice idea that MEPs take decisions in line with their desire to pursue a certain career path, subject to certain limitations they are faced with. It is therefore expected that different types of MEPs, as defined by their differing career paths, participate differently in the EP's legislative activities. For the different career paths, the hypotheses to be tested in this thesis are therefore:

> *H2: Those MEPs looking to stay in the EP for longer participate more actively in the EP's work*

H3: Those MEPs looking to move to a career in national politics participate less actively in the EP's work

H4: Those MEPs looking to leave politics altogether participate less actively in the EP's work

With electoral punishment and reward being a weaker explanation for MEPs' participation, given the second-order nature of the EP elections (Reif and Schmitt, 1980; Schmitt, 2005; Hix and Marsh, 2007), it is important to consider whether an MEP's legislative activities are of influence on his or her re-election opportunities in the first place. In the absence of a strong electoral connection a link can still be made between the behaviour of MEPs and their likelihood of getting re-elected, namely through the role that the national party leadership plays. It can be argued that the national party rewards more active MEPs, who have proven their ability to obtain policy influence, by placing them higher on the electoral list. One of the hypotheses tested in this thesis is therefore:

H5: Of the MEPs who have a desire to pursue their career as MEP, those who participate more actively are more likely to be re-elected than their peers who participate less

Relatively little is known about what MEPs do after their time in the EP when they do not retire or move to national politics. This thesis also tries to address this gap by focusing on one category of former politicians who regularly attract public attention: those who become lobbyists, through the revolving door. In the context of the focus of this thesis on the relationship between career paths and legislative participation, the question arises whether legislative participation is also relevant

for those who pursue a future career outside of politics by becoming a lobbyist. In the US, where the revolving door of politicians has been studied in much greater detail, broadly two schools of thoughts have emerged (this is further elaborated on in chapter four). On the one hand is the idea that revolving door politicians are valuable because they have process and content knowledge. The length of service and membership of a powerful committee are found to be useful indicators here. On the other hand revolving door politicians are valuable because of their network of contacts. Having been in leadership positions and having a relatively closer ideological proximity to those in power are relevant factors here. Given the high turnover in the EP and the many different political ideologies present, I believe that having a network of contacts is less important than having process and content knowledge in the EP context. The following hypothesis will therefore be tested:

> *H6: Those MEPs who have spent a longer period of time in the EP and have been a member of a powerful decision-making committee are more likely to become a Brussels-based lobbyist after their time as an MEP*

Each of the individual papers will have its own, additional hypotheses which will be elaborated on in more detail in the respective papers.

1.6. Overview of EP careers' data

Before moving to a discussion about the three individual papers of this thesis, I will first introduce some of the data that is used in the thesis. In this section, I describe, in broad terms, what the data tells us about the average length of time an MEP spends in the EP of those who were in office recently (in the seventh EP from 2009 until 2014) and how many of them have a political background. I will then also

discuss and analyse some of the exogenous variables that influence the length of time an MEP is likely to spend in parliament considering all MEPs who have been elected since the first election of the EP in 1979. This provides a general introduction into the data that is used in this thesis.

First, I have selected a subset of the data by focusing on the MEPs in the last full parliamentary term (2009-2014). This is the same data as being used in chapter three of this thesis. Some of this data comes from Hix and Noury (2015). In terms of personal information, this data contained information about an MEP's age at the time of the 2014 elections and the member state he or she represented. Added to this was information about the EPG that each MEP belongs to which was derived from the EP website. Information on the length of membership of an MEP until the start of the seventh EP (2009-2014) was added by calculated the number of days from the start date until election day in 2009. Information on an MEP's start date came from the EP website. The data that was needed to identify the career paths as used in table three was found on MEPs' personal websites, the websites of national parliaments and in some cases from interviews given by MEPs in national and international media.

For this period, the MEPs in the dataset have spent at the end of the term on average 2,942 days in the EP, over eight years. However, this also includes the member states which joined the EU more recently in 2004 and 2007 and whose MEPs have not yet had the chance to build a long-term career in the EP. When looking at the length of EP membership per member state it becomes clear that there are significant variations between them (table one). On the one hand, there are some member states with a relatively low average length of EP membership. This group includes, understandably, MEPs from some of the member states which joined in

the last decade but also Greece and Finland. On the other hand, some member states have MEPs who stay significantly longer in the EP than the average. This includes, for example, Germany and the UK. Croatia was dropped from the analysis given that it only joined the EU in 2013. Also, when looking at the EPGs of the MEPs, significant differences can be found (table two).

Table 1: Average length of membership by member state

Member state	Average number of days in EP
Cyprus	1813
Bulgaria	1909
Malta	1917
Romania	1995
Greece	2091
Lithuania	2098
Slovenia	2126
Estonia	2228
Finland	2232
Latvia	2322
Hungary	2390
Poland	2400
Portugal	2423
Denmark	2427
Sweden	2563
Italy	2597
The Netherlands	2752
France	2769
Czech Republic	2784
Slovakia	2817
Austria	2897
Ireland	2911
Spain	3040
Belgium	3629
Germany	4076
United Kingdom	4461
Luxembourg	4525
Total average	2942

Table 2: Average length of membership by EPG

European political group	Average number of days in EP
GUE/NGL	2200
European Freedom and Direct Democracy	2343
Greens	2710
ALDE	2832
S&D	2887
European Conservatives and Reformists	3059
Non-attached	3088
EPP	3198
Total average	2942

It is worth not only looking at the average number of days in the EP but also at the career paths that MEPs follow. For this, I have looked at the same time period (2009-2014) and categorised the MEPs in the same five groups as I developed in the first paper of this thesis (see chapter two). For the first type, the young 'stepping-stone' politicians, a dummy variable was created, with all those MEPs under the age of 41 and no previous domestic political career being selected. The MEPs in this category also all had a career in national politics after the 2014 EP election. The second type of MEPs, the 'retirees', are all those MEPs over the age of 60 who had a career in domestic politics prior to their election as an MEP. The 'EP careerists', the third type, were selected by considering those with no previous domestic career who served at least two terms in the EP and who are now either in their third term or had been an MEP since 2004 and were re-elected in the 2014 EP elections (i.e. having started their third term in 2014). The fourth category of MEPs of 'former national politicians' who pursue a second political life by serving in the EP was selected as those between 40 and 55 years old with a previous career in domestic politics, or between 55 and 59 years old with national political experience and more than one term in the EP (in order to distinguish them from the EP retirees). The final category of 'one-off' MEPs was selected by taking those MEPs who did not have a political career at the national level or at EP level prior to 2004. MEPs in this category also did not become re-elected to the EP in 2014 and did not embark on a senior domestic political career after their time in the EP (i.e. they were active in politics for a maximum of two EP terms). With this categorisation, I captured 514 MEPs out of the 838 that were included in the dataset for the seventh EP. Table three shows the different types of MEPs by political group. It is found that at least 25 percent of the MEPs are committed to the EP for longer and particularly those

from the EPP are well represented in this group. The EP seems to be used by only a few as a stepping-stone into domestic politics. Also, using the EP as a place to retire from national politics seems to be a less common phenomenon than anecdotal evidence might suggest.

Table 3: Career paths by EPG

Types	GUE/NGL	Greens	S&D	ALDE	EPP	ECR	EFDD	NA	Total
Stepping stone	0	1 (2%)	5 (2%)	7 (7%)	11 (4%)	2 (6%)	2 (6%)	3 (7%)	31 (4%)
Retirees	1 (2%)	2 (3%)	16 (8%)	4 (4%)	11 (4%)	1 (3%)	1 (3%)	1 (2%)	37 (4%)
EP careerists	5 (11%)	18 (27%)	53 (26%)	22 (23%)	104 (33%)	4 (13%)	3 (9%)	11 (26%)	220 (26%)
Former national politician	9 (20%)	5 (8%)	27 (13%)	11 (11%)	39 (12%)	5 (16%)	2 (6%)	3 (7%)	101 (12%)
One-off	11 (24%)	18 (27%)	29 (14%)	12 (12%)	36 (12%)	8 (25%)	5 (15%)	6 (14%)	125 (15%)
Unknown	19 (42%)	23 (34%)	77 (37%)	41 (42%)	113 (36%)	12 (38%)	20 (60%)	19 (44%)	324 (39)
Total	45	67	207	97	314	32	33	43	838

1.6.1. Structure of opportunities: data and methodology

For this analysis, I look at all MEPs since the first direct election of the EP in 1979. The data is analysed using the Cox hazard model. As used in other work on the length of political careers (e.g. in the context of the US Congress or UK ministerial careers), the benefits of using such a duration model include the ability to predict the probability of a career ending at any value or combination of values of the explanatory variables (Fogarty et al., 2013). In addition, given some limitations to the Cox hazard model, the data is also analysed by using a multinomial logistic regression analysis.

As the literature in the US has shown, various factors impact the opportunities that politicians have to pursue their career objectives. As part of the introduction to this thesis, and moving on from the above general description of the seventh EP, I will conduct an analysis to describe the different potential factors that are correlated with an MEP's ability to stay in the EP or to leave and pursue a career elsewhere. How does the context in which an MEP operates influence an MEP's decision to stay in the EP or to take advantage of the exit opportunities provided? Or to stay in the terms of Schlesinger (1966), what are the factors impacting the 'structure of opportunities' to MEPs? This analysis does not yet link the career paths of MEPs to their participation in the legislative work. This will be done in the individual papers of this thesis.

As Borchert (2011) has argued, the key factors influencing career paths are the availability, accessibility and attractiveness of offices. Whether or not an MEP has the ambition to build a career in the EP, he or she is likely to be influenced by a number of factors specific to his or her own circumstances that constrain him in achieving his ambitions. In the case of the career paths of MEPs, the relevant factors that will be analysed in this section can be placed into three categories: 1) the factors attracting MEPs to pursue a career within the EP; 2) the exit opportunities provided to MEPs to pursue a career elsewhere; and, 3) external factors of influence, such as electoral rules. Within the structure of opportunities, MEPs can decide about how they wish to participate in the work of the EP.

In order to identify which factors are relevant for the structure of opportunities that MEPs are faced with, the data needs to show when MEPs joined and left the EP. This is combined with information about which political groups an MEP was a member of, which member state they represent and which positions

they have held within the EP. Knowing which member state an MEP represents also means that data about the national political situation can be added as well as information about the electoral rules for both national and European elections.

Part of the data used for this section comes from Hix and Noury (2015) and is also used for the individual papers in this thesis. The dataset Hix and Noury compiled contains information on all politicians who were MEPs from its first direct election in 1979 until the most recent election in 2014. It comprises information about 3205 different MEPs in total. In terms of personal information, the dataset shows the MEPs' age at the start of their mandate in the EP as age is an important factor to consider in the context of career paths. If a politician is elected to the EP at a later stage of his or her life and is already approaching retirement, he or she is less likely to pursue a long-term career in the EP. Younger, and even middle-aged MEPs have a much longer time period to develop a career in the EP.

The MEP's gender, as well as the population size of their home member state at the start of an MEP's mandate were also added to the analysis. This data was obtained from Eurostat. The dataset already contained information about both the EPG and the national political party that each MEP is a member of, including the total number of MEPs each of these groups contain. Larger groups tend to dominate and are able to provide their members with the opportunity to specialise, which could make it more attractive for members of these groups to stay in the EP and develop a career. This information was derived from the EP website.

The increase in power has made the EP a more interesting political institution for policy-seeking politicians. The starting year of EP membership was, therefore, included to measure the impact of increasing EP powers over time. Time was thereby taken as a measurement of the increase in powers given that the

increase in the EP's powers has been gradual. Whether an MEP had held a 'mega-seat' (Carroll et al., 2006) was also added to the analysis. A mega-seat here is defined as holding a senior position such as committee chair or EP (vice)president. Getting hold of such a mega-seat is likely to increase the chances of an MEP seeking to remain in the EP (Whitaker, 2014). A long career in the EP can, because of the experience built up, be helpful in securing a senior position in the parliament but at the same time, the desire to obtain a senior position is likely to be a motivating factor for building a long-term career in the EP. The EP website provided the information needed for this variable.

Besides the factors attracting MEPs to continue their career inside the EP, this analysis also considers the potential factors attracting MEPs to pursue a career outside the EP, for example in national politics. The information on national politics is mainly derived from the ParlGov database (Döring and Manow, 2015). The domestic political arena here is relevant as, for most member states, this will be a more prestigious level than being an MEP (Hix, 2008). There are a number of factors that influence whether a career at the national level is a viable alternative for MEPs. First of all, the number of entry opportunities, both by the number of seats available and the number of parties in a national parliament can be expected to influence the likelihood of an MEP moving from the European to the domestic political level. Parties control access to a career in politics, as they decide about nominations and re-nominations for elections (Borchert and Stolz, 2011b). The database contains the necessary information about the total number of seats in each national parliament as well as the effective number of political parties. Whether an MEP's national party is often in government, or tends to be in opposition is also a relevant factor. A party in government will give a politician more chances to gain a

powerful position and influence policy, which makes moving to national politics a more attractive alternative. The database, therefore, also shows which parties have been a member of a national government. On this basis, each MEP was given a coding to show whether his or her member state tends to have coalition governments or single-party governments.

Electoral systems not only affect which parties are elected but also who gets elected to represent these parties in the legislature. Therefore, the electoral formula and district magnitude are of impact on the types of representatives that are elected (Farrell and Scully, 2007; Norris and Franklin, 1997). In a proportional representation system, where politicians do not need to run on a personal ticket in a district but can be included on a party list by the party leadership, the electoral system will be more open for MEPs who are less well-known in their constituencies. For national elections, each member state has its own electoral rules with, for example, the UK using a majoritarian system and Germany using a combination of closed-list proportional representation and a majoritarian system. These electoral systems have an influence on how candidate-centred the elections are, which could improve the chances of an MEP to be elected nationally – if he or she has developed a more public profile during the EP membership. On the other hand, in party-centred elections, an MEP might have been able to prove his or her qualities to the party leadership, who then, in turn, include him or her as a candidate on the party list for the national elections.

It is relevant to note that dual mandates were abolished in 2004 so that MEPs were no longer able to be an MEP of both their national parliament and the EP at the same time. This means that they will have had to choose between a long-term career in the EP and a career in national politics. Abolishing dual mandates can be

expected to have reduced the number of MEPs pursuing a long-term career in the EP as some will have opted for the career path in national politics so this needs to be included in an analysis on the long-term trends.

Both the Cox hazard model and multinomial logistic regression model are used to analyse the data for this section. The Cox hazard model has been used in other studies on political career lengths, for example in the context of the US Congress (Fogarty et al., 2013) and UK ministerial careers (Berlinski et al., 2010)[1]. The Cox hazard model does, however, have its limitations. Box-Steffensmeier and Jones (1997) explain that problems can arise with the Cox model when more than a single observation (of the risk of failure) exists at the same time[2]. Standard continuous-time event history models such as the Cox model cannot easily handle the problem of the co-occurrence of events.

In their paper, Box-Steffensmeier and Jones describe the events of retirement and ambition for Congressmen as discrete-time events given that, although these events can occur anywhere in time, they tend to occur near the onset of an election cycle. For their case study of Congressmen's careers, Box-Steffensmeier and Jones use a competing risk model using multinomial logistic

[1] Given the relatively high turnover of MEPs in between EP elections, we would seem to be dealing with a continuous-time process event which would justify the use of the Cox model, being a standard continuous-time event history model. The benefits of using the Cox hazard model include the ability to predict the probability of a career ending at any value or combination of values of the explanatory variables (Fogarty et al., 2013). Traditional regression-based methods would be less suitable for studying politicians' career patterns because of the problem of right-censoring and time-varying variables that are included in the analysis. For a more detailed discussion on the use of event history models, I refer to Box-Steffensmeier and Jones (1997)

[2] Prentice and Farewell (1986) state that, as a rule of thumb, no more than 5% of the observations should fail at one time to avoid a bias in the results. In the case of MEPs' careers, the EP elections which take place every five years do however lead to a failure in more than 5% of the observations at one time. The data in this situation would, therefore, suggest that we are dealing with a discrete-time event, rather than a continuous-time event

regression analysis[3]. It was therefore decided to analyse the data in this introduction by using a multinomial logistic regression in addition to the Cox hazard model. The multinomial logistic regression analysis here leaves out the period after the 2009 elections but is, therefore, likely to have created a selection bias. Every MEP for each term is included in the analysis[4].

To sum up, time is a key factor when analysing the motivations of MEPs to stay in the EP, which explains the need to use the Cox hazard model. The Cox hazard model helps us to understand long-term trends in MEPs' career behaviour. The multinomial logistic regression model complements the Cox hazard model by analysing MEPs' careers as a discrete-time event. As the following section will show, the results of both models point in the same direction, albeit emphasising different elements.

1.6.2. MEPs with static ambition

The dependent variable in the analysis, the length of time an MEP has spent in the EP, was included in the dataset by calculating the number of days that an MEP had spent in the EP until the 2014 elections.

Table four shows the outcome of the Cox hazard model. The length of membership was used as the dependent variable in the analyses whereby the independent variables show the impact they have on *the risk of an MEP leaving the*

[3] This allows them to consider three possible outcomes: whether a Congressman will seek re-election, retire or aim for a higher position. This model cannot, however, simply be copied for the situation under analysis in this section. Box-Steffensmeier and Jones were able to select an observation period which ended in the past, something which is not done for the data under consideration in this section. In doing so, they were able to avoid severe right-censoring problems

[4] Other than the Cox hazard model, which only includes each MEP once, for the multinomial logistic regression model, MEPs can be included on multiple occasions, depending on how many terms they have served. This is necessary as this model analyses for every term whether an MEP has left, or has or has not been re-elected, whereas the Cox hazard model assesses the risk that an MEP will leave during his or her time in Parliament

EP. This means that variables which show a number greater than one increase the risk of an MEP leaving the EP at any point in time. Column two in table four includes the EPGs as control variables. Table six shows the findings in clear percentage points.

As could be expected, the older an MEP gets, the more likely he or she is to leave the EP. An increase in age by one year increases the likelihood of an MEP leaving by 1.8 percent. Male MEPs also turn out to have a higher chance of leaving, namely by 10.6 percent, all else being equal. At the same time, the larger the member state is, the lower the risk that an MEP will leave. An increase in population size of one million reduces the likelihood of an MEP leaving the EP by 1.7 percent. The size of the EPG and national party group in the EP has an influence on the risk of an MEP leaving, with MEPs from larger groups being less likely to leave. Having one MEP extra in the national party group reduces the likelihood of an MEP leaving by 0.5 percent. This confirms the idea that larger groups incentivise their members to stay possibly by dominating the work of the EP. Having been a committee chair or EP (vice)-President also significantly reduces the risk of an MEP leaving. This could confirm the idea that MEPs who are in more powerful positions and who are able to develop a significant career in the EP have more of an incentive to stay. However, it is more likely to be the case that in order to become a committee chair or EP (vice)-President, one needs to stay in the EP for longer. It is therefore worth investing time in a career in the EP, as it increases the likelihood of being able to obtain one of the 'mega-seats' in the parliament. Having influence over the policymaking process seems to be a relevant incentive for staying in the EP too. For each subsequent EP term, the likelihood of an MEP leaving the EP shrinks by 6.9

percent. This confirms the idea that the gradual increase in powers for the EP over time has made it more likely overall for MEPs to stay in the EP.

Table 4: Cox hazard model: variables' impact on chances of leaving the EP

	(1) Length of membership	(2) Length of membership
Age	1.018*** (0.00219)	1.018*** (0.00222)
Male	1.106** (0.0558)	1.117** (0.0569)
Population size	0.983*** (0.00299)	0.981*** (0.00305)
EPG size	0.999** (0.000273)	
National party MEPs	0.995** (0.00215)	0.996* (0.00231)
Committee chair	0.591*** (0.0517)	0.601*** (0.0527)
EP president	0.365*** (0.112)	0.370*** (0.113)
EP power increase over time	0.931*** (0.0115)	0.928*** (0.0120)
Number of MPs in national parliament	1.002*** (0.000413)	1.002*** (0.000423)
Number of political parties in national parliament	0.989 (0.0329)	0.978 (0.0329)
Mainly single party governments	0.861 (0.0860)	0.846* (0.0854)
Dual mandates	0.652*** (0.0240)	0.644*** (0.0241)
OLPR	1.178* (0.116)	1.163 (0.116)
CLPR	1.397** (0.196)	1.352** (0.191)
STV	0.684** (0.111)	0.577*** (0.0970)
SMP	0.678** (0.129)	0.648** (0.128)
Proportional representation national elections	0.965 (0.109)	0.983 (0.113)
Majoritarian representation national elections	1.009 (0.127)	0.985 (0.127)
EPGs included as control variables	No	Yes
Number of obs = 3205 No. of failures = 2454 Time at risk = 7614612 LR chi2(18) = 565.68 Log likelihood = -17295.624 Prob > chi2 = 0.0000		

Robust see form in parentheses
*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

As well as considering the incentives at a European level, the Cox hazard model analysis also considers certain factors that can attract MEPs to move to the national level. Here, it is shown that the more MP positions there are available in the national parliament, the more likely it is that an MEP will end their EP career. Every extra MP seat in a national parliament increases the likelihood of an MEP leaving the EP by 0.2 percent. This confirms the idea that MEPs who have more exit opportunities to move to the national level are more likely to leave the EP. On the other hand, the existence of mainly single-party governments has the opposite effect, reducing the likelihood of an MEP leaving the EP by as much as 15.4 percent but only when controlling for EPGs. The existence of mainly single-party governments could make moving to a career in national politics less attractive, as the politician risks ending up in opposition. The data does not include whether an MEP has in fact taken the opportunity to move to domestic politics but should be seen as an analysis of the structure of opportunities at national level.

Being allowed to have dual mandates (i.e. to be a member of both the national parliament and the EP) significantly reduces the risk of an MEP ending their career at European level (by as much as 34.8 percent), as MEPs do not have to choose between the two institutions.

The analysis also includes the effects of electoral rules, both for European and national elections. National electoral rules do not seem to have an effect on the risk of an MEP leaving the EP, but MEPs elected under the single transferable vote or single member plurality, the system that was used in the UK until 1999, are less likely to leave the EP, while closed-list and open-list proportional representation increases this likelihood.

The data was also analysed using a multinomial logistic regression model to complement the findings of the Cox hazard model. The dependent variable of this model is whether an MEP i) left the EP before the elections, ii) was not re-elected at the elections (either because he or she had decided to step down or because he or she lost against a competitor) and iii) the MEP was re-elected. Table five shows the outcome of the analyses. The data selected for this analysis includes all MEPs from 1979 up until the 2009 elections. The outcome of the 2009 elections is also included in the analysis. This cut-off point was selected to limit the impact of right-censoring. This selection might in itself, however, have created a selection bias. The table shows how much the log-hazard of ending an MEP's career increases or decreases.

Table 5: Multinomial logistic regression model: numbers are multinomial logit coefficients

	(1) Leaving EP before elections vs. re-elected	(2) Not re-elected vs. re-elected
Length of EP membership	-0.00122*** (4.66e-05)	-0.000757*** (2.98e-05)
Age	-0.0259*** (0.00596)	0.00326 (0.00452)
Male	0.0172 (0.138)	-0.0377 (0.0977)
Population size	-0.00601 (0.00829)	0.000424 (0.00599)
Number of MEPs in national party	0.00206 (0.00679)	0.00189 (0.00446)
Committee chair	0.623*** (0.216)	-0.268* (0.147)
EP president	1.502** (0.709)	0.719* (0.433)
EP power increase over time	-0.425*** (0.0388)	-0.251*** (0.0277)
Number of MPs in national parliament	0.000763 (0.00109)	0.00115 (0.000809)
Number of political parties in national parliament	0.142 (0.0926)	0.0984 (0.0650)
Mainly single party governments	0.327 (0.245)	0.390** (0.191)
MEP when dual mandates were allowed	-0.286** (0.124)	-0.0695 (0.0701)
Semi-OLPR	-0.444* (0.263)	0.176 (0.198)
CLPR	-0.0379 (0.261)	-0.113 (0.201)
STV	-0.0927 (0.444)	0.317 (0.314)
SMP	-0.567 (0.502)	0.240 (0.309)
Proportional representation national elections	0.0565 (0.175)	0.364*** (0.138)
EPGs included as control variables	Yes	Yes
Constant	4.775*** (0.755)	2.218*** (0.563)
Log likelihood = -2920.682 LR chi2(58) = 2025.792 Prob > chi2 = 0.0000 Pseudo R2 = 0.257 Number of obs = 4341		

Standard errors in parentheses
*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

Column one compares leaving the EP before the elections with being re-elected and column two shows not being re-elected vs. being re-elected. The variable 'age' in column one, for example, shows that a one-unit increase in 'age' is associated with a 0.0259 decrease in the relative log odds of leaving early vs. being re-elected. Interpreting the increases and decreases of log-hazards is not straightforward but a convenient way of interpreting logistic regression coefficients is through the use of odds ratios (for a discussion, see Box-Steffensmeier and Jones, 1997)[5]. Odds ratios greater than one imply that the probability of an event happening increases when the value of the variable increases by one unit. Odds ratios lower than one indicate a decrease in the probability of an event happening when the value of the variable increases by one unit.

Table five shows that the same variables were included in the multinomial logistic regression model as were included for the Cox hazard model. The model does, however, have its limitations as discussed before, and shows fewer variables having a significant impact. For those variables which do have a significant impact, the odds ratios are calculated and are displayed in table six.

As could be expected, the time that an MEP has spent in the EP has a negative impact on the probability of him or her leaving the EP early before the elections vs. being re-elected. The percentage shown in table six for this variable might seem small, but given that the length of EP membership is calculated in days, the effect is significant.

[5] The coefficient can be converted into odds ratios by using the following formula: $\%\Delta = (e^{\beta k \Delta} - 1) * 100$ (Box-Steffensmeier and Jones, 1997)

Table 6: (1) Cox hazard model interpretation, changes in probability of (2) leaving the EP before the elections or (3) not being re-elected vs. being re-elected for selected career variables (%Δ = ($e^{\beta k\Delta}$ − 1) * 100)

	Cox hazard model interpretation (column 1): change in hazard rate i.e. change in risk of leaving the EP at any point in time	The %Δ in the probability of (2) Leaving EP before elections vs. re-elected	The %Δ in the probability of (3) Not re-elected vs. re-elected
Length of EP membership	-	- 0.12%	- 0.08%
Age	+ 1.8%	- 2.56%	-
Male	+ 10.6%	-	-
Population size	- 1.7%	-	-
Number of MEPs in national party	- 0.5%	- 1.3%	-
Committee chair	- 40.9%	+ 86.5%	- 23.5%
EP president	- 63.5%	+ 349%	+ 105%
Increase in EP powers	- 6.9%	- 34.6%	- 22.2%
Number of MPs in national parliament	+ 0.2%	-	-
Mainly single party government	- 15.4% (column 2 only)	-	+ 47.7%
MEP when dual mandates were allowed	- 34.8%	- 24.9%	-
OLPR	+ 17.8%		
Semi-OLPR	-	- 35.9%	-
CLPR	+ 39.7%		
STV	- 31.6%	-	-
SMP	- 32.2%	-	-
Proportional representation national elections	-	-	+ 43.9%

Some results might seem contradicting each other but are merely the methodological effect from deploying different types of statistics. An example of this is the effect of 'age'. The Cox hazard model shows a positive result there suggesting that the older an MEP is, the more likely it is he or she will leave the EP (for example to retire). At the same time the multinomial logistic regression model shows a negative result meaning that that the younger an MEP is, the more likely it is that he or she will leave the EP before the next elections (rather than get re-elected). For example, an MEP who is ten years younger than a colleague is 25.6 percent more likely to leave the EP before the elections vs. being re-elected. This

does not contradict the Cox hazard model but complements it by showing that those MEPs who leave the EP early, are likely to be younger than their peers. This could for example be explained by the fact that younger MEPs are more likely to move to the national political arena when there are national elections halfway through the EP term.

Also the results on the impact of holder a committee chair or EP president position seem, at first sight, to contradict each other between the Cox hazard model and the multinomial logistic regression model. The results from the Cox hazard model show that being/having been a committee chair or EP president reduces the likelihood of leaving the EP. On the other hand, when these two variables have a positive value in the multinomial logistic regression model, it means that with the experience of having been a committee chair or EP president, it is more likely that an MEP will leave the EP instead of being re-elected. This seems contradictory but can be explained by the fact that for the Cox hazard model an MEP was assigned with having been committee chair or EP president when an MEP had had this position *at some point during their time in the EP*. It is however likely that an MEP will only get this position if he or she stays in the EP for a longer period of time. The Cox hazard model will therefore interpret this as if being a committee chair or EP president reduces the likelihood of an MEP leaving. However, it is more likely that those who 'survive' longer in the EP have more chance of being a committee chair or EP president.

The multinomial logistic regression model analyses whether an MEP has left for every term between 1979-2009. This means that if an MEP stayed in the EP for two terms, the model included two observations for this MEP. Each individual observation had information on whether an MEP had been a committee chair or EP

president during that particular term. The results show that if an MEP had been in such a senior position in that term, it was more likely that he would leave before the end of that term. This suggests that either once an MEP has made it to such a senior position and loses this role, subsequent work in the EP becomes less appealing and other opportunities outside the EP attract more, or that obtaining such a role makes an MEP visible and makes it more likely that an MEP is given opportunities outside the EP. At the same time, those who do decide to run for re-election have a higher chance of getting re-elected having been a committee chair.

Again, the increase in powers of the EP over the years makes it significantly less likely for an MEP to leave the EP. For each new term, the probability of leaving the EP before the elections vs. being re-elected decreases by nearly 35 percent.

In terms of the factors attracting MEPs to move to the national political arena, having mainly single party governments has a strong positive effect of nearly 48 percent on MEPs not being re-elected to the EP vs. being re-elected. This would require further analysis as it seems to be at odds with the findings of the Cox hazard model.

The electoral systems for the national and European elections show mixed results in terms of impact on MEPs' length of career. Using semi-open proportional representation lists in the EP elections reduces the probability of an MEP leaving the EP before the elections vs. being re-elected by 36 percent, whereas proportional representation in national elections increases the chances of an MEP not being re-elected vs. being re-elected by nearly 44 percent.

1.6.3. Structure of opportunities found in long-term data

The findings in this introduction support the first hypothesis of this thesis that over time, in line with the increase of powers of the EP, the number of EP careerists has increased. In line with Schlesinger's view it has been found here that politicians operate in a structure of opportunities which includes, for example, the positions which are available and the electoral rules that are set. These parameters have an impact on the opportunities for a politician to achieve his or her career objectives.

The Cox hazard model provides the opportunity to study the development of EP careers over a longer period of time. The multinomial logistic regression model is used as a robustness check to try to analyse the data in a different way given the discrete-event characteristics of the data. The focal points of both models are somewhat different, with the Cox hazard model analysing the risk of an MEP leaving the EP and the multinomial logistic regression model comparing the probabilities of an MEP leaving the EP early or not being re-elected vs. being re-elected and prolonging his or her EP career. The analysis provides an insight into the different variables that have an impact on an MEP's ability to pursue a career in the institution. Group size, both in terms of member state and political party, seems to be of significant influence on the length of EP membership. Larger groups tend to dominate the work in the EP and membership of a larger member state or party increases the likelihood of staying in the EP. Seniority would seem to be an important motivating factor for building a career in the EP, while at the same time having EP experience is often a precondition for obtaining a senior position. The finding that committee chairs and EP (vice)-Presidents are less likely to leave the EP is, therefore, difficult to interpret. The findings from the multinomial logistic regression model, however, suggest that EP experience is a precondition for

obtaining a senior position, given that MEPs who have held such a 'mega-seat' are more likely to leave the EP before the elections. The analysis also suggests that the increase in the EP's powers has reduced the likelihood of MEPs leaving. This would support the argument that the EP has become a more attractive institution in which to build a long-term career.

In terms of the opportunities for MEPs to leave the EP and move to the national political arena, the Cox hazard model finds that the more opportunities provided in the national parliament (in terms of total number of seats available), the more likely it is that an MEP will end his or her EP career. There would then be more entry opportunities for MEPs to move to national politics. The data does not conclude whether these MEPs have in fact moved to the domestic political arena.

When MEPs were allowed to also be a member of their national parliament, the likelihood of an MEP leaving the EP was significantly lower. This suggests that many MEPs are willing to give up their seat in the EP if they are able to get a seat in the national parliament, which would be in line with the idea of politicians perceiving the EP as being of 'second-order' importance.

The impact of electoral systems on the likelihood of an MEP pursuing a career in the EP is mixed and, in many cases, not statistically significant. Overall, the findings suggest that MEPs from larger member states and larger political groups are more likely to stay in the EP. The increase in powers of the EP has also reduced the likelihood of MEPs leaving the parliament. At the same time, when MEPs have more opportunities at the national political level, the likelihood of them leaving increases.

These findings show some interesting long-term trends. At the same time, however, the size of the group (either member state or political group) that an MEP

is a member of is unlikely to be a sufficiently substantiated explanatory factor in explaining why an MEP stays in the EP. Group and party size could be a proxy for an underlying explanatory variable which has not been captured in this analysis. This could be potential policymaking power. Also, the impact of the increase of power of the EP on MEPs staying in the EP suggests they might be interested in obtaining policy influence.

It can be expected that in order to obtain policy influence, an MEP needs to participate in the legislative process. Legislative participation should, therefore, be looked at to better understand the development of career paths. This is what I will explore further in this thesis.

1.7. Overview from the papers

The three papers in this thesis focus on different elements of the relationship between the career paths of MEPs and their behaviour in the EP. The first paper looks at the different types of MEPs that exist and argues that two new types of MEPs can be identified, in addition to the three that are generally used in the literature. A key contribution to the debate about the different career paths that exist among MEPs comes from Scarrow (1997). She categorised MEPs as falling in the young, 'stepping-stone' MEPs who are looking to move to national politics, the EP careerists of politicians who have a long-term commitment to the European institution and the retirees of domestic politicians who use their time in the EP to retire from politics altogether. The paper, however, argues that two further types of MEPs can be identified namely the former domestic politicians who pursue an active, second political career in the EP and the 'one-off' politician who only stays in the EP for a short period and has not had a political career before nor has one

after. These five types of MEPs capture the vast majority of MEPs under analysis in the paper.

The paper continues to show that these different types of MEPs participate differently in the EP. Analysing behaviour of the EU15 MEPs from the first half of the sixth EP (2004-2009), the paper finds that those with an interest in pursuing a long-term career in the EP are more actively involved in the institution's work and attend more plenary votes than their peers. This paper is different from other publications in this area in that it also takes into account the outcome of the 2009 EP elections and is thereby better able at identifying the actual career paths of the politicians.

The second paper goes a step further by not only looking at the achieved career outcomes but also the desired ones. It can be expected that MEPs who have the same career ambition will behave in a similar way, regardless of whether they are successful in achieving this ambition. This paper focuses specifically on one type of MEP: those with a static ambition, seeking to build a career inside the EP. The paper, first of all, looks at, based on survey data, whether the expressed ambitions of MEPs are in any way a predictor of their future career steps. It turns out that those MEPs who have an ambition to still be an MEP in ten years' time are significantly more likely to be successful in achieving that. This shows that MEPs do influence their own career paths and are not solely reliant on election outcomes and party leadership preferences. The paper then analyses the behaviour of MEPs in the seventh EP (2009-2014) not just by looking at those who were successful in becoming re-elected but also by looking at the total group of MEPs who stood for re-election in the first place, including those who failed to be re-elected. It can be argued both groups of candidates have a similar ambition and it would, therefore,

be interesting to consider whether, once an MEP has managed to be included on the candidate list, participation in the legislative work is found to have an impact on the likelihood of success in being re-elected. The paper finds that those who take on more rapporteurships during their time in the EP are more likely to become re-elected. This confirms the idea that those who have the ambition of staying in the EP are rewarded if they participate more actively in the institution's work. Those who do not seek a career at European political level are found to be significantly less actively involved in the EP's work.

For the third paper of this thesis, the focus is shifted towards a career path that some MEPs pursue but which has not attracted much academic attention to date: being a Brussels lobbyist. With the growing importance of the EP in the EU policymaking process, it is likely to become more important for lobbying firms to employ people with knowledge of the functioning of the EP. Former MEPs would, therefore, be very suitable. Studying the revolving door phenomenon has hardly ever been done in the EP context while it has been studied in significantly more detail in the US. Taking the lessons learned from the US literature, this paper looks at those MEPs who become a lobbyist after the 2014 EP election. It finds that although the revolving door phenomenon might be less common in relative terms, due to the higher turnover rate in the EP, in absolute terms the number of politicians becoming a lobbyist is not too dissimilar from the US. The paper considers whether new lobbyists used to behave in a different way from their peers when being MEP. It finds that neither participating actively in the legislative work nor being in one of the key positions in the EP helps an MEP to become a lobbyist. Having been a member of a powerful committee as well as having a longer period of experience in the EP are much more important predicting factors for finding who becomes a

lobbyist after having been an MEP, suggesting that in particular process and content knowledge are important for revolving door politicians. To avoid capturing the key characteristics of anyone who decides to stay in the 'Brussels bubble' after their time as MEP (rather than only those of who become a lobbyist), those moving to other Brussels-based jobs (e.g. in the European Commission) are analysed separately.

Career ambition is not just an exogenous factor that can help to explain the career path of an MEP. Ambition is also endogenous as it is subject to, for example, the opportunities provided to an MEP which in turn will have an impact on their ambition. Ambition is related to realistic expectations and has an influence on the goals that an MEP will set. It thereby also changes the career outcomes. Although the focus of this thesis is on understanding the relationship between the career paths of MEPs and their behaviour in parliament, there are limitations to this study. It is easy to draw quick conclusions about the impact that career paths have on legislative activity while there are other factors of influence as well which are not captured in this thesis. Aspects such as differences in personalities, habits and social backgrounds all come into play. These aspects can influence both the career decisions that MEPs take as well as the behaviour that they show in the EP. A legitimate question can, therefore, be raised whether the conclusions from the analysis are about the relationship between an MEP's career path and their behaviour in parliament or whether the analysis actually captures the influence of personal characteristics on legislative behaviour. Therefore, it has to be acknowledged that linking politicians' career paths with their behaviour only shows that a correlation exists but it does not necessarily prove causality between the two.

In an ideal situation, one would control for all the personal variables that come into play but as this is not a randomised experiment, this is not possible. Some control variables included in the analysis are related to an MEP's personality and social backgrounds, such as member state background, age and gender. However, these variables are imperfect and hence no conclusions can be made about causal effects.

This does however not mean that conducting these analyses is pointless. Even without being able to draw firm causal inferences, improving our understanding of the relationship between career paths and MEPs' behaviour is important. The contributions made to the literature as explained before are relevant. As Black (1972) also found, although the social background of politicians can have an impact on career choices, the more near-term background plays a powerful role in the political choices that politicians make as well. In fact, Davidson (1969) even argued that social background variables provide a scant explanation of legislative role-taking while career paths provide a much more insightful explanation about legislators' behaviour.

All in all, this thesis covers a broad range of issues in the field of the career paths of MEPs and their participation in the EP. They cover both pre- and post-EP careers, different activities and EP-terms as well as focus in more detail on the relationship between career paths and legislative participation for two types of MEPs, namely those with an ambition to stay in the EP and those who become a lobbyist after their time in parliament. The findings lead to the conclusion that career paths and ambitions are a relevant factor to take into consideration when studying the activities of MEPs as they need to make strategic decisions about how to allocate resources. Career paths will not be the only factor influencing these decisions but should not be ignored in future studies on the activities of MEPs.

The remainder of this thesis is structured as follows: chapters two, three and four present the three papers described earlier in this introduction. Chapter five summarises the key findings and contributions of this thesis, both from a theoretical and an empirical point of view. It also sets out the key regularities found in the three papers. Chapter five also discusses the importance of studying the interaction between career paths and behaviour and elaborates on the implications for the EP and the external validity of the findings. The thesis is concluded by making some recommendations for future research in this area.

1.8. Appendix

Table 4b: Cox hazard model with results for dummy variables

	(1) Length of membership	(2) Length of membership
Age	1.018***	1.018***
Male	1.081	1.090*
EPG size	0.999**	
National party MEPs	0.997	0.998
Committee chair	0.582***	0.593***
EP president	0.356***	0.360***
EP power increase over time	0.918***	0.908***
Dual mandates	0.674***	0.667***
Austria	2.063***	2.053***
Belgium	1.457***	1.478***
Bulgaria	2.222***	2.401***
Cyprus	2.221**	2.724***
Czech Republic	1.990***	2.337***
Denmark	1.430**	1.533***
Estonia	2.019*	2.151**
Finland	2.484***	2.641***
France	1.914***	1.886***
Greece	2.290***	2.468***
Hungary	2.411***	2.646***
Ireland	1.117	1.031
Italy	1.829***	1.954***
Latvia	2.297***	2.205***
Lithuania	2.748***	2.962***
Luxembourg	1.154	1.196
Malta	2.653***	2.749***
Netherlands	1.258*	1.273*
Poland	2.687***	2.822***
Portugal	2.439***	2.536***
Romania	2.951***	3.072***
Slovakia	1.895**	2.016***
Slovenia	2.444***	2.739***
Spain	1.738***	1.793***
Sweden	2.305***	2.464***
UK	0.845*	0.855

GUE	0.914
S&D	1.225***
Greens	1.477***
Rainbow Group	1.622***
ALDE	1.176**
Forza Europa	1.767***
European Democrats	1.011
UEN	1.641***
Technical Group of Independents	0.747
Right	1.056
EFD	1.280
Non inscrits	1.431***
Number of obs = 3205	
No. of failures = 2454	
Time at risk = 7614612	
LR chi2(45) = 716.26	
Log likelihood = -17220.334	
Prob > chi2 = 0.000	

Robust see form in parentheses *** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1.
The baseline for the EPG controls is the EPP and
the baseline for the member states controls is Germany

Table 5b: Multinomial logistic regression model with results for dummy variables

	(1) Left EP before elections vs. re-elected	(2) Not re-elected vs. re-elected
Length of EP membership	-0.00127***	-0.000751***
Age	-0.0276***	0.00153
Male	0.103	-0.0221
Number of MEPs in national party	-0.00549	0.00587
Committee chair	0.726***	-0.250*
EP president	1.497**	0.668
EP power increase over time	-0.350***	-0.220***
MEP when dual mandates were allowed	-0.0941	-0.115
Austria	0.740	-0.308
Belgium	0.455	0.131
Bulgaria	-0.0627	-1.093**
Cyprus	-14.45	4.33e-05
Czech Republic	-2.166***	-0.354
Denmark	0.0168	-0.166
Estonia	-1.323	-1.111
Finland	0.762	-0.00961
France	0.646**	0.295*
Greece	0.556	0.302
Hungary	-1.979***	-0.497
Ireland	-0.0472	0.103
Italy	0.334	0.363**
Latvia	-1.918	0.0573
Lithuania	-2.211*	0.219
Luxembourg	-0.112	0.125
Malta	-0.952	-0.560
Netherlands	-0.0547	0.151
Poland	-1.538***	-0.0130
Portugal	0.0939	0.00562
Romania	-0.0596	-1.667***
Slovakia	-14.64	-0.335
Slovenia	-1.809	-0.212
Spain	0.447	-0.136
Sweden	0.642	0.0166
UK	-0.0138	-0.00727

Table 5b continued:

GUE	-0.299	-0.0411
S&D	-0.0569	0.0704
Greens	-0.338	0.241
Rainbow Group	0.206	0.431
ALDE	0.187	0.0228
Forza Europa	-0.180	0.595
European Democrats	-0.934**	0.219
UEN	0.312	0.231
Technical Group of Independents	0.629	0.912*
Right	-0.256	0.353
EFD	0.155	0.173
Non-inscripts	-0.0990	0.124
Constant	5.220***	3.440***
Log likelihood = - 3190.7439		
LR chi2(92) = 2389.71		
Prob > chi2 = 0.0000		
Pseudi R2 = 0.2724		
Number of obs = 4341		

Standard errors in parentheses *** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1. The baseline for the EPG controls is the EPP and the baseline for the member states controls is Germany

Table 6b: (1) Cox hazard model interpretation, changes in probability of (2) leaving the EP before the elections or (3) not being re-elected vs. being re-elected for selected career variables ($\%\Delta = (e^{\beta k\Delta} - 1) * 100$), with results for dummy variables

	Cox hazard model interpretation (table 4b): change in hazard rate i.e. change in risk of leaving the EP at any point in time with member state controls	Cox hazard model interpretation (table 4b): change in hazard rate i.e. change in risk of leaving the EP at any point in time with member state and EPG controls	The %Δ in the probability of leaving EP before elections vs. re-elected	The %Δ in the probability of not re-elected vs. re-elected
Length of EP membership	-	-	- 0.12%	- 0.1%
Age	+ 1.8%	+ 1.8%	- 2.7%	-
Male	-	+ 9%	-	-
EPG size	-0.1%	-		
Number of MEPs in national party	-	-	-	-
Committee chair	- 41.8%	- 40.7%	+ 106.7%	- 22.2%
EP president	- 64.4%	- 64%	+ 347%	-
Increase in EP powers	- 8.2%	- 9.2%	- 29.6%	- 19.7%
MEP when dual mandates were allowed	- 32.6%	- 33.7%	-	-
Austria	+ 106.3%	+ 105.3%	-	-
Belgium	+ 45.7%	+ 47.8%	-	-
Bulgaria	+ 122.2%	+ 140.1%	-	- 66.5%
Cyprus	+ 122.1%	+ 172.4%	-	-
Czech Republic	+ 99%	+ 133.7%	- 88.6%	-
Denmark	+ 43%	+ 53.3%	-	-
Estonia	+ 101.9%	+ 115.1%	-	-
Finland	+ 148.4%	+ 164.1%	-	-
France	+ 91.4%	+ 88.6%	+ 91%	+ 34.3%
Greece	+ 129%	+ 146.8%	-	-
Hungary	+ 141.1%	+ 164.6%	- 86.2%	-
Ireland	-	-	-	-
Italy	+ 82.9%	+ 95.4%	-	+ 43.8%
Latvia	+ 129.7%	+ 120.5%	-	-

Table 6b continued:

Lithuania	+ 174.8%	+ 196.2%	- 89%	-
Luxembourg	-	-	-	-
Malta	+ 165.3%	+ 174.9%	-	-
Netherlands	+ 25.8%	+ 27.3%	-	-
Poland	+ 168.7%	+ 182.2%	- 78.5%	-
Portugal	+ 143.9%	+ 153.6%	-	-
Romania	+ 195.1%	+ 207.2%	-	- 81%
Slovakia	+ 89.5%	+ 101.6%	-	-
Slovenia	+ 144.4%	+ 173.9%	-	-
Spain	+ 73.8%	+ 79.3%	-	-
Sweden	+ 130.5%	+ 146.4%	-	-
UK	- 15.5%	-	-	-
GUE		-	-	-
S&D		+ 22.5%	-	-
Greens		+ 47.7%	-	-
Rainbow Group		+ 62.2%	-	-
ALDE		+ 17.6%	-	-
Forza Europa		+ 76.7%	-	-
European Democrats		-	- 60.7%	-
UEN		+ 64.1%	-	-
Technical Group of Independents		-	-	+ 149%
Right		-	-	-
EFD		-	-	-
Non inscrits		+ 43.1%	-	-

2

The impact of career paths on MEPs' activities

Abstract

The increasing powers of the European Parliament in recent decades have made it a more attractive institution for ambitious politicians who are keen to build their political career in the EU's multi-level system. A key contribution to the debate about the career paths of MEPs is made by Scarrow (1997). Her work, which identified three different career paths taken by MEPs, has been widely cited and used as a basis for other studies on this topic. Building on Scarrow's work, this paper describes two additional categories of MEPs – former national politicians and 'one-off' MEPs – and links MEPs' careers with their activities in parliament. It finds that over and above the factors that have previously been identified as influential on an MEP's behaviour, his or her career path and ambitions are relevant in explaining certain legislative behaviour across member states and party groups.

2.1. Introduction

Politicians are not only focused on reaching desired policy outcomes but they also consider how their legislative participation can enhance their individual career ambitions. In Ambitions and Politics, Schlesinger (1966) observed that politicians change their behaviour in accordance with their career ambitions. Politicians are not only interested in serving the needs of their current constituents but are also forward-looking in identifying the constituents that they would like to serve in the future. A multi-level governance system, such as the EU, provides an interesting laboratory for examining politicians' ambitions.

The new powers granted to the European Parliament (EP) from the Maastricht Treaty in the early 1990s placed MEPs on an equal footing with the Council in most policy areas, making the EP a more attractive institution for ambitious career politicians. MEPs can be at very different stages of their career when they enter the EP. This has also changed over time. At the beginning of the 1980s, many MEPs had political experience at the national level, something that was less the case in the 1990s (Beauvallet and Michon, 2010). A key contribution to the debate about the career paths of MEPs is made by Scarrow (1997). Her work, in which she focuses on how EP membership fits into the political career paths of MEPs, has been widely cited and used as a basis for other studies on this topic. Scarrow captures the different types of career paths in three categories: (1) the young 'stepping-stone' politicians aiming for a career in domestic politics; (2) the long-term 'EP careerists'; and (3) the short-term MEPs close to retirement or looking for a career outside politics.

Building on Scarrow's work, and that of those who have followed her, this paper considers whether Scarrow's approach of using a politician's career

background as an indicator for predicting future career ambitions is sufficient. It is likely that a politician's career background, combined with age, does not provide enough information to identify all the different career trajectories of MEPs. Adding observed behaviour to the analysis should improve our understanding of a politician's career ambitions. It is argued that linking past experience with observed behaviour and career ambitions identifies two other categories of MEPs in addition to the three already described by Scarrow and would improve our understanding of MEPs' different career ambitions. The first new category is of MEPs who have already had a political career at the national level but are not close to retirement. Because of the increase in powers of the EP over the past few decades, building a career in the EP has become an interesting alternative option for these politicians. The second new category is of 'one-off' MEPs who only stay in the EP for a short period of time. They have no political experience, nor do they pursue political experience after their time in the EP. This category covers a range of different profiles, for example, party loyalists who have been rewarded by their national party or non-political public figures. It may also include politicians who were expected to be promising candidates but turn out to be poor-quality politicians.

As Hall (1996) argues for the representatives in the US Congress, parliamentarians face two decisions on every issue that comes up: which position to take and how active to be. This paper will examine whether the career paths of MEPs can explain their level of legislative activity and whether using observed behaviour can provide a better indication of career ambition than considering past experience alone. For this paper, an original dataset is used which includes data of MEPs who were active in the first half of the sixth EP (2004-2007). The impact on the behaviour of the different types of MEPs is analysed in a number of OLS

regression models where certain types of activities were included as dependent variables. The empirical findings broadly confirm the existence of different types of MEPs, and their associated career trajectories in the multi-level EU context. Those MEPs interested in developing a career in the EP are generally more active, in particular in those areas which fit within their career paths. MEPs who are not aiming for – or are not able to secure – a long-term career in the EP focus their activities on other areas, some of which are probably outside the EP. This is in line with Schlesinger's finding of politicians who change their behaviour in accordance with their career ambitions.

The career paths of MEPs are relevant to their level of engagement and should not be ignored in future studies on their activities. The analysis in this paper shows that there are types of MEPs that can be identified across countries and across party groups and that this explains an MEP's behaviour in certain situations. Therefore, over and above these factors of influence that have already been identified to have an impact on the legislative activity of an MEP and the ambition they demonstrate, career paths are a further relevant factor that should be taken into account. This paper shows that combining past career activities with observed activity in parliament leads to better predictions about a politician's career ambitions than looking at someone's career background in combination with age alone.

The paper proceeds as follows. First, existing literature on political ambition theory and the career paths of MEPs is discussed, and why the categorisation developed by Scarrow should be expanded is explained. Second, the link is made with the activities of MEPs, and hypotheses are put forward which set out the possible expected differences in activities between the different types of MEPs.

After an explanation of the variables' operationalisation, the empirical results are presented and discussed.

2.2. Different types of MEPs and their levels of activity

In contemporary politics, where becoming a politician is considered to be a profession in itself, it is important to understand the career ambitions of politicians. Career politicians not only focus on policies that aim to benefit society; they also consider how their legislative participation can enhance their individual ambitions. It can be expected that politicians adjust their behaviour to increase their chances of being promoted to their preferred political position. Some politicians will look to move to a higher political office whereas others wish to pursue a career in the legislature they are currently in, or leave politics altogether. These career ambitions are expected to impact the choices politicians make in their current position. Schlesinger (1966), in one of the first comprehensive attempts to study political career ambitions, identified that political ambitions can manifest themselves in three different forms: discrete, static and progressive. Discretely ambitious politicians only seek to be in office for a limited period of time, whereas politicians with static ambitions aim to stay in office for as long as possible. The third category of progressive politicians describes those who seek to obtain a higher political office.

Careers influence the way politicians behave and participate; a key incentive here is the desire to become re-elected. Politicians aiming to be re-elected, or elected to a different office, can be expected to direct their activities towards achieving that goal. Hibbing (1986) showed for example that members of the House of Representatives alter their voting behaviour in line with the constituency that they hope to serve in the future. Russo (2011) identified that re-election incentives

can have a significant influence on the behaviour of MPs in the Italian Parliament. He found that seeking re-election, either as a constituency MP or as a local politician, incentivises parliamentarians to engage in constituency service. Concerns of re-election have an impact on politicians' activities, as is also shown by Bernecker (2014) in his analysis of activities of MPs in the German Bundestag, where he found that MPs from opposition parties competing in marginal seats are significantly more active in parliament than colleagues who are more secure of keeping control of their seat. In the UK context, Allen (2012) proved that the political experience obtained by a politician prior to becoming an MP can influence his behaviour once elected and impact his future career trajectory. This shows that re-election, or election to a different office, affects the behaviour of politicians in the institution in which they are active, which explains the importance of linking the different types of politicians to their activities in parliament.

Schlesinger's political ambition theory has been widely applied in the US (see e.g. Black, 1972; Rohde, 1979; Hibbing, 1986), but less so in the EU context, while its multi-level governance system provides an interesting opportunity to consider political career ambitions (Borchert and Stolz, 2011b). In the EU, national political office is still considered to be the highest political office and elections to the EP are therefore still seen as 'second-order' (Hix and Marsh, 2011). However, for professional politicians, the creation and the development of the EP has provided new career opportunities and various ways of moving between territorial levels have become possible (Borchert and Stolz, 2011b). It can be assumed that in this multi-level setup, politicians optimise their behaviour in pursuit of their career goals.

Scarrow (1997) studied the political experience and career paths of MEPs from the four countries with the largest delegations in the EP (France, Germany, Italy and the UK). She considered MEPs' previous elective office experience, both at the national and subnational level, and identified three different categories. First are a group of MEPs who use their EP membership as a stepping-stone towards election to national political office. Second are a group of MEPs who are committed to their European role for longer, which she calls the 'European careerists'. Third are a group of MEPs who stay in the EP for only a short space of time following retirement from national elected office, or who use their brief EP membership as a stepping-stone towards a position in non-elective public office or in the private sector. The direct election of the EP and its increase in powers has made this institution an interesting career opportunity for politicians. It has been argued that, for a growing number of actors, the EP provides for a route to political professionalisation and development (Scarrow, 1997; Stolz, 2001). Evidence suggests that it is indeed the case that more and more MEPs build a career in the EP (Whitaker, 2014) and develop as an elite with a European political career (Verzichelli and Edinger, 2005).

Scarrow has not been the only contributor to the academic literature on MEPs' career paths. Apart from more descriptive information about the background of MEPs which is available in some textbooks (e.g. Corbett et al., 2011), a limited group of scholars has focused in more detail on EP candidates' experience in national or regional politics, or MEPs' post-EP careers (e.g. Beauvallet and Michon, 2010; Hobolt and Høyland, 2011; Meserve et al., 2009a and b; Gherghina and Chiru, 2010; Hix et al., 2012). The overall number of studies on the career paths and ambitions of MEPs covering pre- and post-EP positions is, however, small, in

particular in comparison with the number of studies available on US Congressmen's career paths. For those studies which are available, Scarrow's categorisation is often still, at the very least, a point of reference. An example of the application of Scarrow's categorisation is that by Poguntke et al. (2007), who use Scarrow's typology to describe the development of a distinctive EP career path and the impact that such a path might have on national parties' policy positioning. In Hix et al. (2003) too – which takes stock of 50 years of research on the EP – Scarrow is the main author mentioned in the context of MEPs' career paths. Given that Scarrow's work dates back 20 years, it is important to assess the extent to which her work is still applicable or needs to be updated. It can be questioned whether a politician's career background, combined with age, is a sufficient indicator of future career ambition and provides enough information to identify all the different career trajectories of MEPs. Analysing career background and its effect on observed behaviour could provide better explanations and predictions about a politician's career ambitions. This paper aims to connect the career paths of MEPs with observed behaviour in order to reach more credible conclusions about the different career ambitions that politicians demonstrate.

In this paper, it is argued that the expansion of the EP's powers has attracted a new type of politician. These are politicians who have already had a career at the national level, either as an MP or a member of the government, whose political life at the national level has come to an end. For these politicians, a career in the EP has now become an interesting alternative. It could be argued that these MEPs simply become EP careerists, as already described by Scarrow. However, there are a few reasons why these two categories are distinct from each other. An MEP with a previous domestic political career can be expected to have closer connections with

the national party and have a greater network of politicians who are still active in domestic politics. Given the importance of inter-institutional connections, for example with the Council (Høyland, 2006), an MEP with a domestic political background might be better positioned to take on certain rapporteurships which could enhance his ability to build a career in the EP compared with an EP careerist. MEPs with a domestic political background are more likely to enter at a higher level in the EP, with a better chance of obtaining high-profile rapporteurships or senior positions. National experience means that a politician has already proven his qualities. This is likely to give these politicians an advantage over EP careerists.

It is also thought that the category of retiring politicians and those who are MEPs for only a short period of time, as described in Scarrow's analysis, in fact, encompasses two different types of MEPs who behave differently and have different career ambitions. This category should, therefore, be split into two: one for EP retirees and another for MEPs who are elected for a short period of time and who are not career politicians – a category which could be referred to as 'one-off' MEPs. This type of MEP does not typically have a domestic political career either before or after his time in the EP, and typically stays in the EP for two terms at most. It is important to separate this new category of 'one-off' MEPs from the retiring MEPs, as these two groups have very different interests in participating in the EP's work. The former group includes party loyalists who have been rewarded by their party with one or two terms in the EP for service to the party, but who do not pursue a political career there. It also includes MEPs who are public figures outside of politics and who are able to appeal to certain parts of the electorate. Finally, this category also includes MEPs who turn out to be poor-quality politicians and who are deemed unfit for a political career at either the European or domestic

political level. For this last group of 'one-off' MEPs, their ambition might never be truly revealed, as they are considered to be poor-quality politicians. It must be admitted that this category is difficult to operationalise and may consist of further subcategories. This category is heterogeneous, which makes it difficult to develop a theoretical expectation. The results of any analysis of this category will, therefore, need to be interpreted with caution, as the theoretical expectations for this group can be multiple. However, the fact that the 'one-off' MEPs have very different backgrounds, as well as very different career ambitions from the retiring MEPs, has an impact on the activities they are expected to demonstrate and justifies their existence as a distinct category.

This paper will test whether the different types of MEPs show different levels of activity in the EP. The activities and participation of MEPs can be measured in many different ways. In his study of the US Congress, Hall (1996) identified two modes of legislative participation of Congressmen: formal and informal. Much of MEPs' work takes place in formal committees and the plenary, while informal work often takes place behind the scenes without any official note-taking. Formal participation can, however, often be seen as a good indicator of who has participated behind the scenes (Hall, 1996). An MEP who takes up a rapporteurship can be expected to spend considerable time not only on drafting a report but also on talking to EP colleagues, other EU institutions and lobbyists. The formal participation of a rapporteur is thereby an indication of considerable informal participation as well.

2.3. Hypotheses

As discussed, one could expect that different types of MEPs would display different levels of activity, as they are at different stages of their career, are of different ages and have different work experience and career goals. For the first type, the young and inexperienced MEPs, it could be expected that they would try to use their time in the EP as a training period for a career in domestic politics and to build up a profile for the national party leadership. They could, therefore, be expected to be less actively involved in the detailed legislative work of the EP, but rather to spend a considerable amount of time with the national party and their constituency. This lower level of activity by young and inexperienced politicians was also found by Bailer and Ohmura (2013) in their analysis of the German Bundestag, where they showed that young politicians had lower levels of activity at the beginning of their political career than the average Member of the Bundestag:

H1: Young, stepping-stone MEPs participate less actively in the EP's legislative work

For the second type, the MEPs who are close to retirement, it could be expected that, although they have domestic political experience, they are in the process of winding down their political life, and this should be noticeable in their activities. It could be expected that these MEPs have little or no interest in engaging actively in the day-to-day work of the parliament in terms of tabling motions, asking questions or writing reports. The effect was found elsewhere as well, for example in the German Bundestag (Bailer and Ohmura, 2013):

H2: Retiring MEPs participate less actively in the EP's legislative work

The EP careerists, the third type of MEP, are on the other hand focused on a long-term career in the EP and could be expected to be particularly keen to develop good relationships with the EP and European party group (EPG) leadership. They would, therefore, be expected to participate actively in the parliament's work. The idea that politicians who are members of a legislature for longer are more actively involved in the institution's work is also found at national-level legislatures, for example in Poland, where experienced MPs are more deeply involved in the legislative process than newcomers (Shabad and Slomczynski, 2002):

H3: EP careerists participate more actively in the EP's legislative work

For the fourth type of MEP, the new category of politicians with national experience who are looking to build a career in the EP, it could be expected that they would show levels of active engagement similar to those of the EP careerists. However, they are likely to enter at a higher level, given their national experience, and are more easily able to build up a senior profile in the EP relatively quickly than are the EP careerists. This should help them in obtaining, for example, relevant rapporteurship positions, while not necessarily displaying the same level of effort in being involved in the day-to-day work of the EP (e.g. attending plenary voting sessions) as EP careerists do. This fourth type of MEP is more likely to acquire certain privileges early on.

H4: Former national politicians participate more actively in the EP's legislative work, particularly through obtaining senior roles in the parliament

The fifth type of MEP, those who only stay in the EP for a relatively short period and who are not career politicians, could be expected to have limited interest in or capability for impressing the political leadership of either their national party or EPG. They would therefore not show significant levels of activity or involvement in the parliament's work.

This group, for example, includes those who were thought to be 'good quality' politicians, but who turn out to be of poor quality. The national party leadership has given them the opportunity to start their political career in the EP arena, possibly with the prospect of moving to a different political role later on. During the course of their (short) time in the EP it however turns out that they are not suitable for the political profession and it is decided to not let them run for re-election. It is unlikely that the EPG leadership will give them responsibilities through, for example, rapporteurship positions on key files. They will also not be able to move to committee chair positions. These poor-quality MEPs might however still show activity levels similar to national or EP careerists in areas over which they have complete control and for which they do not need support from their political leadership, such as attending plenary sessions.

Another example of the one-off MEP category are those MEPs who have a small set of policy objectives that they want to achieve as an MEP. They might have been public activists outside of politics. They are likely to be quite active in the EP trying to achieve their policy goal. They are however not interested in pursuing a long-term political career and leave politics again after achieving their policy goals (or after realising they cannot be achieved).

Also, this group of one-off MEPs can consist of MEPs who were already public figures before being elected to the EP. The national party has included them

on the ballot paper to attract more votes from the electorate. These public figures might have a policy objective that they want to achieve in the EP but this is not necessarily the case and they are unlikely to be interested in pursuing a long-term career in the EP or reaching senior positions in the EP.

Finally, the group of one-off MEPs also includes former party officials who have had a non-elective office (e.g. party chairmanship). These officials who have contributed to the development of the national party can be rewarded for this by the national party by including them on the ballot paper. Again, these former party officials do not pursue a long-term career in the EP and do not necessarily have a particular policy objective they wish to achieve. They will therefore not be particularly active when elected to the EP.

As becomes clear, this group is heterogeneous and consists of a number of subcategories, which makes the development of theoretical expectations difficult. It is therefore important that this category is set up as a separate group, distinct from the other categories of MEPs. Although desirable, breaking up this category further into subcategories would be very complicated and an analysis of the MEPs' characteristics at such individual level would go beyond the scope of this paper.

> *H5: One-off MEPs participate less actively in the EP's legislative work in areas where they are dependent upon the political leadership in the parliament*

MEPs' activity levels are, however, unlikely to be explained by their career trajectory alone, and other factors should therefore also be taken into account by including them as control variables in the analyses; these are mentioned in the operationalisation section of this paper. Finally, the committee to which an MEP

belongs could also be expected to have an impact on the level of that MEP's legislative activity. For instance, members of a more powerful committee which can have a significant impact on policy outcomes could be expected to be more active than those working on committees whose work has hardly any influence on legislation.

2.4. Operationalisation

The assertions set out above are tested in this paper by means of a new dataset covering those MEPs who served the full period of the first half of the sixth EP from July 2004 to January 2007, which compiles information on the member states that MEPs represent and on the characteristics and career paths of the individual MEPs. The sixth EP was selected as it is one of the most recent parliaments on which sufficient data about post-EP careers could be collected at the start of this study. The EU15, rather than the EU25, was selected, as the MEPs from the ten accession states in 2004 had not been able to develop certain career paths and would, therefore, distort the analysis. The population size of the member state an MEP represents is included in the dataset in millions of inhabitants in 2004; this information was obtained from Eurostat. The first half of the sixth EP was selected (rather than the full sixth EP) as a number of MEPs normally move to a different committee halfway through an EP term. As this could lead to a drop in perceived activity (e.g. these MEPs joining a new committee are not likely to table motions straight away), it was decided to focus on the first half of the sixth EP to avoid a distortion of the data on this point. Data on committee membership was obtained from the EP website; the classification of EP committees as more or less powerful was devised by Yordanova (2009). Information about gender, age and national

party of the MEPs, as well as their number of days in parliament, was obtained from online sources such as the EP and MEPs' personal and national party websites.

The dataset also includes information on how many MEPs are from the same national party and whether the national party is represented in the Council. This information came from the ParlGov database (Döring and Manow, 2015). Bigger groups in the EP could dominate the work as they are better resourced and better able to spread the workload among their members. Therefore, the dataset includes information about the size of the national party and EPG of an MEP. Data on whether the national party is represented in the Council is included as well, as Høyland (2006) found that this could have an impact on an MEP's activity level in the form of rapporteurships obtained. The analysis does not include further data on political parties, such as their ideological positioning, although by including the EPGs as control variables these effects are indirectly captured in the analyses. The MEP-specific variables focus in particular on parliamentarians' professional backgrounds. Information on MEPs' career paths was sourced from the EP website, MEPs' personal websites and, in some cases, interviews given by MEPs in national and international media. This includes information about the careers of MEPs before the 2004 elections and after the 2009 elections. Career paths were coded by indicating whether an MEP had had a national political career as MP, senator, minister or Prime Minister. Whether MEPs had had careers outside of politics, for example as doctors, engineers or education professionals, was also recorded. The data used in this paper's analyses does not cover whether an MEP has been a local or regional politician, even though politicians who were active at these levels might have developed experience similar to those active at the national political level. Based on Schlesinger's assumptions about progressive career ambitions and the fact

that the national political office is still considered to be the highest political office, it is assumed that the regional political level is not the main level competing with the European one. It might, however, be the case that career patterns at the European level are similar to those at a regional level. Further research should be conducted to establish whether this is the case. The five types of MEPs described above were constructed using career background information. For the first type, the young 'stepping-stone' politicians, a dummy variable was created, with all those MEPs under the age of 41 and no previous domestic political career being selected. They also all had a career in national politics after the 2009 EP election. The second type of MEPs, the 'retirees', are all those MEPs over the age of 60 who had a career in domestic politics prior to their election as an MEP. The EP careerists, the third type, were selected by considering those with no previous domestic career who served at least two terms in the EP and who are now either in their third term or had been an MEP since 1999 and were re-elected in the 2009 EP elections (i.e. having started their third term in 2009). The new, fourth, category of MEPs of former national politicians was selected as those between 40 and 55 years old with a previous career in domestic politics, or between 55 and 59 years old with national political experience and more than one term in the EP (in order to distinguish them from the EP retirees). The other, newly identified, category of 'one-off' MEPs was selected by taking those MEPs who did not have a political career at the national level or at the EP level prior to 1999. MEPs in this category also did not become re-elected to the EP in 2009 and did not embark on a senior domestic political career after their time in the EP (i.e. they were active in politics for a maximum of two EP terms). Theoretically there could have been an overlap between the young MEPs and the EP careerist. This would only be the case for MEPs who had been elected to the EP

in the 1994 election and had a national career after the 2009 election while still being under the age of 41. This means that this MEP would have been elected in 1994 at the age of maximum 25. The data did however not contain such overlapping cases. The remaining group, that of MEPs whose career path could not yet be identified, was omitted from the empirical analysis in order to avoid distortion of the data. This leaves 433 out of the 539 MEPs from the dataset included in the analysis.

MEPs' levels of activity can be measured in a number of different ways; the data for this was provided by Votewatch.eu. Attendance rates are based on attending roll-call votes in plenary. The simple use of roll-call votes for studying the behaviour of MEPs has previously been criticised (see Carrubba et al., 2006). Nevertheless, it can be expected to provide a solid indication of how often MEPs attend the plenary, as roll-call votes are used in around one-third of all votes (Hix et al., 2007). Two other measures of activity which are used in this paper are the number of reports amended and the number of motions tabled. These three measures of activity are included in the analyses as continuous dependent variables.

These measures of activity were selected as they provide an indication of the overall level of activity in the parliament. They are similar to the operationalisation of 'activity' as used elsewhere (e.g. Bailer and Ohmura, 2013). Nevertheless, it is recognised that these measures are not exhaustive, given the wide range of activities in which MEPs can be involved (Corbett et al., 2011). However, as attendance at plenaries and motions indicates activities in the plenary and the number of reports amended indicate how active an MEP is in his committee, the three measures selected should provide a realistic indication of an MEP's overall level of participation in the EP's work. Attendance in plenary has also been found

to be a predictor of the allocation of rapporteurships in committees (Yoshinaka et al., 2010) so these three types of activity should provide a reasonable indication of the dependent variable 'activity' overall that is used in this paper.

2.5. Empirical analysis

In this section, we consider the empirical findings of the analyses conducted. Table seven shows the impact of the different types of MEPs on their attendance rates in plenary roll-call votes. Column one in the table shows a basic model of the impact of some variables, such as gender and age, on the attendance of MEPs. Here, it seems that both the population size of the Member State that an MEP represents and the size of the EPG he or she belongs to should have an effect on attendance rates. The explanatory power of this model is, however, limited. The question therefore arises how much this basic model can be improved by adding more information about the different types of MEPs. These effects are shown in column two, where the retiring MEP is left out as the baseline variable. It was decided to use the group of retiring MEPs as the baseline variable as it is generally expected that these MEPs will be the least active. Table seven shows that adding the different types of MEPs as well as the other control variables to the basic model significantly improves the explanatory power of the model. In this analysis, it is shown that EP careerists, former national politicians and one-off MEPs attend significantly more plenary votes than their colleagues. In particular, EP careerists attend more votes, with attendance rates nearly ten percent higher, which equals to about one week per year in Strasbourg. Young MEPs do not attend significantly more votes than retiring MEPs from the baseline category and seem to be less active in this respect than colleagues from the above-mentioned categories.

Table 7. Attendance rates[6]

	(1) Attendance	(2) Attendance
Young MEP		0.908
		(2.448)
EP careerist		9.458***
		(1.654)
Former national politician		6.537***
		(1.745)
One-off MEP		7.504***
		(1.692)
Male	0.500	1.713
	(1.220)	(1.134)
Age	-0.114*	
	(0.0593)	
EPG size	0.0307***	
	(0.00847)	
Member state size	-0.0433**	
	(0.0204)	
Memb. powerful cmte		1.209
		(1.083)
Constant	90.45***	76.93***
	(3.422)	(2.970)
EPG controls included	No	Yes
Member states controls included	No	Yes
Observations	433	433
R-squared	0.044	0.283

Note: Standard errors in parentheses. *** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.10.
The baseline for the four different types of MEPs is the retiring MEP.

Table eight shows the same set-up as for the analysis testing the attendance rate. In this table, the number of reports amended in the committee is used as the dependent variable and analysed in order to assess MEPs' committee activity, which constitutes an important part of parliamentary work. The basic model in column one shows that gender, age and population size have a significant impact

[6] Other variables were controlled for. These include models where data on the member state, EPG and national party size was included and whether the national party was represented in government and thereby in the Council (see Appendix)

on the number of reports amended. On average, men amended nearly five fewer reports over the period 2004-2007 than women. MEPs from bigger member states are also less likely to amend reports. Including the different types of MEPs and other control variables in the analyses again improves the explanatory power of the basic model. It finds that MEPs who do not have a long-term career in the EP are more likely to submit amendments to reports than MEPs who do pursue a career in the EP, such as the EP careerists and the former national politicians. Young MEPs and one-off MEPs on average submit amendments to around three to four more reports than their peers. This could be explained by the fact that the MEPs pursuing a career in the EP are possibly more often the rapporteurs themselves. They would therefore logically be less likely to submit amendments to reports. With regard to the other variables included in the analysis, it is interesting to note that an MEP who is a member of a powerful committee will submit amendments to a significantly higher number of reports. An MEP who is a member of a powerful committee amends at least two reports more than colleagues who are members of less powerful committees. This could be explained by the fact that for MEPs on a more powerful committee, amending a report has an actual impact on policy outcomes. For this type of activity, it seems therefore that it is not only the type of MEP that can go some way to explaining the variance, but also the influence that a committee has on policy decisions.

Table 8. Number of reports amended[7]

	(1) Reports amended	(2) Reports amended
Young MEP		3.885** (1.929)
EP careerist		2.079 (1.303)
Former nat'l politician		0.866 (1.375)
One-off MEP		3.096** (1.333)
Male	-4.575*** (0.913)	-3.856*** (0.894)
Age	-0.0854* (0.0444)	
Member state size	-0.0332** (0.0152)	
EPG size	0.00894 (0.00634)	
Mem. powerful cmte		2.454*** (0.853)
Constant	17.71*** (2.562)	9.869*** (2.340)
EPG controls included	No	Yes
Member states controls included	No	Yes
Observations	433	433
R-squared	0.086	0.242

Note: Standard errors in parentheses. *** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.10.
The baseline for the four different types of MEPs is the "retiring MEP".

The third type of activity analysed here is the number of motions tabled by an MEP. Again, the basic model, which only finds EPG size to be of significant impact on the number of motions tabled, is significantly improved by adding the MEP types and other control variables. It finds that EP careerists are much more active in this type of activity than their peers, with around seven motions more

[7] Other variables were controlled for. These include models where data on the member state, EPG and national party size was included and whether the national party was represented in government and thereby in the Council (see Appendix)

tabled in the period analysed. The young MEPs, former national politicians and one-off MEPs do not show a significantly high number of motions tabled in parliament. The dominance of EP careerists in this type of activity could be explained by the fact that this group try to make themselves more visible among the party and parliament leadership in order to promote the development of their career in the EP. Young, retiring and one-off MEPs have much less interest in doing so. Former national politicians could also be expected to show similar levels of activity as EP careerists but, as discussed above, they are likely to face less pressure to be visible as they have already proved their qualities as national politicians. Another interesting and significant effect found here is the number of motions tabled by members of a powerful committee. MEPs who are members of a powerful committee table significantly fewer motions than their colleagues; around eleven fewer in the period 2004-2007. This could be explained by the fact that these MEPs are able to achieve their policy aims by influencing the relevant legislation directly through rapporteurships or by tabling amendments (as is shown in table eight), whereas MEPs from less powerful committees need to table motions to be heard (table nine).

Table 9. Motions tabled[8]

	(1) Motions	(2) Motions
Young MEP		-0.279
		(4.423)
EP careerist		7.083**
		(2.988)
Former nat'l politician		2.161
		(3.152)
One-off MEP		-1.683
		(3.057)
Male	-0.830	-1.449
	(2.154)	(2.049)
Age	-0.0441	
	(0.105)	
EPG size	-0.0633***	
	(0.0150)	
Member state size	0.0483	
	(0.0360)	
Mem. powerful cmte		-11.47***
		(1.956)
Constant	18.92***	14.06***
	(6.042)	(5.365)
EPG controls included	No	Yes
Member states controls included	No	Yes
Observations	433	433
R-squared	0.044	0.250

Note: Standard errors in parentheses. *** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.10.
The baseline for the four different types of MEPs is the "retiring MEP".

2.6. Discussion

The empirical findings broadly confirm the expectations about different MEPs' career ambitions and activities. Young and inexperienced MEPs who, after a short period of time in the EP, pursue a career in domestic politics were not expected to be interested in getting overly involved in the work of the EP. The relatively lower

[8] Other variables were controlled for. These include models where data on the member state, EPG and national party size was included and whether the national party was represented in government and thereby in the Council (see Appendix)

attendance rate, as well as the limited number of motions tabled in parliament, confirm these expectations. The only type of activity they seem to be more active than many of their peers is submitting amendments to reports. This could be explained by the fact that these stepping-stone MEPs are less likely to be able to obtain rapporteurships, and therefore tabling amendments to reports is their main way of seeking to influence legislation. It could also be that this is a way by which they can at least show their national party leadership that they are able to conduct some of the parliamentary work that will also be required at the national level, even though submitting amendments is not as significant as obtaining a rapporteurship position.

The EP careerists are very active in the EP's work. They attend more plenary votes than any of the other types of MEPs and also table more motions than any of their colleagues. By doing this, these static career-ambitious politicians want to make themselves visible to their EPG leadership, who decide about the prospects for developing a career in the EP. The fact that EP careerists table fewer amendments to reports could be because they are more often the rapporteurs themselves – also given that higher plenary attendance rates are associated with more rapporteurships (Yoshinaka et al., 2010) – but this assumption needs to be confirmed by further research.

The former domestic politicians, who have had a senior career in domestic politics and thereafter look to build a career in the EP – which makes them distinct from retiring MEPs – are overall also found to be more active in the EP's work than many of their colleagues. They attend slightly fewer plenary meetings and table fewer motions than the EP careerists, though. They probably face less pressure to

conduct a lot of the groundwork, such as tabling motions, as they have proved their qualities in the national political arena.

The one-off MEPs are found to be more active than would actually be expected from these discrete career-ambitious politicians. However, they turn out to be active in areas which do not require significant qualities or previous political experience, such as attending plenary voting sessions and tabling amendments to reports; the latter can be expected to require less political 'quality' than being a rapporteur. This would confirm the idea that the one-off MEP category is composed of people who turn out to be of lower quality or ambition. Given the heterogeneous nature of this group, these findings need to be interpreted with caution.

Overall the career ambitions of the different types of MEPs seem to be broadly confirmed by their observed behaviour. Those MEPs pursuing a career in the EP are generally active, in particular in those areas which fit with their career ambitions. MEPs who are not aiming for, or able to get, a long-term career in the EP focus their activities on other areas, some of which are probably outside the EP.

2.7. Conclusion

Politicians change their behaviour in accordance with their career ambitions (Schlesinger, 1966) and the EU provides an interesting multi-level context to study politicians' career ambitions and legislative behaviour. Even though the national political level in the EU can still be considered to be the 'highest' political office, the gradual expansion of powers of the European Parliament has provided career politicians with an interesting additional opportunity to pursue a political career. MEPs are at a wide variety of different stages in their career when they enter the EP. Some have only just started their political career, whereas others are about to

retire after serving many years in politics. A key contribution to the study of the career paths of MEPs is that of Scarrow (1997), who identified three types of MEPs. The techniques used by Scarrow and others to identify career paths mainly look at the past experience of MEPs in combination with age, from which they claim to be able to identify a future career trajectory of politicians, for example as a national or a retiring politician. It can be questioned whether Scarrow's approach of basing a politician's career ambitions on their career background is sufficient. Analysing career background and its effect on observed behaviour could provide a better explanation and prediction of someone's career ambitions. Scarrow's categorisation is limited in scope and does not seem to cover the full range of career paths and ambitions present in the EP.

A new type of MEP that seems to have emerged is that of politicians who previously had a senior domestic political career and decided to pursue a further career at European level. These MEPs do not move to the EP arena in order to bridge the gap between the domestic career and retirement but are looking to build a truly European career. Another group of MEPs that can be identified is what one might call 'one-off' MEPs. This is a group of MEPs who are not career politicians and who do not have a domestic or European career in politics either before or after their time in the EP, either because they are not interested or because they lack quality. They usually stay in the EP for only a short period of time and do not build a political career. This group is however heterogeneous in nature and its findings need to be interpreted with caution. Further analysis on this specific group in future studies would be recommended.

It could be expected that MEPs who are in different stages of their career, and who therefore have different levels of experience and career goals, show

different levels of activity in the EP. This paper has, within the broader framework of political career ambitions in multi-level systems, built on Scarrow's work and shown that over and above the factors that have already previously been identified to have an influence on an MEP's behaviour, such as member state of origin and EPG membership, the career path of an MEP can be a relevant factor in explaining certain legislative behaviour across member states and party groups. Those MEPs interested in developing a career in the EP are overall found to be more active, particularly in the key areas of the EP's work, whereas those who only stay in the EP for a short period of time are either less active or active in areas of less importance. Other control variables were included in the analyses which showed that membership of a powerful legislative committee also makes MEPs significantly more likely to be actively involved in tabling amendments to legislative reports than their colleagues who sit on less powerful committees. MEPs on powerful committees are, however, less actively involved in tabling motions.

The findings presented in this paper could be of relevance beyond the EP and have broader implications for our understanding of politicians' career ambitions and their legislative behaviour in a multi-level system. The different types of careers found in this paper can be used when studying other political levels, for example national or regional. This paper also gives an insight into how legislative careers of politicians can change when the balance of power between different levels of government changes. When a particular level of government becomes more powerful, it creates new, interesting career opportunities for politicians. A similar effect could possibly be found at regional levels in the case of decentralisation.

The conclusions reached in this paper provide a number of suggestions for further research. First, it would be interesting to see whether MEPs from the EU member states that joined in the past ten years are developing the same or different career patterns and ambitions as described in this paper and whether the analyses could be repeated for other EPs. Second, the dependent variable in this paper of 'activity' could be strengthened by testing other types of activities (e.g. rapporteurships and questions asked) in future research. Third, to extend the analysis from this paper beyond the EP, it could be considered whether the different types of politicians as described here are also present in other 'second-order' legislative institutions such as regional parliaments. Finally, the basic models in the analyses include population size and the size of the EPG as control variables. In further research, it would be interesting to analyse whether differences in the types of MEPs can be found between member states and political groups.

As Scarrow has also previously shown, MEPs' career paths are relevant and differ between member states, and should not be ignored in future studies on the activities of MEPs. The analysis in this paper shows that, across countries and party groups, it is possible to identify types of MEPs with different backgrounds and career ambitions, which can in certain situations explain an MEP's behaviour. Therefore, over and above these factors of influence that have already been acknowledged to have an impact on an MEP's activities in the EP, career paths are a further relevant factor to be taken into account when studying the legislative behaviour of MEPs.

2.8. Appendix

Table 7B. Attendance rates, with results for dummy variables

	(1) Attendance	(2) Attendance	(3) Attendance	(4) Attendance	(5) Attendance	(6) Attendance	(7) Attendance	(8) Attendance
Young MEP		3.394	3.056	0.980	3.181	2.854	1.179	0.908
EP careerist		11.35***	11.10***	9.581***	9.856***	9.421***	9.507***	9.458***
Former nat'l politician		8.235***	7.746***	6.961***	8.725***	8.272***	6.910***	6.537***
One-off MEP		6.630***	6.714***	7.192***	6.335***	6.374***	7.163***	7.504***
Male	0.500	1.069	1.634	1.350	0.892	1.424	1.255	1.713
Age	-0.114*							
Member state size	-0.0433**	-0.0617***	-0.0660***					
National party size					0.0672	0.0782	0.0740	0.104
EPG size	0.0307***	0.0246***		0.0191**	0.0176*		0.0134	
Nat'l party in gov't		2.450*	2.841**	1.194	3.952***	4.511***	1.342	1.742
Mem. powerful cmte		1.176	1.129	1.460	1.370	1.336	1.400	1.209
Austria				8.043***			9.292***	9.222***
Belgium				-2.340			-1.084	-0.926
Denmark				4.378			5.491	7.384*
Finland				6.976**			8.202**	9.315***
France				-1.791			-1.548	-1.141
Greece				3.330			4.456	4.933
Ireland				1.416			2.442	4.872
Italy				-10.90***			-9.813***	-9.144***
Luxembourg				2.131			3.494	4.025
Netherlands				-0.374			0.659	1.662
Portugal				1.160			2.471	3.328
Spain				-0.130			0.209	0.310
Sweden				-2.030			-0.696	1.488
United Kingdom				-1.038			-0.602	0.218
PES			0.778			0.886		0.786
ALDE			-3.980**			-3.099*		-2.551
Greens			1.988			3.430		2.765
GUE			-2.958			-2.180		-0.590
UEN			-7.723**			-6.318*		-3.432
Independents			-10.81***			-8.866***		-10.31***
Non attached			-1.519			-0.553		1.252
Constant	90.45***	77.20***	81.21***	76.88***	74.48***	76.87***	76.12***	76.93***
Observations	433	433	433	433	433	433	433	433
R-squared	0.044	0.146	0.180	0.250	0.132	0.165	0.252	0.283

Note: Standard errors in parentheses. *** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.10. The baseline for the four different types of MEPs is the "retiring MEP", the baseline for the EPG controls is the EPP, and the baseline for the member states controls is Germany.

Table 8B. Number of reports amended, with results for dummy variables

	(1) Reports amended	(2) Reports amended	(3) Reports amended	(4) Reports amended	(5) Reports amended	(6) Reports amended	(7) Reports amended	(8) Reports amended
Young MEP		5.797***	4.975***	4.451**	5.668***	4.884**	4.236**	3.885**
EP careerist		3.149**	2.635**	2.250*	2.934**	2.331*	2.330*	2.079
Former nat'l politician		1.520	1.112	1.096	1.810	1.406	1.152	0.866
One-off MEP		4.591***	4.279***	3.358**	4.518***	4.173***	3.390**	3.096**
Male	-4.575***	-4.264***	-3.858***	-4.295***	-4.235***	-3.853***	-4.192***	-3.856***
Age	-0.0854*							
Member state size	-0.0332**	-0.0385**	-0.0377**					
National party size					-0.0801*	-0.0655	-0.0802	-0.0571
EPG size	0.00894	0.00967		0.00188	0.0157**		0.00812	
Nat'l party in gov't		0.871	1.191	0.394	1.292	1.648	0.233	0.369
Mem. powerful cmte		2.096**	2.243***	2.372***	2.176**	2.314***	2.437***	2.454***
Austria				2.700			1.345	2.697
Belgium				-1.960			-3.322	-2.417
Denmark				-1.931			-3.138	-2.320
Finland				0.648			-0.681	-0.276
France				-1.662			-1.925	-0.488
Greece				9.298***			8.077***	8.825***
Ireland				-3.358			-4.471	-3.455
Italy				-1.431			-2.613	-1.465
Luxembourg				4.055			2.576	2.616
Netherlands				4.722**			3.601	4.092*
Portugal				-0.155			-1.577	-0.679
Spain				2.825			2.457	2.755
Sweden				0.712			-0.734	0.495
United Kingdom				-1.128			-1.602	-0.715
PES			-1.362			-1.452		-1.207
ALDE			-1.876			-2.506*		-1.226
Greens			3.866**			3.133*		3.421*
GUE			0.888			-0.121		0.622
UEN			-4.643*			-5.127*		-1.763
Independents			-4.457*			-4.807**		-3.808
Non attached			-7.852***			-8.830***		-7.621***
Constant	17.71***	8.672***	10.73***	8.367***	7.020***	10.02***	9.194***	9.869***
Observations	433	433	433	433	433	433	433	433
R-squared	0.086	0.128	0.186	0.193	0.123	0.180	0.196	0.242

Note: Standard errors in parentheses. *** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.10. The baseline for the four different types of MEPs is the "retiring MEP", the baseline for the EPG controls is the EPP, and the baseline for the member states controls is Germany.

Table 9B. Motions tabled, with results for dummy variables

	(1) Motions	(2) Motions	(3) Motions	(4) Motions	(5) Motions	(6) Motions	(7) Motions	(8) Motions
Young MEP		-0.284	-2.010	1.287	-0.257	-1.968	0.865	-0.279
EP careerist		6.097**	5.713**	7.177**	7.336**	6.795**	7.334**	7.083**
Former nat'l politician		2.330	1.250	2.733	2.260	1.234	2.842	2.161
One-off MEP		-0.606	-1.069	-1.219	-0.407	-0.922	-1.156	-1.683
Male	-0.830	-2.211	-1.357	-2.742	-1.981	-1.151	-2.540	-1.449
Age	-0.0441							
Member state size	0.0483	0.00580	0.000458					
National party size					-0.194*	-0.180*	-0.157	-0.128
EPG size	-0.0633***	-0.0665***		-0.0617***	-0.0499***		-0.0495**	
Nat'l party in gov't		-1.494	-1.654	-0.0204	-2.425	-2.477	-0.334	-0.809
Mem. powerful cmte		-11.10***	-11.16***	-11.52***	-11.18***	-11.24***	-11.39***	-11.47***
Austria				-0.0130			-2.659	1.313
Belgium				2.658			-0.00355	3.866
Denmark				-4.758			-7.116	-3.852
Finland				1.313			-1.284	0.872
France				-2.322			-2.836	1.962
Greece				-2.902			-5.287	-3.737
Ireland				3.196			1.023	0.281
Italy				9.834***			7.525*	9.008**
Luxembourg				-2.395			-5.283	-3.896
Netherlands				2.463			0.275	2.265
Portugal				-0.567			-3.345	-2.017
Spain				0.377			-0.342	0.850
Sweden				-1.490			-4.317	0.223
United Kingdom				-1.893			-2.818	0.736
PES			0.150			-0.0979		-0.130
ALDE			4.061			2.203		1.819
Greens			19.02***			16.47***		17.31***
GUE			25.48***			23.10***		22.46***
UEN			22.57***			20.46***		18.07***
Independents			-4.285			-6.684		-5.275
Non attached			-5.473			-7.978*		-9.260*
Constant	18.92***	25.08***	13.49***	24.00***	25.40***	16.42***	25.62***	14.06***
Observations	433	433	433	433	433	433	433	433
R-squared	0.044	0.126	0.224	0.157	0.133	0.230	0.159	0.250

Note: Standard errors in parentheses. *** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.10. The baseline for the four different types of MEPs is the "retiring MEP", the baseline for the EPG controls is the EPP, and the baseline for the member states controls is Germany.

Table 10. Types of MEPs by Member State[9]

	Number of MEPs							Percentage of MEPs				
Member state	Young MEP	Retiring MEP	EP careerist	Former national politician	One-off MEP	Total	Not yet identified[1]	Young MEP	Retiring MEP	EP careerist	Former national politician	One-off MEP
Luxembourg	0	4	1	1	0	6	0	0	66.7	16.7	16.7	0
Denmark	1	3	3	1	1	9	3	11.1	33.3	33.3	11.1	11.1
Ireland	1	2	0	6	2	11	2	9.1	18.2	0	54.5	18.2
Finland	1	5	1	5	1	13	2	7.7	38.5	7.7	38.5	7.7
Austria	1	2	2	7	3	15	2	6.7	13.3	13.3	46.7	20.0
Sweden	4	3	0	5	3	15	2	26.7	20.0	0	33.3	20.0
Portugal	0	3	0	10	2	15	7	0	20.0	0	66.7	13.3
Greece	0	2	2	4	9	17	7	0	11.8	11.8	23.5	52.9
Belgium	0	5	4	6	3	18	5	0	27.8	22.2	33.3	16.7
Netherlands	3	0	5	1	11	20	7	15.0	0	25.0	5.0	55.0
Spain	3	7	13	8	7	38	16	7.9	18.4	34.2	21.1	18.4
Italy	0	12	8	7	27	54	10	0	22.2	14.8	13.0	50.0
France	1	14	12	10	23	60	17	1.7	23.3	20.0	16.7	38.3
United Kingdom	4	9	36	5	9	63	11	6.3	14.3	57.1	7.9	14.3
Germany	10	4	46	10	10	80	14	12.5	5.0	57.5	12.5	12.5
Total	29	75	133	86	111	434	105	6.7	17.3	30.6	19.8	25.6

Note: 1. The career paths of these MEPs could not be identified yet, mainly because these MEPs have only been in the EP for a short period of time. It could therefore be that this category is composed of starting EP careerists, one-off MEPs and others that do not fall within any of the other five categories

[9] Table 10 shows the five categories described and the residual group of MEPs whose career path has not yet been identified, mainly because they were only elected in 2004. The countries in the table are ordered by total number of MEPs. These numbers may differ slightly from the total number of MEPs, as MEPs who left within the first half of the sixth EP have been omitted from the dataset to avoid a distortion of the analysis. The table shows that there are relatively few young MEPs. Germany, the Netherlands and Sweden have, relatively, the most young MEPs who use their EP career as a stepping-stone to national politics. For retiring MEPs, a relatively large number are from Denmark, Luxembourg or Finland. The EP-careerist category seems to be dominated by Germany and the UK, and - to a lesser extent - Denmark and Spain. The newly-identified category of former national politicians seems to be relatively dominated by MEPs from smaller member states. Significant proportions from member states such as Austria, Belgium, Finland, Ireland, Portugal and Sweden fall within this category. The one-off category is dominated by MEPs from France, Greece, Italy and the Netherlands.

3

Static ambition in the European Parliament – a multi-level analysis of the career ambitions of MEPs

Abstract

The European Parliament has grown to become one of the key institutional players in the EU legislative process. This paper looks at the career ambitions of Members of the European Parliament and how they need to go about achieving them. Applying Schlesinger's division of static, discrete and progressive career ambitions of politicians, the findings suggest that career paths are not solely the result of decisions by the national party leadership, but are also the result of expressed ambitions by politicians themselves. MEPs looking to pursue a career in the EP are more actively involved in the parliament's activities. This higher level of participation and acquired policy influence, in particular through writing legislative reports, is rewarded when MEPs stand for re-election. Active participation in the EP does not help those looking to move to the national political arena, nor is it widespread among those leaving politics altogether.

3.1. Introduction

Over the past few decades, the European Parliament (EP) has grown to become one of the key institutional players in the EU legislative process. Starting as a parliament that was initially only consulted in the legislative process, the EP now has co-decision powers in the majority of European policy areas. Members of the European Parliament (MEPs) have played a key role in the development of the institution. Over the years, the EP has attracted a wide range of different types of MEPs, varying from young, first-time politicians, to those who use the EP as a place to retire from national political life. Turnover in EP membership at each election is relatively high (Corbett, Jacobs and Shackleton, 2011; Whitaker, 2014). Some MEPs, however, choose to pursue a career in this European institution and stay on for multiple terms, some for longer than 25 years. This paper looks at the relationship between career ambitions and legislative participation and whether MEPs who show active levels of participation in the legislative work of the institution have a higher chance of being able to pursue a career within the EP. As has been argued before, participation can be regarded as a pivotal indicator of a legislator's quality, commitment or diligence (Hix, Hobolt and Høyland, 2012). Do MEPs who are not seeking re-election or who are looking to move to the national political arena behave differently?

In recent years, the number of long-term career politicians in the EP has appeared to increase. It could be argued that this is a natural consequence of the EP's new powers, which make it a more attractive institution for politicians to work for. MEPs working there for longer periods could be a good thing. Tenure is associated with securing greater levels of influence over the legislative process (Fogarty et al., 2013). Therefore, MEPs with longer tenures can be expected to be

in a more powerful position vis-à-vis their peers and the other legislative institutions than MEPs with less experience in the EP. Building a longer career in the EP also gives politicians the opportunity to develop policy expertise which they can use to improve the quality of legislation. Moreover, tenure is correlated with producing more legislative amendments and proposals (Hibbing, 1991).

With the expansion of the EP's powers, the body of literature on this institution has also grown. Although the career paths of MEPs seem to attract increasing attention, few researchers have focused on linking these career paths with the behaviour in parliament. How should MEPs who hope to stay in the EP behave in order to achieve their goals, and does this differ for those looking to move to the national political level? Does being active in parliamentary work increases the likelihood of being 'promoted' to the national level or does it make it more likely that the MEP will be given the opportunity to stay longer in the EP? Given the above-mentioned benefits of securing a longer tenure in parliament, it is important to understand how politicians successfully pursue this ambition, whether active involvement is rewarded, and how.

This paper analyses the activities of MEPs who were active in the seventh EP between 2009-2014. Combining different datasets with new data sources, it is possible to analyse the relationship between MEPs' activities and whether they stood for re-election in the 2014 EP elections. The paper also analyses the activities of MEPs and whether they were successful in becoming re-elected. Given that Europe is a multi-level political system, this paper considers whether politicians moved to national politics after the 2014 elections or whether they left politics altogether, either to retire or pursue a career elsewhere. A number of additional variables which could have an impact on an MEP's re-election chances were

included in the analysis, including the member state and political group background of an MEP and the electoral system in which they were elected.

It has been found here that an MEP's own activities do have an influence on whether he or she stays in the EP, with MEPs wishing to stay in the EP significantly being more actively involved in a number of parliamentary activities, including taking on rapporteurships and writing own initiative reports. This higher level of participation is also rewarded, as those MEPs who are more actively involved have a higher chance in being re-elected than their peers who also stand for re-election but who have been less active, in particular when they have been able to influence policy by obtaining rapporteurships. MEPs looking to move to national politics are found to be less active; a similar pattern to those who are leaving politics altogether.

This paper proceeds as follows. First, the ideas of politicians' career ambitions, as developed by Schlesinger (1966) are introduced. This section also introduces the available literature on the career paths of MEPs, recognising the multi-level context in which European politicians operate. Second, the potential factors of influence on an MEP pursuing a career in the EP are discussed; on this basis, the hypotheses for the analysis are then developed. Third, the methodology and data used in this paper are explained, followed by a discussion of the empirical findings and the conclusions.

3.2. Career ambitions in multi-level political systems

Politician's career ambitions are both numerous and diverse. Whereas some wish to pursue a lifelong career in the institution to which they are elected, others aim for a different political office or a career outside of politics. Differences in ambitions are likely to influence politicians' behaviour, as they will consider the

impact their legislative participation will have on their career opportunities. Is this also the case in the EP? What kind of behaviour do MEPs need to show if they are interested in pursuing a career inside this institution? Will their participation matter or are MEPs' career paths purely a result of decisions by the national party leadership? Does the national party leadership reward active participation by 'promoting' an MEP to the national level or by increasing their chances of becoming re-elected to the EP? Although politicians are likely to say in public that their career depends on the outcome of democratic elections, such a thing as individual career-planning in politics does exist (Borchert, 2011).

Schlesinger (1966) argued that "*ambition lies at the heart of politics*". Schlesinger identified three different forms of ambition: 'static', 'discrete' and 'progressive'. Statically ambitious politicians try to stay in office for as long as possible and seek to build a long-term career there. Discretely ambitious politicians only seek to stay in office for a short period of time and have no desire to pursue a political career elsewhere. Progressive politicians, on the other hand, constantly seek to obtain a higher political office; this should be noticeable in their political behaviour.

Career patterns are usually interrelated with the existing institutional framework that is available. Politicians operate within a given 'structure of opportunity' (Schlesinger, 1966) and will have individual preferences for moving around within this structure. Career ambitions and the opportunities provided to politicians are closely related and shape a politician's career choices.

Following several treaty reforms, the EP has become a key legislative player at EU level exercising co-decision powers in many policy areas. Pursuing a political career in the EP has, therefore, become a more interesting option for politicians.

With the growing powers of the EP, and the influence individual MEPs can have on how these powers are being used, it is also of growing importance to understand who the people are who get elected to the EP and who stay there. The career ambitions of politicians influence the way they participate in their current position as they adapt their behaviour to improve their chance of obtaining the position they ultimately desire. It is therefore worth considering whether the different levels of ambition as described by Schlesinger exist in the EP just as they do in the US Congress and whether indeed MEPs adjust their behaviour in line with career ambitions.

Although many scholars in the US have studied why some politicians decide to run for a higher office or why politicians seek the career track they do within the legislative body to which they belong (cited in Hibbing, 1999), European researchers have tended to disregard careerism (Borchert and Stolz, 2011b) and the legislative careers of MEPs has only recently started to attract attention from scholars. And in part, very few have actually linked the career trajectories of MEPs to their participation in the legislative process. This paper seeks to address this gap in our knowledge.

First, when looking at the career paths of MEPs, Scarrow (1997) considered the political experience of MEPs from France, Germany, Italy and the UK and concluded that there were three types of MEPs that could be identified, who follow a similar characterisation to Schlesinger's. First, a group of young MEPs not looking to pursue a career in the EP, but planning to use their time in the EP as a 'stepping-stone' to a career in national politics. Second, a group of politicians who are aiming to stay in the EP for longer, the so-called 'European careerists'. Third, a

group of MEPs who only stay in the EP for a short period of time either because they are about to retire or are looking to pursue a career outside of politics. Scarrow expected that it would become increasingly likely that the EP would be filled with static EP politicians looking to stay in the EP for longer, now that the EP has been professionalised and presents a serious alternative for politicians looking to run for office (Scarrow, 1997).

This view was also shared by Beauvallet and Michon (2010) who found an emerging EP elite who dominate work in the institution. They argued that, whereas in the first directly-elected EP in 1979, the typical European political profile was one of the end-of-career MEP, in more recent parliaments, a younger group of politicians has been elected who stay in the EP for longer periods and choose to build a career in the institution. These EP careerists specialise in the European political arena and tend to dominate leadership positions in the EP.

Whitaker (2014), too, finds that MEPs are indeed building careers in the EP and greater numbers of MEPs aspire to stay than was previously the case. One aspect to which only high-level attention has been given so far when analysing the career paths of MEPs (Whitaker, 2014) is the interaction of EP membership with political careers at other levels within the multi-level political entity that exists in Europe.

With the EU growing in importance, the European system can be labelled as ‘multi-level’ (Deschouwer, 2003). The multi-level system, whereby politicians can move between local, regional, national and supranational levels, provides politicians with a wide variety of career options. Within this system, the national political level is likely to attract a considerable number of politicians from the EP level. In the multi-level system of the EU, there is a more or less structured

hierarchy of offices which are valued differently by different politicians based on their career ambitions and opportunities. In Germany, for example, career patterns are oriented towards the national level, whereas in Belgium politicians move more frequently between regional, national and supranational levels (Van Houten, 2009). In fact, German politicians show very limited movement between different levels of government (Borchert and Stolz, 2011a). For most politicians in Germany, the national political level is considered to be the most prestigious level. Hix (2008) considered the prestige and policymaking powers of the various offices in the EU system and identified the following hierarchy: (1) national prime minister, (2) Commission President, (3) national cabinet minister, (4) Commissioner, (5) member of a national parliament, and (6) MEP. In general, Hix argues that national political offices are more desirable for politicians than European offices, except perhaps for some of the very small member states. He adds, however, that the choice between being an MEP and being a member of a national parliament is less easy to make. Being a backbench MP will in many cases be less desirable than being an MEP with more policy influence, in particular with the most recent increases in power for the EP. This idea is in line with Borchert and Stolz (2011b) who have argued that the career ambitions of professional politicians are no longer necessarily focused on the national political arena alone and new career patterns are emerging.

Although Whitaker (2014) and others (Hobolt and Høyland, 2011; Meserve, Pemstein and Bernhard, 2009a and b; Verzichelli and Edinger, 2005; Westlake, 1994) have considered the careers of MEPs, these studies did not cover whether certain types of MEPs show different levels of legislative participation than others. In particular, hardly any focus has been given as to whether those with an ambition of staying in the EP, show this by participating more in the EP's legislative process.

Daniel (2015) is probably the exception and the focus in his work is on how the changing nature of the EP has affected political careers. Part of his analysis is on the interlinkages between MEPs' careers and behaviour in parliament with his main conclusion being that EP careerists write more reports.

This paper aims to develop our existing knowledge about the career paths of MEPs and the impact their ambitions have on their legislative behaviour. It increases our knowledge about the extent to which MEPs are able to pursue their career ambitions and whether more engaged MEPs are rewarded by allowing them to stay longer in the EP. Taking the multi-level context into account, this paper also improves our understanding of whether MEPs who have the ambition to move around in this multi-level system (in this case by moving to the national level) participate in the EP in a different way.

Before getting into an analysis of the different career ambitions of MEPs and the behaviour they show, it is important to understand two aspects better. First, whether the ambitions of MEPs are at all related to the actual outcomes of elections. Second, whether we are at risk of detecting an unobserved phenomenon.

To address the first issue, I use survey data collected by Hix, Scully and Farrell (2011) as part of the European Parliament Research Group. The surveys of 2000 (1999-2004 EP) and 2006 (2004-2009 EP) were selected using the answers to the question: "*Where would you most like to be in ten years from now?*". MEPs who participated in the surveys were a representative sample of the wider EP membership, considering key variables such as the EPG, gender and member state (Hix, Scully and Farrell, 2011). In total, 319 MEPs responded to this multiple-choice question. The answers were converted to binary response (e.g. a 'yes' or 'no'

answer on whether an MEP had the ambition to stay in the EP) which made it possible to analyse them in a logistic regression model. The answers were compared with data on EP membership at the end of the seventh term, in 2014.

Using logistic regression models, the findings show (table 11) that those MEPs who had the desire to be an MEP ten years were statistically significantly more likely to still be an MEP even when controlled for various factors such as age, group membership and electoral systems. MEPs who expected to have retired were significantly less likely to still be an MEP. The ambition to be a national MP did not show a significant effect. Those looking to retire were also found to be more likely to have done so. This shows that MEPs' ambition is related to the actual outcome of career decisions and is not solely a function of national party leadership decisions.

Table 11: Expressed ambition and actual outcome

	(1) MEP at the end of 7th EP	Change in likelihood	(2) MEP at the end of 7th EP	Change in likelihood	(3) MEP at the end of 7th EP	Change in likelihood
Ambition to be MEP in 10 years	1.178*** (0.281)	+ 225%				
Ambition to be national MP in 10 years			-0.0688 (0.419)			
Ambition to be retired in 10 years					-0.917*** (0.283)	- 60%
Number of MEPs from national party	0.0138 (0.0132)		0.0126 (0.0128)		0.0159 (0.0129)	
Population size	0.00717 (0.00668)		0.0104 (0.00643)		0.0101 (0.00657)	
EPG size	0.000794 (0.00180)		0.000344 (0.00174)		0.000558 (0.00177)	
Age	-0.0167 (0.0141)		-0.0207 (0.0140)		-0.00386 (0.0147)	
Male	0.197 (0.286)		0.164 (0.279)		0.182 (0.281)	
Controlled for electoral system	Yes		Yes		Yes	
Survey fixed effects controlled for	Yes		Yes		Yes	
Constant	-0.481 (0.794)		0.0861 (0.773)		-0.483 (0.790)	
Observations	359		359		359	
Pseudo R2	0.1189		0.0797		0.1040	

Standard errors in parentheses
*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

For the second issue, it is important to be aware when there is a risk of having an unobserved latent factor causing the observed phenomenon (in this case for example active MEPs being more likely to be re-elected). Here, a valid question can be raised whether ambitious, active MEPs are favoured in the future (and re-elected) or whether those who are favoured (and more likely to be re-elected in the future) allowed better access to leadership positions and rapporteurships. If this second, unobserved phenomenon is stronger, the correlations found later in this paper are of less value. However, I think it can be argued that such unobserved phenomenon is not present in this situation for the following reason. An MEP is dependent on two different actors for the two aspects which come into play here, namely the ability to become re-elected vs. having access to leadership positions and participation opportunities. The ability to become re-elected is influenced by the national party (leadership) and their decision about whether and where to put the candidate on the ballot paper. With the electorate taking the ultimate decision in the ballot box about re-election. The EPG leadership, on the other hand, decides about access to leadership and participation opportunities. When considering this in a principal-agent structure, the MEP as agent has two principals. If both the aspects of re-election opportunities and participation in the EP were decided upon by one principal, the argument for being at risk of having an unobserved phenomenon would have been a lot stronger but this is not the case here in the EP.

3.3. Hypotheses

Whitaker (2014) rightly points out that building a career in the EP is complicated by the second-order nature of EP elections. As has been argued elsewhere, voters

are largely ignorant of the day-to-day activities of MEPs (Hix, Hobolt and Høyland, 2012). A question is whether even in such a second-order institution, the behaviour of MEPs changes in line with their career ambitions. Another question is whether, if is found, the national party leadership and the electorate reward this different level of participation. It is expected that MEPs will adapt their behaviour in line with their career ambitions. This means that static, discrete and progressive MEPs should show different levels of participation.

One of the ideas here is that MEPs who show active levels of participation in the legislative work of the institution have a higher chance of being able to pursue a career in the EP. Some of the 'EP-careerists' can be expected to be interested in obtaining influence over policymaking (policy-seekers). This idea would seem to be supported by recent research which showed that policy leadership is mostly associated with incumbents' electoral fortunes (Wilson et al., 2016). The MEPs have become experts in a certain policy area or feel passionate about particular policy initiatives they hope to undertake in the European political arena now that the EP has gained co-decision powers in many policy areas after a series of treaty reforms. MEPs looking to stay in the EP can, therefore, be expected to show active levels of participation, both through actions which they control themselves, such as attendance at plenary sessions, as well as activities which are controlled by the EPG leadership, such as rapporteurships and the production of own initiative reports.

For those who are interested in using the EP as a stepping-stone to national politics, spending a considerable amount of time on legislative work in the EP might not necessarily be an efficient way to achieve that goal. It might be more efficient to spend time in the constituency and build up a network of support that is needed to move to the national political arena. This should be noticeable in their level of

participation. It could, therefore, be expected that these progressive career ambitious politicians would show lower levels of participation in the work of the EP.

The remaining group of MEPs is composed of those who neither wish to move to national politics nor stay in the EP. This includes politicians who are close to retirement and those who will pursue a career outside of the European and the national political arena. Retiring politicians, in particular, have less of an incentive to be very active in the work of the EP at all as they do not need to impress the political leadership in order to be nominated for re-election.

Whether or not an MEP has the ambitions to build a career in the EP, he or she is likely to be influenced by a number of factors specific to his or her own circumstances and these will need to be controlled for in any analysis. Age is an important factor. If a politician is elected to the EP at a later stage of his or her life and is already approaching retirement, he or she is less likely to pursue a long-term career in the EP. Younger and even middle-aged MEPs have a much longer time period during which to develop a career in the EP. Age has been used by some as a proxy for career ambition (Meserve, Pemstein and Bernhard, 2009a). Gender could also be of influence on an MEP's career ambitions. The EP has a significant higher proportion of women compared to national parliaments. As shown in the US literature, women often underestimate their own competence to run for a certain office (Lawless and Fox, 2015). This despite the fact that in the US, women are as successful as men in winning elections (Fox, 2000). Once they get elected, they are also as successful as men in getting legislation passed (Bratton and Haynie, 1999). Nevertheless, given their own underestimation of competence, this could have an impact on their decision to pursue a certain office and therefore an MEP's gender

is included as a control factor in the analysis. The length of time an MEP has already been in the EP could also be of influence. Its effect could go both ways: the longer an MEP has been a member, the more likely it becomes he or she will leave at some point; while younger, stepping-stone MEPs who have only been in parliament for a short period of time could also be more likely to leave.

As larger groups tend to dominate the work of the EP and significantly influence voting and policy outcomes, policy-seeking MEPs could be particularly attracted to building a career in one of the larger groups. Larger groups in this context could mean larger national political groups, EPGs or member states. The effects of being in these groups should be controlled for.

As stated before, when applying a principal-agent structure, the MEP as an agent has two principals. The two principals, being the national and European party leadership, decide about different aspects which are important to an MEP, but the ultimate sanction of nominating a member for re-election is reserved for the national party leadership (Scully, 2007). In all member states, the party leadership of the national parties have some control over the selection of the candidates for the EP elections by determining the list of candidates or approving the regionally-selected candidates (Hix, 2002). The loyalty of MEPs to their national party could, therefore, have an influence on the opportunities for MEPs to be reselected and pursue an EP career. Very loyal MEPs might be rewarded by the national party on the other hand by moving them to the national political arena. Strong loyalty to the EPG could, however, lead to MEPs being rewarded by the EPG leadership with more rapporteurship positions. Politicians focused on pursuing a career in the EP are likely to try to balance their loyalty between their EPG and their national party (Meserve, Pemstein and Bernhard, 2009a). With this in mind, it is important to

control for both EPG loyalty and national party loyalty, as loyalty might prove more important than participation.

This paper attempts to approach the career ambitions of MEPs from a multi-level perspective. A particular focus is on the participation in the EP work by MEPs who are looking for a career in national politics. With regard to the possibilities for developing a career in national politics, there are a number of factors that influence whether a career at the national level is a viable alternative for MEPs. First of all, the number of entry opportunities, both by the number of seats available and the number of parties in a national parliament, can be expected to influence the likelihood of an MEP moving from the European to the domestic political level. Parties control access to a career in politics, as they decide on nominations and re-nominations for elections (Borchert and Stolz, 2011a). If there are relatively more national parliamentary seats and more political parties, it could be expected that there are more opportunities for MEPs to move to the national level. What is also important is whether an MEP's national party is often in government, or tends to be in opposition. A party in government will give a politician more chances to gain a powerful position and influence policy, which makes moving to national politics a more attractive alternative. Equally, an MEP of a party that is often in government might have closer ties to the Council, which could make it more attractive to stay in Brussels.

Another external factor of influence on the candidate selection is the electoral system (Farrell and Scully, 2007). Electoral systems would not only affect which parties are elected but also who gets elected to represent these parties in the legislature. Therefore, the electoral institutions and candidate selection rules are important factors to control for when studying the selection of MEPs. In their study,

Hix, Hobolt and Høyland (2017) identify electoral institutions and candidate selection rules as important factors that moderate the association between career ambitions and legislative activity with the effect of career ambitions on legislative participation being stronger in candidate-centred systems than in party-centred systems.

In the analysis of this paper, I will first look at whether participating more in the EP's work increases the likelihood of staying on as an MEP. For this, I will follow a two-step approach, testing two hypotheses:

H1: Those MEPs standing for re-election have participated more actively in the EP's work

H2: When standing for re-election, those MEPs who have participated more in the EP are more likely to become re-elected

When these hypotheses are tested, this paper moves on to consider the multi-level context in which MEPs operate. It will be tested to what extent the participation of static, progressive and discrete ambitious MEPs differ. For this, I look at the actual position of MEPs who were active in the eighth EP, after the 2014 elections. It follows from the above two hypotheses that it is expected that static MEPs who were re-elected in 2014 had participated more actively. It is expected that:

H3: Progressively ambitious MEPs looking to move to the national arena are more focused on the national level and participate less actively in the work of the EP

3.4. Methodology

To test the relationship between MEPs' activities and the likelihood of staying in the EP or moving to national politics, a logistic regression analysis is used. For the analyses in this paper, the 2009-2014 EP was selected, as this was the most recent full parliamentary period available. The data should show whether an MEP's activities have an impact on whether he or she stood for re-election in the 2014 elections. They will also show the impact of an MEP's activities on whether he or she stayed on in the parliament after the 2014 EP elections, whether he or she moved to national politics or whether he or she retired from political life. Information about age, gender, length of membership, the size of the group(s) he or she was a member of, loyalty, electoral systems as well as the opportunities at the national level were included as control variables.

For the dependent variables in this paper, information on which MEPs had returned to the EP after the 2014 election was derived from the EP website. DeHavilland consultancy (2014) provided information about whether an MEP stood for re-election in the 2014 election or whether he or she had not been a candidate. Table 12 shows that nearly 43 percent of the MEPs were re-elected in the 2014 elections. Nearly 30 percent of MEPs did not seek re-election, either because they moved to a career elsewhere or had decided to retire. Others failed to become re-elected or their data was not available. Those for whom it was unknown whether they had stood for re-election were excluded from the analysis. This significant turnover in MEPs at the 2014 elections is in line with previous EPs, where around 50 percent of MEPs were new (Corbett, Jacobs and Shackleton, 2011).

Table 12: Candidacy for 2014 EP elections

	Number of MEPs	Percentage
Re-elected as MEP	358	42.72%
Stood for re-election but was not re-elected	154	18.38%
Did not stand for re-election	251	29.95%
Unknown	75	8.95%

In cases where MEPs did not return to the EP after the 2014 elections, it was considered whether they had moved to national politics shortly before or after the 2014 elections. Information about whether an MEP had (most likely) retired or moved to a career outside of European or national politics was also included as dependent variables in the analysis. This information was found on MEPs' personal websites, the websites of national parliaments and in some cases from interviews given by MEPs in national and international media. A career in national politics was defined as being an MP, senator or a member of the government.

Some of the data used for this paper for the independent variables comes from Hix and Noury (2015). In terms of personal information, the dataset contained an MEP's age at the time of the 2014 elections, and the member state he or she represented. The population size of an MEP's home member state at the start of an MEP's mandate was also added to the analysis. This data was obtained from Eurostat. The dataset already contained information about both the EPG and the national political party that each MEP belongs to, including the total number of MEPs each of these groups contain. This information was derived from the EP website. Information on the length of membership of an MEP until the start of the seventh EP (2009-2014) was added by calculating the number of days from the start date until election day in 2009. Information on an MEP's start date came from the EP website.

The analysis also includes information about an MEP's gender and the electoral system used in the EP elections (open-list proportional representation (OLPR), semi-OLPR, closed-list proportional representation and single transferable vote). In a proportional representation system, where politicians do not need to run on a personal ticket in a district but can be included on a party list by the party leadership, the electoral system will be more open for MEPs who are less well-known in their constituencies. On the other hand, in party-centred elections, an MEP might have been able to prove his or her qualities to the party leadership, who then, in turn, include him or her as a candidate on the party list for the elections. This could have an impact on an MEP's chances of becoming re-elected. The information on the electoral system was obtained from an article by Hix and Hagemann (2009).

This paper also considers the factors which could influence whether an MEP pursues a career outside the EP in national politics. The information on national politics is mainly derived from the ParlGov database (Döring and Manow, 2015). The database contains the necessary information about the total number of seats in each national parliament as well as the effective number of political parties. The database also shows which parties have regularly been a member of a national government. On this basis, each MEP was given a code to show whether his or her party is likely to be a governing party. This information provides an indication of the entry opportunities that an MEP has to switch to a career in national politics.

The dataset used also contains information about the activities of MEPs in the 2009-2014 period. This information was compiled by Hurka, Kaeding and Obholzer (2015) and sets out the attendance rates of MEPs at plenary roll-call votes as well as the number of speeches, rapporteurships and own initiative reports. All

four activities were included in the analyses at the same time as independent variables, as it was found that they were not significantly correlated (see table 13). Hurka, Kaeding and Obholzer (2015) have also calculated the loyalty of MEPs to their EPG and national political group analysing the number of times an MEP has voted out of line with the majority of his or her group.

Table 13: Correlation of activities

	Attendance plenary	Rapporteurships	Own initiative reports	Speeches
Attendance	1.0000			
Rapporteurships	0.1125	1.0000		
Own initiative reports	0.0952	0.2709	1.000	
Speeches	0.0854	0.0615	0.0385	1.000

3.5. Results

In this section, the empirical findings of the analyses conducted are being considered. For the empirical analysis, three steps are taken. First, the relationship between an MEP's participation and whether he or she stands for re-election or not is analysed. Second, it is assessed for those who do decide to stand for re-election what the impact of participation on the success rate of re-election is. Third, the analysis is taken into a broader context by conducting a multinomial analysis of the different levels of participation of MEPs with different career ambitions.

Before moving to an assessment of whether an MEP's activities have an impact on whether he or she is successful in pursuing a career in the EP or moving to national politics, it is important to first analyse the impact of activities on an MEP's likelihood of standing for re-election. The decision whether an MEP will stand for re-election is normally taken by both the MEP and the national party leadership, possibly subject to a decision by the party membership. This paper seeks to capture the impact of ambition on participation but the election *outcome* only

shows who has been successful in pursuing that ambition, leaving out the total population of MEPs who wish to continue in their role and have the same ambition. This thereby creates a selection bias. One would expect that those who have the desire to continue as an MEP to portray the same level of activities, independent of whether they are successful in the 2014 elections or not.

Table 14 shows the outcome of the logistic regression model on the first step, looking at whether an MEP stood for re-election in 2014. The independent variables show the impact they have on the likelihood of an MEP standing for re-election. The logit coefficients that are reported show the effect of the independent variable on the logarithm of the odds of being in the 1 category of the dependent variable, rather than the 0 category. As odds ratios are easier to interpret and can be converted into changes in percentages, table 14 also shows the odds ratios converted into percentages of the independent variables for cases in which the effects are statistically significant[9]. The percentages show the increase or decrease in the likelihood of an event happening when the value of the independent variable increases by one unit.

Different forms of participation as well as a number of control variables are included. The results show that MEPs who were more active in writing own initiative reports were significantly more likely to seek re-election. Own initiative reports could be seen as a form of participation which is particularly well suited for expressing an eagerness to be active in the EP as they do not bring the policy influence which is for example the case with (most) rapporteurships. When controlling for member states, giving more speeches also increases the likelihood of standing for re-election. It could therefore be said that there is a moderately

[9] The coefficient can be converted into odds ratios percentages by using the following formula: $\%\Delta = (e^{\beta k\Delta} - 1) * 100$ (Box-Steffensmeier & Jones, 1997)

positive effect of participation on seeking re-election. Understandably, the length of membership of the EP has a negative impact on the likelihood of seeking re-election, with longer-serving MEPs less likely to seek re-election again. The entry opportunities at the national level do not seem to have an effect on an MEP's decision to stand for re-election.

Table 14: MEP seeking vs not seeking re-election in 2014 election

	(1) Stood for re-election	Change in likelihood	(2) Stood for re-election	Change in likelihood	(3) Stood for re-election	Change in likelihood
Attendance	0.00435		-0.00147		0.00524	
	(0.00644)		(0.00696)		(0.00652)	
Speeches	0.000127		0.000648*	+ 0.06%	0.000135	
	(0.000285)		(0.000345)		(0.000288)	
Rapporteurships	0.0182		0.0309		0.0192	
	(0.0198)		(0.0210)		(0.0199)	
Own initiative reports	0.208**	+ 23.1%	0.295***	+ 34.3%	0.222**	+ 24.9%
	(0.0949)		(0.0997)		(0.0964)	
Age	0.00583		0.00677		0.00780	
	(0.00726)		(0.00762)		(0.00739)	
Gender (male)	0.220		0.258		0.178	
	(0.164)		(0.171)		(0.166)	
Membership length	-0.000155***	- 0.01%	-0.000192***	- 0.02%	-0.000164***	- 0.02%
	(4.04e-05)		(4.34e-05)		(4.12e-05)	
Population size	-0.00168		-		0.00294	
	(0.00958)				(0.0101)	
National party size	0.00723		0.0112		0.00323	
	(0.0126)		(0.0143)		(0.0130)	
EPG size	-0.000602		-0.00139		-	
	(0.000952)		(0.00114)			
National party likely to be in government	0.0354		0.444		0.0507	
	(0.233)		(0.327)		(0.246)	
Number of political parties in national parliament	0.162		-		0.135	
	(0.107)				(0.108)	
Number of seats in national parliament	0.00136		-		0.000846	
	(0.00130)				(0.00135)	
Electoral systems controls included	Yes		No		Yes	
Member state controls included	No		Yes		No	
EPG controls included	No		No		Yes	
Constant	-0.820		0.855		-0.945	
	(0.903)		(0.771)		(0.947)	
Observations	836		836		836	

Standard errors in parentheses *** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

As mentioned, I will take a two-step approach here and have first looked at whether MEPs who have been more active are more likely to seek re-election. I will now consider whether the more active MEPs who do seek re-election are more likely to indeed be re-elected. Included in the dependent variable here are the MEPs who were successful in seeking re-election in the 2014 elections. Only those seeking re-election were included in the analysis. It has been found here that those who were rapporteur more often in the 2009-2014 period were more likely to be successful in becoming re-elected. This finding suggests that national parties might reward those MEPs who have been a rapporteur by placing them higher up on the ballot paper. For a national party, it is expected to be appealing to have an MEP who has proven to have political and policy influence in the EP. For MEPs looking to pursue a long-term career in the EP, gaining policy influence by obtaining a rapporteurship would, therefore, seem very important. Interestingly, being a member of a party that is likely to be in government from time to time (i.e. not a complete outlier in the national political spectrum) also increases the likelihood of becoming re-elected.

Table 15: MEP successfully vs unsuccessfully seeking re-election in 2014 election

	(1) Successfully stood for re-elected	Change in likelihood	(2) Successfully stood for re-elected	Change in likelihood
Attendance	0.00858		0.00148	
	(0.00954)		(0.0107)	
Speeches	0.000473		0.000582	
	(0.000429)		(0.000505)	
Rapporteurships	0.0632*	+ 6.52%	0.0624*	+ 6.4%
	(0.0348)		(0.0355)	
Own initiative reports	0.156		0.202	
	(0.125)		(0.138)	
Age	-0.00177		-0.00690	
	(0.00958)		(0.0103)	
Gender (male)	-0.169		-0.0686	
	(0.219)		(0.237)	
Membership length	1.54e-05		-1.88e-05	
	(5.96e-05)		(6.35e-05)	
Population size	0.0117		0.00193	
	(0.0131)		(0.0145)	
National party size	-0.0265		-0.0250	
	(0.0162)		(0.0185)	
EPG size	-0.000580		0.000572	
	(0.00125)		(0.00148)	
Party likely to be in government	1.174***	+ 223%	1.431***	+ 318%
	(0.350)		(0.492)	
Number of political parties in national parties	0.202		-	
	(0.149)			
Number of seats in national parliament	-0.00240		-	
	(0.00181)			
Electoral systems included as control variables	Yes		No	
Member states included as control variables	No		Yes	
Constant	-0.635		0.856	
	(1.280)		(1.329)	
Observations	512		501	

Standard errors in parentheses
*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

Table 16 moves on and analyses what MEPs did after the 2014 elections, with member states included as control variables using a multinomial model. Some MEPs were re-elected, other politicians moved to a career in national politics and again others left politics altogether, either to retire or pursue a career elsewhere. Table 16 displays the logistic regression analyses for all four outcomes. Here the positive effect of the participation of MEPs on the likelihood of an MEP returning

to the EP is again confirmed. It has been found here that MEPs who gave more speeches, had more rapporteurship positions and wrote more own initiative reports in the 2009-2014 period were significantly more likely to return to the EP after the 2014 elections. For example, holding a rapporteurship once increases this likelihood by five percent, confirming the findings in table 14. Writing own initiative reports has a strong positive effect on the likelihood of returning to the EP with an increase of over 40 percent.

For MEPs who moved to national politics after the 2014 EP elections, the effects are the opposite, although - apart from writing own initiative reports - not statistically significant. MEPs moving to national politics have generally stayed in the EP for a shorter period of time. Increases in EP membership length make it less likely that MEPs will still move to national politics. This would support the idea that some politicians use the EP as a stepping stone to national politics.

Politicians who leave the EP and do not move to national politics to pursue a career elsewhere show lower levels of participation, although most forms of activity are not statistically significant. MEPs who leave the EP and move to a career outside of politics write significantly fewer own initiative reports. Those MEPs who retire after the 2014 elections participate significantly less in giving speeches but interestingly they do attend more plenary votes. The same effect as in table 14 of whether an MEP's party is likely to be a governing party can be found here. MEPs from parties which are more likely to be in government have a higher chance of staying in the EP and are less likely to leave politics altogether than those whose parties are not.

Table 16: Post-EP7 career with member state controls

	(1) Career as MEP	Change in likelihood	(2) Career in national politics	Change in likelihood	(3) Career outside of politics	Change in likelihood	(4) Retired	Change in likelihood
Attendance	0.00732		-0.00703		-0.00858		0.0397***	+ 4%
	(0.00782)		(0.00927)		(0.00746)		(0.0143)	
Speeches	0.000725**	+ 0.07%	-0.000437		0.000204		-0.00341***	- 0.34%
	(0.000327)		(0.000412)		(0.000317)		(0.00115)	
Rapporteurships	0.0488**	+ 5%	-0.0103		-0.0269		-0.0807	
	(0.0202)		(0.0209)		(0.0189)		(0.0509)	
Own initiative reports	0.339***	+ 40.4%	-0.225*	- 20.1%	-0.185*	- 16.9%	-0.177	
	(0.0949)		(0.122)		(0.0955)		(0.170)	
Age	0.000645		-0.00125		0.00418		-0.00882	
	(0.00750)		(0.00922)		(0.00760)		(0.0128)	
Gender (male)	0.130		-0.0406		-0.442***	- 35.7%	0.532*	+ 70.2%
	(0.169)		(0.208)		(0.170)		(0.311)	
Membership length	-0.000175***	- 0.02%	-0.000772***	- 0.08%	2.34e-05		0.000357***	+ 0.04%
	(4.63e-05)		(9.52e-05)		(4.67e-05)		(6.46e-05)	
National party size	-0.00407		-0.00204		-0.0180		0.0453*	+ 4.6%
	(0.0142)		(0.0179)		(0.0147)		(0.0240)	
EPG size	-0.000227		-0.000578		0.000570		-0.00160	
	(0.00115)		(0.00146)		(0.00116)		(0.00205)	
Loyalty to national party	0.00237		-0.0124		-0.0489		0.163	
	(0.0313)		(0.0359)		(0.0332)		(0.101)	
Loyalty to EPG	-0.00933		0.000880		0.0153		-0.0134	
	(0.0116)		(0.0136)		(0.0117)		(0.0215)	
Party likely to be in government	1.076***	+ 193%	-0.627		-1.205***	- 70%	0.716	
	(0.351)		(0.446)		(0.359)		(0.582)	
Member states included as control variables	Yes		Yes		Yes		Yes	
Constant	-0.114		3.198		4.099		-22.35**	
	(3.172)		(3.707)		(3.356)		(10.21)	
Observations	760		771		788		692	

Standard errors in parentheses
*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.

3.6. Discussion and conclusion

Being a politician has become a profession for many. With the development of the EP as an influential institution at the European level, building a career in the EP has become an interesting option. As others have found, the EP is becoming populated more and more with MEPs looking to build a long-term career in this institution. Schlesinger (1966) argued that politicians have different levels of ambition, with static politicians trying to stay in office for as long as possible, discrete politicians only wishing to stay in politics for a short period of time, and progressive politicians looking to move to a higher political office. Politicians can be expected to adapt their behaviour in line with their desired career objectives.

The EU can be characterised as a multi-level system, with politicians moving around between different levels. Despite the growing importance of the EP in recent decades, the national political level is generally still seen as the top level that progressively ambitious MEPs tend to aim for. Static MEPs, on the other hand, can be expected to adapt their behaviour in such a way that will optimise their chances of staying in the EP. This paper has tried to expand our existing knowledge about the career paths of MEPs, the impact their ambitions have on their legislative behaviour and to what extent active MEPs are rewarded by being allowed to pursue a career in the institution.

The findings suggest that the political career ambitions that MEPs express are in line with what they end up achieving. MEPs who wish to be an MEP in ten years' time are more likely to be in that position in the future, whereas those who wish to retire often have done so. This undermines the idea that the career decisions are solely set by the national party leadership, or are only the outcome of an

electoral decision. Those who are keen on building a career in the EP also have the opportunity to do so.

Using a logistic regression model, the empirical findings give a moderately positive confirmation that being active as an MEP improves the likelihood of staying on as an MEP. More active MEPs are more likely to seek re-election in the first place. Writing an own initiative report could be seen as a clear expression of interest in participating actively in the EP, as it does not bring the policy influence that (most) rapporteurships do. Secondly, when standing for re-election, MEPs who have participated more by obtaining rapporteurships are more likely to be re-elected than colleagues who participated less. This could be because of the fact that the national party rewards more active MEPs, who have proven their ability to obtain policy influence, by placing them higher on the electoral list. It could also be that the electorate rewards more active MEPs, although this is probably less likely, given the second-order nature of EP elections. All in all, it shows that if an MEP is looking to pursue a career in the EP, participating actively at least in certain types of activities helps towards achieving that goal.

The analysis also includes a multinomial regression comparing four groups of MEPs: i) those who stayed as MEP after the 2014 election, ii) those who moved to national politics, iii) those who left politics altogether, and iv) those who retired. Those wishing to move to national politics do not need to be as active to demonstrate to the national party leadership that they are worth being moved to the national political arena. MEPs who moved to national politics after the 2014 EP elections spent considerably less time on own initiative reports. Politicians who are not seeking re-election and do not return to the EP or national politics - either

because they pursue a career elsewhere or retire - are found to be less active than their peers, too.

These findings broadly confirm Schlesinger's idea that politicians adapt their behaviour in line with their desired career ambitions (Schlesinger, 1966). The EU provides politicians with an interesting multi-level structure in which to operate. The expansion of the EP's powers has provided politicians with an alternative career option. The new powers given to the EP over the last 25 years has allowed politicians to take up new influential co-legislative positions. This paper has looked at the careers of MEPs and how their participation helps them secure their career objectives, either in the EP or at the national level. It has been here found that MEPs' careers are influenced by more factors than elections alone and that MEPs themselves can influence their career prospects.

For future studies on this topic, the analysis would benefit from additional data on the post-EP careers of MEPs. The analysis could also be repeated for other EP terms. Future studies could also look at the movement between the EP level and the local and regional political level, as the current paper focused only on the national political level. Finally, it would be worth trying to capture additional data on legislative participation, such as the number of amendments to legislation tabled and the number of committee meetings attended. This would build a broader picture of the full range of activities that MEPs undertake.

As Schlesinger (1966) argued, ambition lies at the heart of politics. A better understanding of the career ambitions of politicians is crucial in understanding the functioning of the institution itself and thereby ultimately the democratic process. MEPs' careers are found to be influenced by more factors than the simple external event of elections alone. Their own activities can and do influence whether an MEP

stays in the EP, with MEPs seeking to leave politics or move to the national level operating differently from those who are keen to build a future in the EP.

3.7. Appendix

Table 11b: Expressed ambition and actual outcome, with results for dummy variables

	(1) MEP at the end of 7th EP	Change in likelihood	(2) MEP at the end of 7th EP	Change in likelihood	(3) MEP at the end of 7th EP	Change in likelihood
Ambition to be MEP in 10 years	1.178*** (0.281)	+ 225%				
Ambition to be national MP in 10 years			-0.0688 (0.419)			
Ambition to be retired in 10 years					-0.917*** (0.283)	- 60%
Number of MEPs from national party	0.0138 (0.0132)		0.0126 (0.0128)		0.0159 (0.0129)	
Population size	0.00717 (0.00668)		0.0104 (0.00643)		0.0101 (0.00657)	
EPG size	0.000794 (0.00180)		0.000344 (0.00174)		0.000558 (0.00177)	
Age	-0.0167 (0.0141)		-0.0207 (0.0140)		-0.00386 (0.0147)	
Male	0.197 (0.286)		0.164 (0.279)		0.182 (0.281)	
Open list proportional representation	-0.312 (0.443)		-0.430 (0.434)		-0.499 (0.441)	
Closed list proportional representation	-0.0737 (0.473)		-0.174 (0.460)		-0.171 (0.468)	
Single transferable vote	1.432** (0.726)	+ 319%	1.200* (0.709)	+ 222%	1.745** (0.741)	+ 473%
Single member plurality	-0.632 (0.799)		-1.036 (0.782)		-0.910 (0.780)	
Survey year MEP participated in	-1.088*** (0.263)	- 66.3%	-1.042*** (0.255)	- 34.7%	-0.992*** (0.260)	- 63%
Constant	-0.481 (0.794)		0.0861 (0.773)		-0.483 (0.790)	
Observations	359		359		359	
Pseudo R2	0.1189		0.0797		0.1040	

Standard errors in parentheses
*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

Table 14b: MEP seeking vs not seeking re-election in 2014 election, with results for dummy variables

	(1) Stood for re-election	Change in likelihood	(2) Stood for re-election	Change in likelihood	(3) Stood for re-election	Change in likelihood
Attendance	0.00435		-0.00147		0.00524	
	(0.00644)		(0.00696)		(0.00652)	
Speeches	0.000127		0.000648*	+ 0.06%	0.000135	
	(0.000285)		(0.000345)		(0.000288)	
Rapporteurships	0.0182		0.0309		0.0192	
	(0.0198)		(0.0210)		(0.0199)	
Own initiative reports	0.208**	+ 23.1%	0.295***	+ 34.3%	0.222**	+ 24.9%
	(0.0949)		(0.0997)		(0.0964)	
Age	0.00583		0.00677		0.00780	
	(0.00726)		(0.00762)		(0.00739)	
Gender (male)	0.220		0.258		0.178	
	(0.164)		(0.171)		(0.166)	
Membership length	-0.000155***	- 0.01%	-0.000192***	- 0.02%	-0.000164***	- 0.02%
	(4.04e-05)		(4.34e-05)		(4.12e-05)	
Population size	-0.00168		-		0.00294	
	(0.00958)				(0.0101)	
National party size	0.00723		0.0112		0.00323	
	(0.0126)		(0.0143)		(0.0130)	
EPG size	-0.000602		-0.00139		-	
	(0.000952)		(0.00114)			
National party likely to be in government	0.0354		0.444		0.0507	
	(0.233)		(0.327)		(0.246)	
Number of political parties in national parliament	0.162		-		0.135	
	(0.107)				(0.108)	
Number of seats in national parliament	0.00136		-		0.000846	
	(0.00130)				(0.00135)	
Open list proportional representation	-0.0324		-		0.0206	
	(0.287)				(0.292)	
Closed list proportional representation	0.0944		-		0.0980	
	(0.347)				(0.350)	
Single transferable vote	1.101*	+ 201%	-		1.133*	+ 310%
	(0.583)				(0.584)	

Table 14b continued:

Austria		-0.837			
Belgium		0.0862			
Bulgaria		-0.585			
Cyprus		0.151			
Czech Republic		-0.684			
Denmark		-0.204			
Estonia		0.864			
Finland		0.257			
France		0.0813			
Greece		-1.736***	- 82.4%		
Hungary		0.510			
Ireland		0.415			
Italy		-0.174			
Latvia		1.291			
Lithuania		0.106			
Luxembourg		0.329			
Malta		0.235			
Netherlands		-0.699			
Poland		0.543			
Portugal		-2.104***	- 88%		
Romania		-0.299			
Slovakia		0.335			
Slovenia		-0.144			
Spain		-0.648*	- 47.3%		
UK		-0.00415			
GUE/NGL				-0.237	
Greens				-0.108	
S&D				-0.101	
ALDE				0.292	
ECR				1.264**	+ 354%
EFD				0.252	
Non-inscripts				0.454	
Constant	-0.820	0.855		-0.945	
	(0.903)	(0.771)		(0.947)	
Observations	836	836		836	

Standard errors in parentheses *** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

Table 15b: MEP successfully vs unsuccessfully seeking re-election in 2014 election, with results for dummy variables

	(1) Successfully stood for re-elected	Change in likelihood	(2) Successfully stood for re-elected	Change in likelihood
Attendance	0.00858		0.00148	
	(0.00954)		(0.0107)	
Speeches	0.000473		0.000582	
	(0.000429)		(0.000505)	
Rapporteurships	0.0632*	+ 6.52%	0.0624*	+ 6.4%
	(0.0348)		(0.0355)	
Own initiative reports	0.156		0.202	
	(0.125)		(0.138)	
Age	-0.00177		-0.00690	
	(0.00958)		(0.0103)	
Gender (male)	-0.169		-0.0686	
	(0.219)		(0.237)	
Membership length	1.54e-05		-1.88e-05	
	(5.96e-05)		(6.35e-05)	
Population size	0.0117		0.00193	
	(0.0131)		(0.0145)	
National party size	-0.0265		-0.0250	
	(0.0162)		(0.0185)	
EPG size	-0.000580		0.000572	
	(0.00125)		(0.00148)	
Party likely to be in government	1.174***	+ 223%	1.431***	+ 318%
	(0.350)		(0.492)	
Number of political parties in national parties	0.202		-	
	(0.149)			
Number of seats in national parliament	-0.00240		-	
	(0.00181)			
Austria			1.103	
Belgium			2.028	
Bulgaria			1.417	
Cyprus			1.034	
Czech Republic			0.908	
Denmark			3.010	
Estonia			0.863	
Finland			1.687	
France			-0.124	
Greece			-	
Hungary			1.343	
Ireland			0.862	
Italy			-1.261**	- 72%
Latvia			1.470	
Lithuania			1.969	
Luxembourg			-	
Malta			-	
Netherlands			1.763	
Poland			0.132	
Portugal			2.025	
Romania			2.693*	+ 1377%
Slovakia			1.897	
Slovenia			1.585	
Spain			1.621	
UK			-	
Constant	-0.635		0.856	
	(1.280)		(1.329)	
Observations	512		501	

Standard errors in parentheses *** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

4

The revolving door of Brussels – how politicians become lobbyists

Abstract

The increase in powers of the European Parliament has made it a key target for lobbyists. Having knowledge about and access to the EP is important for them. This makes former MEPs ideal candidates to be hired by lobbying firms. The revolving door of politicians moving to the private sector is yet to be studied in the EU context. Building on what is known from Washington, this paper seeks to identify the characteristics of MEPs who pursue careers as lobbyists. Being on a powerful committee, from a smaller political group and having a longer tenure makes it more likely that an MEP becomes a lobbyist. Neither participation in legislative work nor holding one of the 'mega-seats' in the EP were found to be significant factors.

4.1. Introduction

Since the Maastricht Treaty in the early 1990s, the powers of the European Parliament (EP) have steadily been increasing. Since the Lisbon Treaty, the EP operates on an equal footing with the Council in many policy areas. Not surprisingly, in line with its increase of powers, the EP is attracting more attention from lobbyists and interest groups (Kohler-Koch, 1997; Lehmann, 2009) and some have argued that the EP has become a key target for lobbyists (Earnshaw and Judge, 2006; Kaeding, 2004).

In order to be a successful lobbyist in Brussels, one needs to be familiar with the legislative procedures of the EU including in the EP. A lobbyist needs to decide when it is best to approach relevant legislators and what messages to use. Contacting a legislator at the wrong time, or with the wrong message can be ineffective or even counterproductive. Lobbying firms or organisations that need to be represented will, therefore, be looking for people who are able to represent them and who are familiar with the procedures and practices in the relevant institutions. It could be expected that, in line with the EP's increases in powers, former MEPs are in higher demand from lobbying firms given their familiarity with the practices of the EP and their network of contacts.

This paper seeks to identify what the characteristics are of those MEPs who become lobbyists, and whether they occupy certain positions or participate in a certain way in the EP. To ensure that any characteristics found are not simply those of everyone who pursues a career in the Brussels 'bubble' after their time in the EP, this paper also considers all those who stay in Brussels after their time as MEPs but who work outside of lobbying. This is done to avoid capturing the characteristics of those who are keen on staying in the EU's political environment in general, rather

than solely of those who become lobbyists. The Brussels bubble here is defined as the working place related to the EU policymaking process excluding any domestic political positions that might be involved in it. Most positions in this working environment are based in Brussels, but this is not necessarily the case.

A former MEP will have built up experience with how the EP operates. He or she will have a better understanding of legislative procedures and windows of opportunity for lobbyists. He or she will also have built up a certain level of expertise in a policy area through the EP committees, which have grown in importance and now forms the backbone of the EP's legislative work (Neuhold, 2001). In addition, a former MEP will have built up a network in the parliament, both with the EP's permanent staff as well as with colleagues who continue in their roles as MEPs. This valuable network of contacts can be used by a former MEP on becoming a lobbyist.

Revolving door politicians have become a widespread phenomenon in Washington. Between 1998 and 2004, 43 percent of the members who had left Congress became registered lobbyists (Kim, 2013). There is a significantly larger volume of literature on the revolving door of Congress than there is on the EP. This paper seeks to address this gap by looking at which lessons-learned from the US might be applicable to the EP. The decision to compare the EP with the US Congress was taken given the significant body of literature available in the US which is not available for other legislative institutions.

Seeking to understand the revolving door phenomenon is relevant from both a social-ethical perspective as well as from an empirical academic perspective. First, the presence of a revolving door may undermine the trust of the public in the EP. Second, the existence of a revolving door might have an impact on current

MEPs' behaviour in the parliament and should, therefore, be of interest to all those seeking to understand the legislative behaviour of MEPs.

Using data on the activities of MEPs in the seventh EP, 2009-2014, and their career paths after the 2014 EP elections, this paper finds that the revolving door phenomenon, to a limited extent, does exist in the EP. MEPs who are on powerful committees, members of a smaller national party and who have been in the EP for a relatively longer period of time are more likely to become lobbyists. Active participation or having been in a senior EP position are not associated with an increased likelihood of becoming a lobbyist. This suggests that familiarity with the practices and content of the EP's key committees are more important assets for lobbyists than having access to contacts, through, for example, their experience in a senior role in the EP. This is understandable given the high turnover in the EP, which undermines the value of having a network of contacts from the previous EP-term.

This paper aims to contribute to the growing literature on the career paths of MEPs. It seeks to better understand the relationship between one career path that former MEPs can follow (i.e. becoming a lobbyist) and their activities whilst still employed as MEPs. This paper does not seek to add to the already substantial body of literature on the impact of lobbying on the EP.

The paper proceeds as follows: First, the literature on the revolving door phenomenon in Washington is discussed. This is followed by a, short, overview of the revolving door in the EP context; This section includes some introductory data on post-EP careers. Subsequently, the hypotheses are developed and tested. The paper finishes with a discussion of the results and conclusion.

4.2. The revolving door of Washington

The phenomenon of politicians becoming lobbyists is well known in the US. Eggers (2010) even concluded that almost two-thirds of all federal lobbying in the US involves a former congressional staffer or former member of Congress in some way, confirming the widespread existence of the revolving door phenomenon in Washington. It is not difficult to understand why. Baumgartner et al. (2009) found well-connected lobbyists with a government background to be more successful. They showed that employing revolving door lobbyists is associated with a slightly higher chance that an organisation's preferred outcome occurs, even though the effect is weak. Lazarus and McKay (2012) showed that having a revolving door lobbyist representing a school's interest significantly increased the chances of that school securing more congressional funding. Their study provided evidence that the revolving door lobbyist himself had a significant effect, above and beyond lobbying alone.

Herring (1929) observed the revolving door phenomenon as early as the 1920s (quoted in Salisbury et al., 1989). The revolving door phenomenon contains two parts. The first part concerns those who move from the private sector to government positions; the second part concerns those public officials who move to the private sector (Cohen, 1986). In this paper, I deal with the latter. The revolving door of politicians is a widely criticised phenomenon in the media but, surprisingly, it is not widely studied (Blanes i Vidal et al., 2012; Kim, 2013; LaPire et al., 2014). A number of scholars in the US in the 1960s, 70s and 80s studying the revolving door mainly analysed case studies and anecdotes in specific policy domains (e.g. Bauer et al., 1963; Milbrath, 1963; Berry, 1984). Their findings did, however, not allow for making representative statements about the revolving door at large.

This changed with the more quantitative approach of Gormley (1979) and Cohen (1986) who studied movements between the private sector and government agencies, focusing on the revolving door of the Federal Communications Commission. Their work led to a broader analysis, studying other public-sector venues, policy domains and time periods. Salisbury et al. (1989) looked at lobbyists with congressional or executive experience. Their analysis showed that lobbyists with a background on Capitol Hill have a better understanding of the policy process and content. They also have a broader network of contacts, which helps them in their post-congressional lobbying career. Heinz et al. (1993, quoted in LaPire et al., 2014) interviewed nearly 800 lobbyists, many of whom said that their government employment had given them both procedural knowledge and subject matter expertise. Access to former colleagues was not seen as a key attribute.

Blanes i Vidal et al. (2012), however, concluded that the lobbying industry in Washington should be seen as a market for political connections, where indirect links to serving politicians can be acquired by hiring their former employees and colleagues. This was confirmed by Eggers (2010), who found that interest groups hire former staffers of the party in power mainly to gain access and communicate information. He argued that lobbying can be seen as information transmission with lobbyists seeking to inform politicians who are ideologically closer. Politicians with an ideology close to a lobbyist are more likely to trust the information they receive.

However, the revolving door does not seem to exist evenly among all politicians. LaPire et al. (2014) found that revolving door lobbyists are more likely to have specialised in lobbying the Senate Appropriations Committee, one of the most powerful committees of Congress, showing the importance of being able to access powerful committees in Congress. Most studies on the revolving door

phenomenon only use data on those who have actually become lobbyists. Little is known in general about the careers pursued by politicians who have left Congress. Herrick and Nixon (1996) found that less than half of all the former members of the House were involved in the revolving door. They examined the post-congressional careers of House of Representative members who had left the House between 1971 and 1992 and found that former members of the House pursue a wide variety of careers.

Herrick and Nixon's work focused on all types of post-Congress careers, without reaching particular conclusions about the revolving door of Congress. Butler and Sovey (2010), on the other hand, specifically focused on the revolving door by asking which former members of Congress had been hired by lobbying firms. They found that Congressmen in leadership positions, serving on powerful committees and who were ideologically moderate, were more likely to have a post-Congress career as a lobbyist. Their results also suggest that knowledge of the legislative process is important for lobbyists when targeting key legislators (Butler and Sovey, 2010).

A question arises as to whether to potential to move to a lobbying career after politics might impact on individuals' behaviour while still employed as politicians. As Herrick and Nixon (1996) have argued, behaviour while in the House may have an impact on the employment options of politicians after leaving politics. In this context, Kim (2013) focused on former members of the House of Representatives for the 105^{th}-108^{th} Congresses and the relationship between the lobbying employment and voting behaviour of Congressmen. Kim considered the politicians' last term in office comparing Congressmen who retired voluntarily with those who lost their re-election bid. He found that those who became lobbyists after

losing an election had served on more powerful committees and had more conservative voting records than those who did not become lobbyists. This effect was not found for those who retired voluntarily. For these retirees, their length of membership of Congress, a decrease in their conservative voting record and a slowdown in their legislative activity in their last term were all important predictors for becoming a lobbyist. Tenure rather than specific knowledge gained from being active on a committee, seemed to matter most.

All in all, the US literature on the revolving door provides a useful starting point when studying the existence of the phenomenon in the EP. There are broadly two schools of thoughts emerging from the US literature. First, the idea that revolving door politicians are valuable because they have process and content knowledge; Length of service and having been on a powerful committee could be indicators here. Second, the belief that revolving door politicians are valuable because they have access to contacts; Having been in leadership positions and having a relatively closer ideological proximity to those in power are relevant factors here. It is worth testing which elements are found to be most important in the EP context.

4.3. The revolving door of the EP

Given that lobbying has become an important component of the EU legislative process, becoming a lobbyist after their time in the EP could be an alternative career option for MEPs. Former MEPs have a good insight into the *modus operandi* of the EP as they are familiar with the procedures and practices of the legislative process. They have also built up a network of contacts in the EP. This could make them attractive lobbyists for those who are looking to have their interests represented.

Where the US literature on the phenomenon of revolving door politicians has developed over the last few decades, it is virtually non-existent in the EU. This despite the fact that there are no restrictions on the work that MEPs can do after they leave office, allowing them to pick up lobbyist positions straightaway (Balosin, 2016). Although the career paths of MEPs is a research area increasingly attracting attention (Daniel, 2015; Whitaker, 2014; Meserve et al., 2009a and b), MEPs becoming lobbyists has not been widely studied.

Before looking at the revolving door of the EP in more detail, it is worth reflecting on the importance of studying this phenomenon. There are both social-ethical as well as empirical academic reasons for this. First, from a social-ethical perspective, the presence of a revolving door may undermine public trust in MEPs and the EP as a whole. Citizens could question whether the activities and decisions of MEPs are the result of careful consideration of the electorate's wishes or rather an MEP's future career ambitions in the private (lobbying) sector. The revolving door may lead to politicians being overly sympathetic to the needs of a particular business because they seek to move into the private sector after their political life (Balosin, 2016). The existence of the revolving door in the EP may thereby undermine the trust of the public in the main democratic institution at European level, thereby deepening the democratic deficit. This in itself justifies further analysis of the phenomenon.

Second, there are empirical academic reasons for studying the revolving door in Brussels. As argued by Schlesinger (1966), politicians can be expected to adjust their behaviour in line with their future career objectives. It could, therefore, be that the existence of the revolving door has an impact on the behaviour of current

MEPs. The revolving door is, therefore, a relevant phenomenon for those seeking to understand the legislative behaviour of MEPs.

Coen and Vannoni (2016) is the only large-scale study on the revolving door of the EU. They examined at the career paths of 300 EU affairs managers and identified three types of EU affairs managers, one of which used to work at the EU institutions. In their dataset, they found that only ten percent of the EU affairs managers had work experience in the EU institutions. This low level of an exchange of personnel between business and EU institutions has led them to call into question the existence of the revolving door phenomenon. It should, however, be noted that their study only focused on corporate lobbying activity and did not consider other types of interest representation. Moreover, it did not single-out the revolving door phenomenon among those with key policymaking power, such as MEPs. Furthermore, their analysis did not assess any potential relationship between those who became lobbyists and their legislative behaviour.

Before moving to developing a number of hypothesis, I will, based on data collected for this paper, provide some information on the number of MEPs who become lobbyists. The sources of this data are discussed in more detail in the methodology section of this paper. When considering the EP, the data shows that a total of 480 MEPs did not return to the EP after the 2014 elections. Nearly 60 percent of those who left the EP, moved to a career outside of Brussels. A significant part of them moved to national or local politics. Others moved to careers in academia, the national civil service or they started working in the corporate sector. Around 20 percent had (most likely) retired from politics and for about ten percent of the former MEPs it could not be ascertained whether they had taken on another job or had left the workforce altogether. Around ten percent decided to stay

in the Brussels bubble to pursue a career. Most of them, 33, became lobbyists, 11 joined the European Commission and three joined Brussels-based NGOs in roles that did not seem to involve lobbying work. Two former MEPs joined think tanks focused on EU politics. Lobbyists were defined as those who had been hired by lobbying firms, corporates in a public affairs role, or other organisations (including NGOs) in a public affairs role.

These numbers show that a smaller *proportion* of MEPs become lobbyists than the 43 percent of US Congressmen (combining the House of Representatives and Senate) that is quoted in Kim (2013). However, it could be argued that in *absolute* terms, the number of former politicians become lobbyists is not significantly different[10].

[10] This is the case when considering the incumbency rate in the EP of around 50 percent for each election and comparing that to the US House of Representatives, where the incumbency rate is around 95 percent, and the Senate, with an incumbency rate of around 87 percent (CRP, 2017). With an incumbency rate of 95 percent for the 435 House of Representative members and a two-year election cycle, this means that during the five-year period of the EP, around 54 House of Representative members will have left the House. For the Senate, which has a six-year election cycle, this means that during the five-year period of the EP, around 11 Senators will have left. This is an average of 65 politicians leaving Congress every five years. Applying the 43 percent rate of Congressmen who become lobbyists (Kim, 2013), results in around 28 former politicians who become lobbyists in Washington every five years. This is very similar to the number of MEPs, 33, who became lobbyists after the 2014 EP elections.

Table 17: Careers after EP

Careers after EP	Frequency	Percentage	Brussels lobbyist	Stayed in Brussels bubble (incl. lobbyists)*	Other career outside Brussels	Left workforce / unknown
Retired / most likely retired	84	17.50				84
National politics	88	18.33			88	
Local/regional politics / party official	92	19.17			92	
Academia / think tank	34	7.08		2	32	
EC staff	11	2.30		11		
International organisation	1	0.21			1	
Lobbyist	33	6.88	33	33		
Nat civil service and public body	21	4.38			21	
NGO activist	17	3.54		3	14	
Media / actor / musician	12	2.50			12	
Corporate / own employee incl. lawyer	20	4.17			20	
Other incl. doctor and priest	6	1.25			6	
Imprisoned	8	1.67				8
Passed away	7	1.46				7
Unknown	46	9.58				46
Total	480	100.00	33	49 (10.2%)	286 (59.6%)	145 (30.2%)

* This includes former MEPs by working for the European Commission, Brussels based NGOs and think tanks as well as Brussels based lobbyists

Breaking this data down by European Party Group (EPG) shows that in absolute terms those who used to be a member of the S&D, ALDE or EPP were best represented in the lobbyist category. In relative terms, however, the Greens, ECR and EFD also had a similar percentage of people who stayed in the Brussels bubble with ALDE having the highest percentage of MEPs becoming lobbyists. In this context, it is also important to consider whether certain groups had a higher percentage of MEPs deciding not to run for re-election in 2014. If many MEPs decided not to pursue a career in the EP, this could have an impact on the number of MEPs pursuing a career elsewhere, including as lobbyists. The data (DeHavilland consultancy, 2014), however, shows that for all groups, between 25 and 35 percent decided not to stand for re-election (with the ECR being the main outlier). In terms of who was subsequently successful in being re-elected when standing, the success rate varied from about half of the ECR members to over 80 percent of the GUE/NGL members. These numbers, then, do not suggest that becoming a lobbyist is related to the likelihood of an MEP standing and being re-elected.

Table 18: EPG background and post-2014 careers (excluding continuing MEPs)

EPG membership	Total	Brussels lobbyist	Stayed in Brussels bubble (incl. lobbyists)*	Other career outside of Brussels	Left workforce / unknown	Percentage of MEPs not standing for re-election**	Chance of getting re-elected when standing***
GUE / NGL	26	0	0	15	11	35.6%	82.6%
Greens	36	2	3	26	7	31.3%	73.8%
S&D	125	9	13	72	40	32.4%	72.6%
ALDE	55	10	12	33	10	24.7%	65.6%
EPP	172	8	16	100	56	30.9%	72.4%
ECR	19	2	3	12	4	12.5%	48.1%
EFD	19	2	2	8	9	24.2%	63.6%
Non attached	28	0	0	20	8	30.2%	60%
Total	480	33	49	286	145		

* This includes by working for the European Commission, Brussels based NGOs and think tanks as well as Brussels based lobbyists

** The percentage of MEPs of whom it was unknown whether they had stood for re-election was between 5-13% per group

*** Calculated by comparing the successfully re-elected with those who stood but did not get re-elected

Besides considering the different political groups, it is also possible to look at variations among member states. Here it has been found that, in particular, those member states which joined the EU in 2004 and 2007 do not have many MEPs who decide to stay in the Brussels bubble when they leave the EP after the elections. The Czech Republic is an exception here. Of the countries which had many MEPs not being re-elected, such as France, Italy and Poland, only very few individuals stayed in Brussels. It is also worth noting the large number of former MEPs from the UK who decided to stay in Brussels. Nearly one in four of those staying in Brussels were from the UK despite the fact that UK MEPs did not have a significantly smaller likelihood of being re-elected than their peers.

Table 19: Member state background and post-2014 careers (excluding continuing MEPs)

Member states	Total	Brussels lobbyist	Stayed in Brussels bubble (incl. lobbyists)*	Other career outside of Brussels	Left workforce / unknown	Percentage of MEPs not standing for re-election**	Chance of getting re-elected when standing***
Austria	11	1	1	6	4	38.1%	76.9%
Belgium	12	1	2	8	2	29.2%	80%
Bulgaria	16		1	11	4	45.5%	66.7%
Cyprus	6			2	4	25%	50%
Czech Republic	17	3	4	9	4	43.5%	50%
Denmark	7	2	2	4	1	33.3%	88.9%
Estonia	5			5		14.3%	50%
Finland	9	2	3	6		23.5%	72.7%
France	48		3	34	11	25.6%	66.7%
Germany	39	5	6	14	19	26.9%	89%
Greece	27			18	9	55.6%	0%
Hungary	16	1	2	10	4	19.2%	62.5%
Ireland	10	1	1	4	5	20%	62.5%
Italy	62	2	3	44	15	28.4%	35.2%
Latvia	4			3	1	11.1%	62.5%
Lithuania	7			3	4	23.1%	75%
Luxembourg	2				2	33.3%	100%
Malta	6			5	1	22.2%	100%
The Netherlands	16	3	3	11	2	37.9%	86.7%
Poland	31	1	1	28	2	18.5%	57.5%
Portugal	15		1	9	5	58.3%	90%
Romania	16			7	9	29.7%	91.3%
Slovakia	7			5	2	23.1%	75%
Slovenia	5		1	1	3	33.3%	66.7%
Spain	37	1	3	21	13	35%	69.7%
Sweden	12	1	1	6	5	27.3%	71.4%
UK	37	9	11	12	14	27.3%	78.4%
Total	480	33	49	286	145		

* This includes by working for the European Commission, Brussels based NGOs and think tanks as well as Brussels based lobbyists
** The percentage of MEPs of whom it was unknown whether they had stood for re-election was 9% on average per member state
*** Calculated by comparing the successfully re-elected with those who stood but did not get re-elected

4.4. Hypotheses

It is unlikely that every MEP has an equal opportunity of becoming a lobbyist after leaving the EP and some former MEPs are likely to be more attractive to lobbying firms. The data in table 17 shows that former MEPs have a range of career options when they are not re-elected to the EP. Many return to domestic careers but some do not want to leave the Brussels bubble. The US literature provides some ideas regarding which MEPs are more likely to become lobbyists. On the one hand, process and content knowledge would seem to be important. Others, on the other hand, argue that access to contacts is more important.

I would argue that particularly process and content knowledge are important for revolving door politicians in the EP, more so than having a network of contacts. Admittedly, having the right contacts and relationships with politicians and policymakers are important for a lobbyist, as lobbying is also about building a relationship of trust between the lobbyist and the politician; being able to establish informal contacts makes a former MEP a valuable lobbyist for his or her clients or new employer. I would, however, argue that in the EP context, having access to contacts is a less determinant factor of who becomes a lobbyist than having process and content knowledge.

One of the reasons for this is the high turnover of the EP. As mentioned before, the EP turnover is significantly higher than that of Congress. This provides MEPs with less time to develop a network of contacts in the European political arena. There is also a higher risk that a significant part of the network will not be in place anymore after fresh elections. Relying on revolving door politicians for having access to contacts could therefore be less relevant for Brussels lobbying firms.

Second, Congress is dominated by two political parties, one of which will hold a majority. The EP, on the other hand, is more plural and populated with a number of different political groups, which are in themselves again composed of national delegations elected based on national lists. Where in the US former politicians of one party would have a relatively close ideological proximity to around half of all politicians, this is less so the case in the EP. This again undermines the argument that access to contacts is particularly important for revolving door politicians in the EU.

To test whether access to contacts is indeed less valued for revolving door politicians than process and content knowledge, a number of hypotheses are tested in this paper. As it is difficult to measure how many contacts an MEP exactly had in the EP, a proxy could be the extent to which an MEP had a central, coordinating role in the EP. For this, one could think of coordinating positions, such as being a committee chair, EPG coordinator in a committee or an EP (vice)president. These positions have been called 'mega-seats' (Carroll et al., 2006). It is likely that in these roles, an MEP builds up a broader network of contacts than MEPs who do not take up these coordinating roles.

H1: MEPs in mega-seats are not more likely to be employed as lobbyists after their time in the EP

Linked to importance of having access to contacts is the ideological proximity of a lobbyist to the politician he or she is seeking to influence. The work and decisions of the EP are dominated by the centrist groups of the S&D, ALDE and the EPP. As Eggers (2010) has argued, politicians with an ideology close to the lobbyist are more likely to trust the information they receive. Being from one of the

mainstream parties, and not a political outlier, makes a former MEP more appealing to be hired, as it is more likely that he or she will be able to gain access to and be trusted by the MEPs who need to be lobbied. Applying the logic from the US literature, it should be argued that having been from one of these centrist groups would also help in accessing contacts. However, as stated earlier, I do not believe this to be a key determining factor in the EP.

H2: MEPs from one of the mainstream political groups are not more likely to be employed as lobbyists after their time in the EP

Instead of emphasising the importance of having a network of contacts, I argue that having process and content knowledge are more important factors for determining who is likely to become a revolving door politician. Here, the underlying idea is that a lobbyist needs to be able to provide credible expert information at the right time. There are a number of ways former MEPs could have built up process and content expertise. Active participation in the EP's legislative process is a possible explanatory factor here. Giving speeches, attending plenary sessions, being a rapporteur or writing own initiative reports are all examples of participation through which an MEP might improve his or her knowledge and expertise. For example, being a rapporteur on a legislative proposal gives an MEP in-depth knowledge of a particular dossier which could be valuable on becoming a lobbyist. Also, an MEP writing his or her own initiative reports may help such a person to become an expert in a certain policy area. Showing a higher level of participation in the legislative process could thereby make an MEP more attractive for lobbying firms and other interest organisations, as it is a signal of him or her having built up content knowledge.

H3: MEPs who have been more active as rapporteurs or by writing own initiative reports are more likely to become lobbyists after their time in the EP

As lobbying is a resource-intensive activity, it is likely that those looking to have their interests represented will allocate resources carefully. In certain policy areas, the EP does not have a significant role in the legislative process, whereas in others it operates on an equal footing with the Council. The work of the EP is dealt with through the committee structure, which forms the backbone of the parliament (Neuhold, 2001). Some committees play a more powerful role in the legislative process than others and have more of an impact on external parties who will be seeking to influence the legislative process. A committee can be considered to be powerful when it has significant regulatory and/or budgetary powers (Yordanova, 2009). These more powerful committees are therefore likely subject to more lobbying activities than the less powerful committees. Having expert knowledge about how these committees operate and the issues that are discussed could make former MEPs from these committees more attractive as lobbyists. This was also found to be relevant in the US context by Butler and Savoy (2010).

H4: MEPs who have been members of a powerful EP committee are more likely to become lobbyists after their time in the EP

Finally, as Kim (2013) discovered in the US Congress, length of service in parliament can be a predictor of the likelihood of becoming a lobbyist. The longer an MEP has been a member, the more process and content knowledge he or she has

that can be of use as a lobbyist. So those with a longer tenure in the EP are likely to be more attractive candidates to be hired by lobbying firms.

H5: MEPs who have served longer in the EP are more likely to become lobbyists

4.5. Methodology and data

To analyse which MEPs become lobbyists and what their characteristics are, I am using a dataset comprising information from the seventh EP (2009-2014) as this was the most recent completed EP term. The data contains information on those MEPs who did not return to the parliament after the 2014 elections and includes information on which careers these former MEPs pursued. The information on the post-EP careers was derived from various sources including NGO transparency databases, interviews, former MEP's websites and lobbying firms' websites. An introduction to this data is provided in table 17.

To test the impact of the explanatory variables, a multilogistic regression analysis conducted using a dependent variable with three categories: i) those who become lobbyists in Brussels, ii) those who stay in the Brussels bubble in a different career, and iii) those who move away from Brussels either to a different career or to retire. It was decided to use a dependent variable with three categories (rather than a simple split between those who become lobbyists and those who did not) to avoid capturing the characteristics of those who want to stay in the Brussels bubble rather than those who become lobbyists. If any differences are found between category one and two, it confirms that those characteristics found for the lobbyists are indeed discrete characteristics and not those of a broader category.

Most of the information for the independent variables in the analysis was derived from the EP website. This includes information on an MEP's gender, age, length of membership and whether he or she has held a mega-seat position. A mega-seat position has been defined as having been an EP (vice)President, committee chair or a group coordinator. The population size in 2009 (the start of the seventh EP) of a country that an MEP represents was obtained from Eurostat. Information from DeHavilland consultancy was used to identify whether an MEP stood for re-election in the 2014 election or whether he or she had not been a candidate. The EP website also gave the necessary information about an MEP's EPG and national party. This was combined with information from Hix and Noury (2015) about the size of the EPG and national party group at the start of the seventh EP. Yordanova (2009) has provided a useful classification of the EP committees into more and less powerful categories. For the activities of MEPs, information compiled by Hurka, Kaeding and Obholzer (2015) was used. This includes detail of the attendance rates of MEPs at plenary roll-call votes as well as the number of speeches, rapporteurships and MEPs' own initiative reports.

4.6. Results

Table 20 shows the results of the empirical analysis; deceased or imprisoned former MEPs, as well as those of whom the post-2014 career is unknown, have been excluded to avoid distortion of the data. This leaves 419 observations in the analysis. The multilogit regression analysis uses those who left Brussels as the base scenario and compares the two other categories with that. In columns one to four, the national party size is included as a control variable. Whether an MEP was a member of a mainstream party group is included as a control variable in columns

five to eight. These two variables are kept separate as they correlate with each other. Keeping them separate in two regression analyses allows us analyse their individual effects.

In columns three, four, seven and eight it is tested whether those holding a mega-seat are more likely to stay in the Brussels bubble or become a lobbyist after their time in the EP. It could however be expected that MEPs in more senior positions are more active and have been in parliament for longer. The correlation between the variable 'mega-seat' and the four types of legislative participation as well as the length of membership was, therefore, tested by conducting a t-test. These tests did indeed show a correlation between holding a mega-seat on the one hand and four types of activities and length of membership on the other. Therefore, these variables were not included in the analysis in columns three, four, seven and eight where the mega-seat variables were included.

The coefficients shown are the results from the multilogit regression analysis and as it is easier to interpret the odds ratios of these coefficients, a formula is used to convert the coefficients into odds ratios (Box-Steffensmeier and Jones, 1997)[11]. Table 21 shows the increases or decreases, in percentages, in the likelihood of an MEP staying in the Brussels bubble or becoming a lobbyist. From the results, it becomes clear that whether an MEP is male or female does not have an impact on the likelihood of him or her becoming a lobbyist, or staying in the Brussels bubble. Also, age or member state size are not factors influencing this.

[11] The coefficient can be converted into odds ratios by using the following formula: $\%\Delta = (e^{\beta k\Delta} - 1) * 100$ (Box-Steffensmeier and Jones, 1997)

Table 20: Multilogit regression analysis on those who stayed for a career in Brussels vs. those who left the Brussels bubble (the data excludes unknowns, deceased and imprisoned)

	(1) Stayed in Brussels bubble (excl. lobbyists)	(2) Brussels lobbyist	(3) Stayed in Brussels bubble (excl. lobbyists)	(4) Brussels lobbyist	(5) Stayed in Brussels bubble (excl. lobbyists)	(6) Brussels lobbyist	(7) Stayed in Brussels bubble (excl. lobbyists)	(8) Brussels lobbyist
Gender (male)	-0.0746	-0.109	-0.216	-0.0538	-0.132	-0.193	-0.212	-0.116
	(0.586)	(0.405)	(0.542)	(0.393)	(0.558)	(0.403)	(0.540)	(0.387)
Age	-0.0174	-0.0151	-0.0129	-0.0166	-0.0167	-0.0139	-0.0120	-0.0160
	(0.0226)	(0.0146)	(0.0201)	(0.0140)	(0.0227)	(0.0147)	(0.0193)	(0.0141)
Population size	-0.0143	0.0111	-0.00828	0.0140	0.00234	-0.00417	0.00296	0.00184
	(0.0164)	(0.00937)	(0.0131)	(0.00902)	(0.00990)	(0.00753)	(0.00980)	(0.00703)
Speeches	-0.000404	-0.00214**	0.000281	-0.00199**	-0.000187	-0.00222**	0.000392	-0.00218**
	(0.000918)	(0.00104)	(0.000804)	(0.000941)	(0.000856)	(0.000941)	(0.000776)	(0.000897)
Attendance	0.104***	-0.0164			0.0954***	-0.0143		
	(0.0367)	(0.0161)			(0.0359)	(0.0173)		
Rapporteurships	0.0192	0.00976			0.0196	0.000722		
	(0.0259)	(0.0581)			(0.0277)	(0.0585)		
Own initiative reports	0.637***	0.289			0.627***	0.245		
	(0.232)	(0.215)			(0.243)	(0.218)		
Membership length	0.000101	0.000237***			9.03e-05	0.000210***		
	(9.01e-05)	(7.93e-05)			(8.48e-05)	(7.47e-05)		
National party size	0.0527	-0.0725***	0.0391	-0.0541**				
	(0.0406)	(0.0267)	(0.0359)	(0.0220)				
Mainstream party members (S&D, ALDE, EPP)					0.785	0.365	0.974	0.450
					(0.830)	(0.471)	(0.782)	(0.473)
Member of a more powerful committee	-0.433	1.412**	-0.543	1.088**	-0.327	1.190*	-0.525	0.986*
	(0.578)	(0.655)	(0.538)	(0.549)	(0.632)	(0.609)	(0.544)	(0.550)
Mega-seat			1.657***	0.592			1.682***	0.555
			(0.532)	(0.397)			(0.535)	(0.390)
Constant	-11.97***	-1.847	-2.931**	-2.357**	-11.88***	-2.146	-3.735**	-2.684**
	(3.865)	(1.597)	(1.485)	(1.035)	(3.988)	(1.767)	(1.769)	(1.088)
Observations	419	419	419	419	419	419	419	419
Pseudo R2	0.1195	0.1195	0.0758	0.0758	0.1003	0.1003	0.0683	0.0683

Robust standard errors in parentheses
*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

Some of the other variables do however show relevant differences between those who become Brussels lobbyists and those who pursue a different profession in the Brussels bubble. Certain forms of participation in the EP's legislative process are associated with an MEP's likelihood of staying in the Brussels bubble (excluding lobbyists). Those who attend plenary votes more often and write more of own initiative reports are more likely to stay in the Brussels bubble than others. Having written an own initiative report increased the likelihood of an MEP staying in Brussels after the 2014 elections in a role other than as a lobbyist by 88 percent. Also, having held a mega-seat increased the likelihood that an MEP stayed in Brussels significantly. Having been an EP (vice)President, committee chair or group coordinator increased the likelihood of this outcome by more than 400 percent.

To become a lobbyist in Brussels, other factors are of influence, however. An MEP having served in the EP for a relatively longer period of time is associated with an increased likelihood of their becoming a lobbyist, confirming the fifth hypothesis. This is not something found to be of relevance for those who pursue other careers in Brussels. This could indicate that lobbying firms do indeed value process and content experience in the EP when hiring lobbyists.

Interestingly, having given more speeches would seem to decrease the likelihood of an MEP becoming a lobbyist. All other forms of legislative participation were not found to be statistically significant. The third hypothesis, which suggested that becoming a policy expert by being active as a rapporteur, is therefore not confirmed. It was also found that MEPs from smaller national parties were more likely to become lobbyists than others. It might be the case that given the dominant role of certain large national parties in the EP, MEPs from smaller

parties might be looking for alternative jobs sooner. To make sure that the results were not driven by one or just a small number of national parties, the underlying data was further analysed. It was found that the revolving door MEPs came from 22 different national parties and not a handful, which could have led to an incorrect interpretation of the results.

Importantly, MEPs who sat on more powerful committees were between 168 and 300 percent more likely to become a lobbyist, confirming the hypothesis on this point. As stated, it is more likely that clients are willing to spend money on seeking to influence committees which do have a say over policy. Attracting lobbyists who can serve these clients well is something lobby firms will be looking to do. Having been a member of these powerful committees gives former MEPs in-depth knowledge about key files and working practices of the committee, which will be valued. The data also confirms the first and second hypotheses in this paper, namely that holding a mega-seat and being from one of the mainstream political groups does not increase the likelihood that an MEP becomes a lobbyist. This suggests that indeed having access to contacts is found to be less relevant in the revolving door context of the EP.

Table 21: Likelihood interpretation of statistically significant variables in table 20. The percentages are the interpretation of the odds ratio. The percentage shows the increase (or decrease) in the likelihood of the outcome (i.e. staying in the Brussels bubble or being a Brussels lobbyist)

	(1) Stayed in Brussels bubble (excl. lobbyists)	(2) Brussels lobbyist	(3) Stayed in Brussels bubble (excl. lobbyists)	(4) Brussels lobbyist	(5) Stayed in Brussels bubble (excl. lobbyists)	(6) Brussels lobbyist	(7) Stayed in Brussels bubble (excl. lobbyists)	(8) Brussels lobbyist
Speeches		- 0.2%		- 0.2%		- 0.2%		-0.2%
Attendance	+ 11%		Not included	Not included	+ 10%		Not included	Not included
Own initiative report	+ 89%		Not included	Not included	+ 87%		Not included	Not included
Membership length		+ 0.024 %	Not included	Not included		+ 0.021%	Not included	Not included
National party size		- 7%		- 5.3%	Not included	Not included	Not included	Not included
Mainstream party	Not included	Not included	Not included	Not included				
Member of a powerful committee		+ 310%		+ 197%		+ 229%		+ 168%
Mega-seat	Not included	Not included	+ 424%		Not included	Not included	+ 438%	
Observations	419	419	419	419	419	419	419	419

After having conducted the multilogit regression analyses, I now turn to some post-estimation analyses. The figures show the marginal effects of the independent variables, i.e. the predicted increment of the dependent variable associated with a unit increase in one of the independent variables keeping the others constant. Figure one and two analyse these effects for an MEP who becomes a lobbyist and figure three for someone who pursues a different career in the Brussels bubble. Figure one looks at the relationship between an MEP's length of membership of the EP and the likelihood of becoming a lobbyist. The two lines show the differences for those MEPs who were member of more powerful committees and those we were on less powerful committees. The figure confirms that becoming a lobbyist depends on the membership length of an MEP in the parliament. It also shows that there is variation in the likelihood of becoming a lobbyist between MEPs who used to be members of a powerful committee as they are more likely to become lobbyists.

Figure 1: Post-estimation of relationship between membership length and probability of becoming a lobbyist, by membership of a powerful EP committee or not showing the marginal effects and 95% confidence intervals

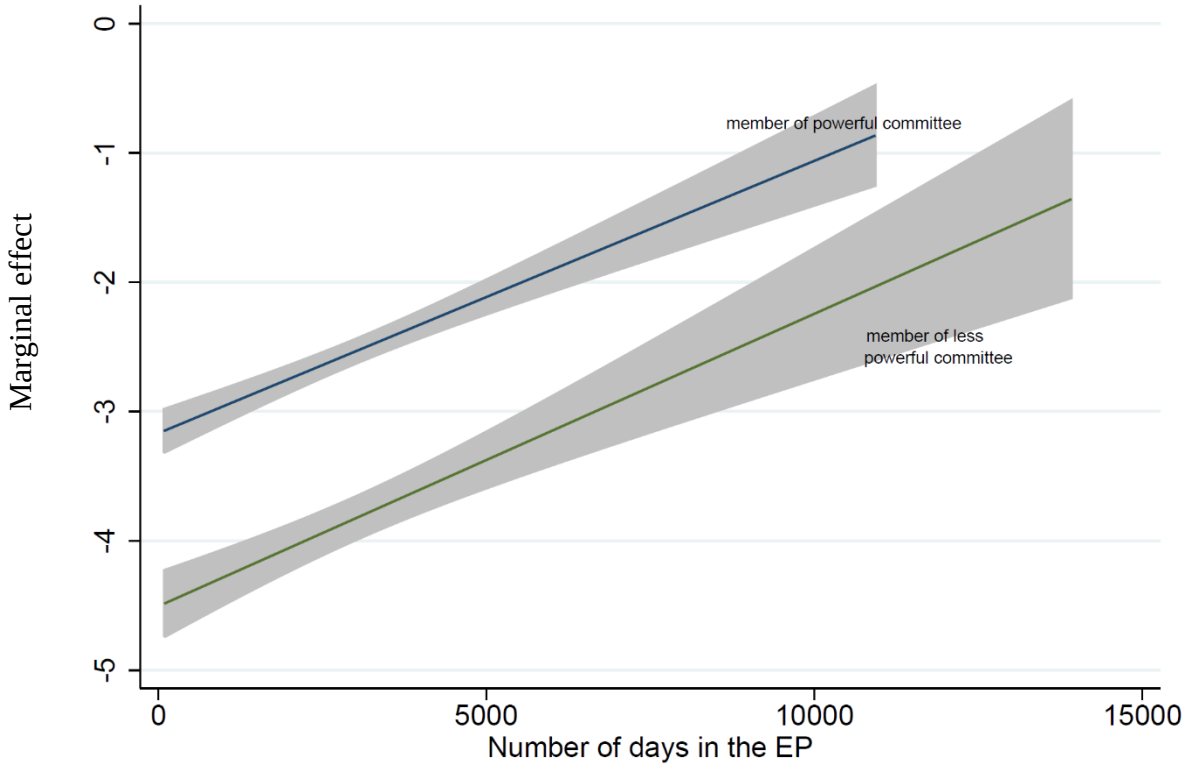
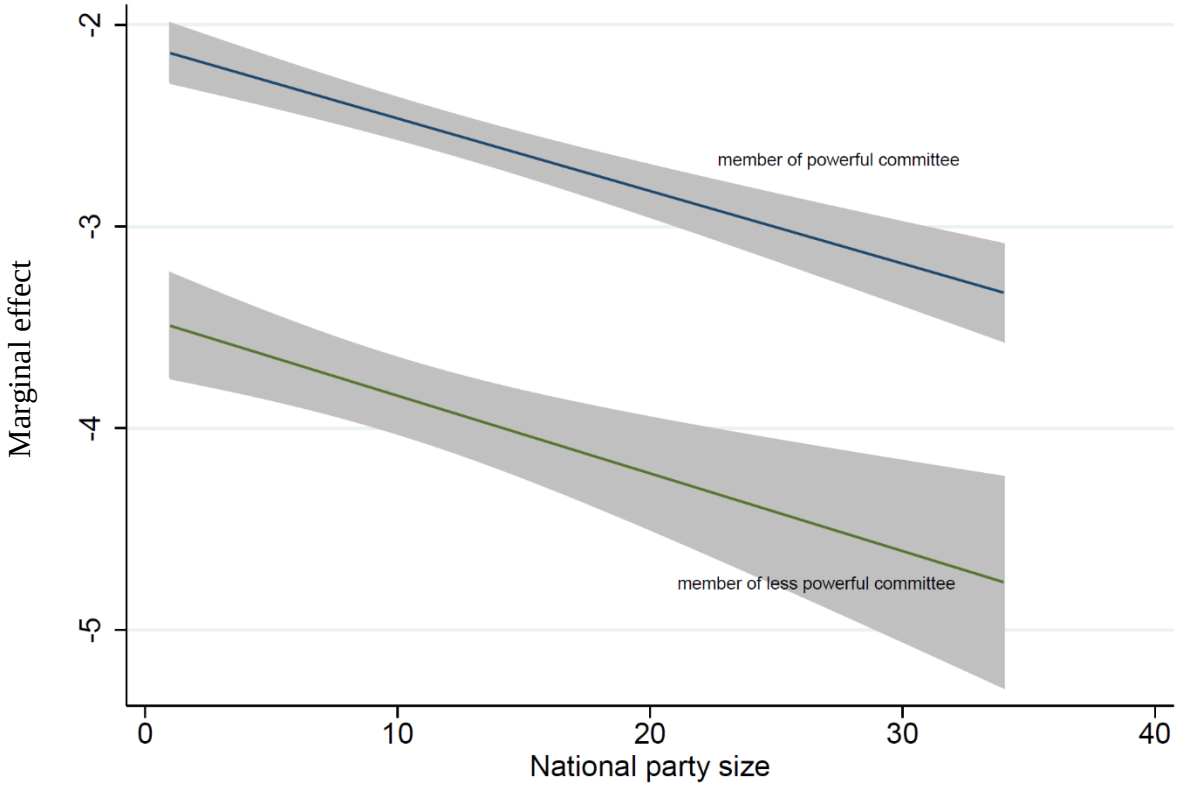


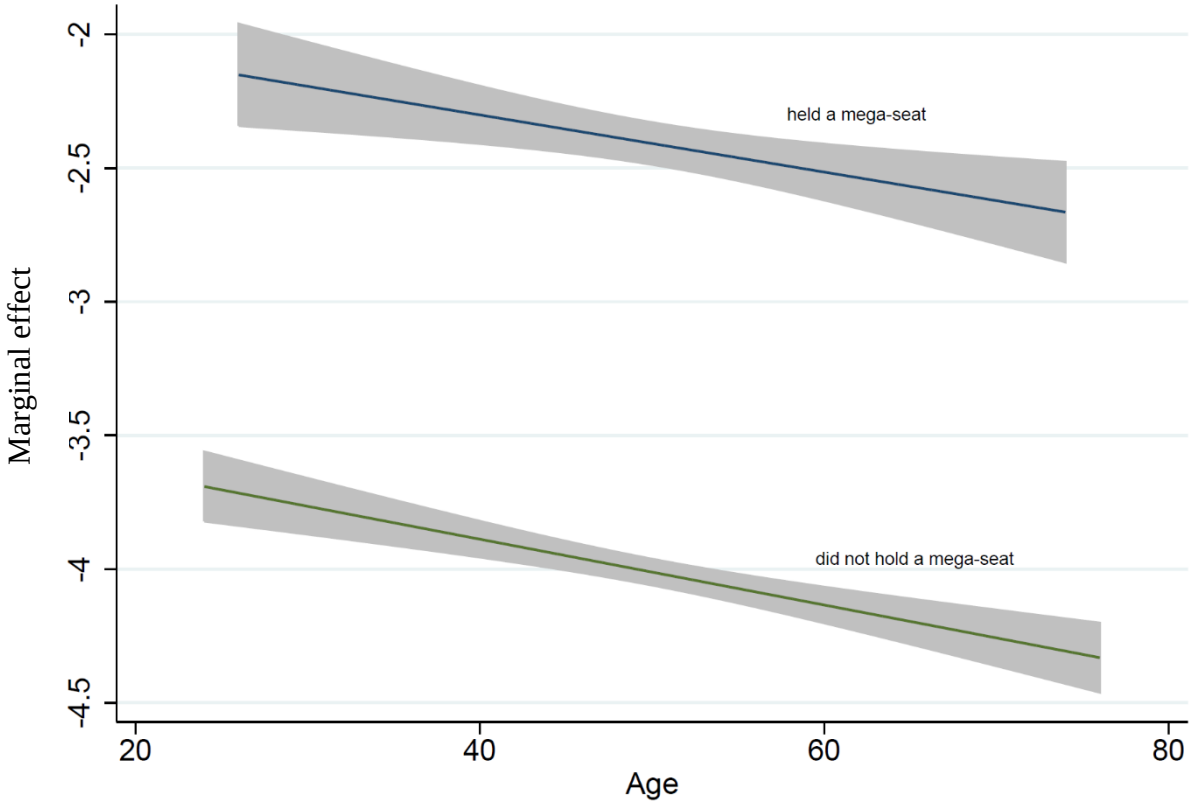
Figure two looks at the relationship between the size of the national party an MEP belongs to and the probability of becoming a lobbyist. The two lines show the marginal effects for those MEPs who were member of more powerful committees and those we were on less powerful committees. The figure confirms that the size of an MEP's national party has an impact on the likelihood of becoming a lobbyist with those from smaller national political parties being more likely of becoming a lobbyist. Figure two shows that there is again a distinction between those MEPs who used to be members of a powerful committee with those who have been predicted to be more likely to become lobbyists.

Figure 2: Post-estimation of relationship between national party size and probability of becoming a lobbyist, by membership of a powerful EP committee or not showing the marginal effects and 95% confidence intervals



The final post-estimation in figure three looks at the relationship between the age an MEP and the probability of staying in the Brussels bubble (excluding those who become lobbyists). The two lines show the different marginal effects for those MEPs who held a mega-seat and those who did not. The figure shows that the older an MEP becomes, the less likely it is that he or she will take on a role in the Brussels bubble when leaving the EP. This effect is however smaller for those who held a mega-seat when they were in the EP.

Figure 3: Post-estimation of relationship between age and probability of staying in Brussels bubble (excl. lobbyists), by having a mega-seat or not showing the marginal effects and 95% confidence intervals



4.7. Discussion and conclusion

Interest representation in Brussels has become more important in recent decades. The increase in powers of the EP has made it a key target for lobbyists, besides targeting the European Commission, it is agenda-setting capacity, and member states. For lobbying firms and others who are looking to have their interests represented, it is important to employ people who understand the functioning of the EP and who are able to convey the messages needed to influence the policymaking process. It could therefore be expected that former MEPs are an important pool of talent for these firms and organisations. Becoming a lobbyist can be an attractive option for MEPs who are keen on staying involved in the Brussels political process after their time in the EP.

The revolving door phenomenon is well known in Washington but has not been studied in significant detail in Brussels yet. There is a lack of knowledge about both the size of the phenomenon as well as what the characteristics may be that MEPs who are keen on pursuing a career as lobbyist need to have. This paper has sought to address this gap by combining different data sources on MEPs who left the EP after the 2014 elections.

Around ten percent of MEPs who have left the EP stayed in Brussels after the 2014 elections. Around two-thirds of this group became lobbyists[12]. A question can be raised as to what extent the MEPs who become Brussels based lobbyists are different from others who stay in Brussels pursuing other careers after their time in the EP. To make sure that the analysis did not capture the overall characteristics of those who stay in Brussels, the group was split into those who started conducting

[12] This might not seem significant and is indeed less in relative terms than is the case in Washington; however, in total the number of lobbyists is similar to the US given the Congress's high incumbency rate.

lobbying activities and those who found a job elsewhere in the Brussels bubble. These other jobs turn out to be mainly with the European Commission. In the analysis, the lobbyists were found to have some distinct characteristics, different from their peers who stayed in Brussels as non-lobbyists, as well as distinct from their former colleagues who moved to careers elsewhere or left the workforce entirely. Three key characteristics are found to be of particular importance for those who become lobbyists: their length of service in the EP, whether they used to be a member of a powerful committee in the EP and their membership of a smaller national political party.

In terms of the political groups that Brussels lobbyists come from, unlike what could have been expected from the US literature, MEPs from the mainstream, more centrist, political groups are not found to be hired more often. Although former ALDE MEPs relatively often became lobbyists, mainstream parties overall do not dominate. This suggests that former MEPs from a broader spectrum are able to gain sufficient access to the EP for their lobbying activities, even if they had a different ideological proximity. Also, former MEPs who held one of the mega-seats in the parliament are not more likely to be hired as lobbyists. They do however stay in other careers in Brussels more often. They are significantly more often hired for jobs elsewhere, in particular by the European Commission.

With regard to the activities conducted by MEPs, it does not seem to be the case that MEPs who participate very actively, by being a rapporteur for example, are more likely to become lobbyists. The policy expertise developed by being a rapporteur or participating in other ways does not have a significant effect. MEPs writing own initiative reports does, however, increase the likelihood of pursuing

their careers elsewhere in the Brussels bubble possibly because this gives MEPs a certain profile on a topic.

One of the key findings in the analysis is that MEPs who become lobbyists are significantly more likely to have been a member of a powerful committee. The committees which have the most budgetary and legislative influence can be expected to be the prime targets of lobbyists. Hiring former members of these committees would be a strategy to gain access. These former committee members are likely to have a better knowledge of the procedures and main dossiers with which a committee deals.

Knowledge of the procedures of the EP comes with time. This could explain the fact that the longer an MEP has served in the parliament, the more likely it is he or she will become a lobbyist. Longer experience is likely to improve the service that a lobbyist can provide to his or her clients and this is found to be important.

Although the focus of former MEPs still seems to be on pursuing a domestic political career, a small group of them is involved in the revolving door of Brussels. The findings in this paper confirm some of the aspects of the revolving door phenomenon in the US. In particular, they broadly suggest that having process and content knowledge is more valuable for revolving door politicians than having access to contacts. This is understandable given the higher turnover and the plural nature of the EP. Those who become lobbyists are different from others who also decide to stay in the Brussels bubble outside of lobbying.

This area of research would benefit from further analysis. The literature available on former European politicians who become lobbyists is scarce, to say the least. It would be worth repeating this analysis for other EP terms to see if similar results could be found and trends identified. Also, given the important role that

assistants play in the work of MEPs, it would be worth conducting a more in-depth analysis of their role in the revolving door. It is possible that a considerable number of them become lobbyists after they have finished working in the EP.

From a normative perspective it is difficult to say whether the revolving door at the EP is problematic. For this further analysis is needed, for example on whether the revolving door has an impact on the voting behaviour of MEPs. In any event, it would seem to be important for the EP to avoid MEPs potentially being influenced in their behaviour by future career opportunities at private lobby firms. For this it might be an idea to introduce a cooling off period as is already in place for European Commissioners.

With the powers of the EP increasing over time, the value of those with knowledge of this institution can be expected to increase. Also likely to increase in number are organisations seeking to influence the policy process from the outside by hiring those who have experience from the inside. This is an understandable tactic, but important to be understood, both from an ethical and academic perspective. Familiarity with the process and content in the EP is important for those MEPs who wish to become lobbyists.

4.8. Appendix

Table 20b: Multilogit regression analysis with EPGs as dummy variables

	(1) Stayed in Brussels bubble (excl. lobbyists)	(2) Brussels lobbyist	(3) Stayed in Brussels bubble (excl. lobbyists)	(4) Brussels lobbyist
Gender (male)	-0.159 (0.567)	-0.117 (0.387)	-0.234 (0.536)	-0.0650 (0.384)
Age	-0.0158 (0.0231)	-0.00991 (0.0152)	-0.0135 (0.0193)	-0.00957 (0.0144)
Population size	0.000260 (0.0100)	-0.00697 (0.00745)	0.000367 (0.0103)	-0.000297 (0.00726)
Speeches	-0.000127 (0.000814)	-0.00217** (0.00107)	0.000369 (0.000783)	-0.00219** (0.00102)
Attendance	0.0949*** (0.0357)	-0.0139 (0.0168)		
Rapporteurships	0.0254 (0.0304)	-0.00613 (0.0562)		
Own initiative reports	0.634** (0.254)	0.248 (0.211)		
Membership length	7.70e-05 (8.44e-05)	0.000236*** (7.85e-05)		
Member of a powerful committee	-0.272 (0.630)	1.131* (0.601)	-0.534 (0.560)	0.969* (0.560)
Mega-seat			1.675*** (0.548)	0.474 (0.416)
GUE/NGL	-15.61*** (0.639)	-15.26*** (0.524)	-15.17*** (0.531)	-14.37*** (0.500)
Greens	-0.688 (1.258)	0.282 (0.808)	-0.827 (1.117)	-0.0371 (0.823)
S&D	-0.199 (0.650)	0.370 (0.517)	-0.336 (0.630)	0.404 (0.516)
ALDE	-0.0320 (0.817)	1.477*** (0.542)	-0.238 (0.865)	1.289** (0.522)
ECR	0.825 (1.207)	0.682 (0.922)	0.307 (1.061)	0.954 (0.823)
EFD	-15.11*** (0.701)	1.279 (0.888)	-14.45*** (0.530)	1.072 (0.929)
Non-inscripts	-15.38*** (0.538)	-15.19*** (0.505)	-14.47*** (0.525)	-14.21*** (0.509)
Constant	-10.95*** (3.662)	-2.484 (1.827)	-2.425* (1.338)	-2.928** (1.175)
Observations	419	419	419	419
Pseudo R2	0.1501	0.1501	0.1145	0.1145

Robust standard errors in parentheses *** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1.
For the EPGs, the EPP was used as a base. National party size and the 'mainstream party' variable were left out

As King and Zeng argued (1999), standard logistic regressions can sharply underestimate the probability of rare events. They argue that the real information which is of interest to researchers lies in the cases which have a positive value on the binary dependent variable, rather than the cases with a zero value. With the large number of zeros, the analysis will be biased in the direction of these zeros and underestimate an event from happening. King and Zeng have therefore developed an alternative statistical method; the rare events logistic regression. As a rule of thumb they say that the effects of using this alternative method will be largest when the number of observations is small (under a few thousand) and the events are rare (under 5%). With 419 observation and 16 cases where former MEPs stay in Brussels but do not take on lobbyist positions, both condition are met and would justify using this rare events logistic regression. I have therefore analysed the data and the results can be found in table 20c below. These should be compared with the results in table 20, which uses a traditional multilogit regression analysis. The results turn out to be broadly similar. The effects point in the same direction and the variables which were found to be statistically significant still are when using the rare events logistic regression. The main difference is that having had more rapporteurships is now found to have a positive, statistically significant effect on the likelihood of staying in the Brussels bubble (outside of lobbying). However, this effect is significant only at $p<0.1$.

Tabel 20c: Rare events logistic regressions on those who stayed for a career in Brussels vs. those who left the Brussels bubble (the data excludes unknowns, deceased and imprisoned)

	(1) Stayed in Brussels bubble (excl. lobbyists)	(2) Brussels lobbyist	(3) Stayed in Brussels bubble (excl. lobbyists)	(4) Brussels lobbyist	(5) Stayed in Brussels bubble (excl. lobbyists)	(6) Brussels lobbyist	(7) Stayed in Brussels bubble (excl. lobbyists)	(8) Brussels lobbyist
Gender	-0.0948	-0.117	-0.217	-0.0563	-0.153	-0.198	-0.219	-0.120
	(0.568)	(0.395)	(0.531)	(0.386)	(0.540)	(0.392)	(0.528)	(0.379)
Age	-0.0166	-0.0145	-0.0113	-0.0159	-0.0159	-0.0132	-0.0108	-0.0151
	(0.0219)	(0.0142)	(0.0196)	(0.0137)	(0.0220)	(0.0143)	(0.0188)	(0.0138)
Population size	-0.0115	0.0113	-0.00714	0.0145	0.00271	-0.00373	0.00273	0.00204
	(0.0160)	(0.00912)	(0.0128)	(0.00887)	(0.00954)	(0.00731)	(0.00959)	(0.00689)
Speeches	0.000110	-0.00127	0.000737	-0.00125	0.000262	-0.00145	0.000830	-0.00151*
	(0.000877)	(0.00101)	(0.000775)	(0.000937)	(0.000814)	(0.000913)	(0.000744)	(0.000891)
Attendance	0.0942***	-0.0193			0.0863**	-0.0175		
	(0.0357)	(0.0153)			(0.0348)	(0.0163)		
Rapporteurships	0.0485*	0.0333			0.0517*	0.0262		
	(0.0250)	(0.0570)			(0.0268)	(0.0574)		
Own initiative reports	0.531**	0.217			0.520**	0.174		
	(0.221)	(0.206)			(0.231)	(0.210)		
Membership length	7.65e-05	0.000216***			6.63e-05	0.000193***		
	(8.43e-05)	(7.67e-05)			(8.02e-05)	(7.21e-05)		
National party size	0.0493	-0.0680***	0.0380	-0.0533**				
	(0.0397)	(0.0258)	(0.0352)	(0.0217)				
Mainstream party members (S&D, ALDE, EPP)					0.495	0.251	0.724	0.353
					(0.806)	(0.459)	(0.768)	(0.461)
Member of a more powerful committee	-0.572	1.244*	-0.628	0.988*	-0.469	1.045*	-0.612	0.900*
	(0.561)	(0.640)	(0.528)	(0.540)	(0.612)	(0.594)	(0.532)	(0.540)
Mega-seat			1.530***	0.641*			1.552***	0.598
			(0.524)	(0.383)			(0.523)	(0.376)
Constant	-10.85***	-1.447	-2.845*	-2.353**	-10.53***	-1.632	-3.380*	-2.596**
	(3.763)	(1.536)	(1.460)	(1.019)	(3.878)	(1.687)	(1.737)	(1.064)
Observations	419	419	419	419	419	419	419	419

Robust standard errors in parentheses
*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

Table 21b: Likelihood interpretation of statistically significant variables in table 20b. The percentages are the interpretation of the odds ratio. The percentage shows the increase (or decrease) in the likelihood of the outcome (i.e. staying in the Brussels bubble or being a Brussels lobbyist)

	(1) Stayed in Brussels bubble (excl. lobbyists)	(2) Brussels lobbyist	(3) Stayed in Brussels bubble (excl. lobbyists)	(4) Brussels lobbyist
Speeches		- 0.2%		- 0.2%
Attendance	+ 10%		Not included	Not included
Own initiative report	+ 89%		Not included	Not included
Membership length		+ 0.024 %	Not included	Not included
National party size		- 7%		- 5.3%
Mainstream party	Not included	Not included	Not included	Not included
Member of a powerful committee		+ 210%		+ 164%
Mega-seat	Not included	Not included	+ 434%	
GUE/NGL	- 1000%	- 1000%	- 1000%	- 1000%
Greens				
S&D				
ALDE		+ 339%		+ 263%
ECR				
EFD	- 1000%		- 1000%	
Non-inscripts	- 1000%	- 1000%	- 1000%	- 1000%
Observations	419	419	419	419

5

Conclusion

With the European Parliament's powers being increased in recent decades, pursuing a career in this institution has become increasingly attractive for politicians. This is confirmed by the fact that there is a growing cohort of politicians who stay in the EP for a longer period of time (Verzichelli and Edinger, 2005; Whitaker, 2014). With the EU being a multi-level political ecosystem, various alternative career options are available and, in many cases, politicians move around during their careers. Where the career paths of MEPs have already been the focus of others, this thesis seeks to build on that by developing a more granular understanding of which career trajectories exist. And more importantly, it seeks to link those career trajectories to the behaviour that MEPs show when they participate in the EP's legislative process.

The idea behind linking the career paths of MEPs to their participation in the legislative process comes from an acknowledgement that the connection between the citizens of the EU and their representatives in the EP is weak. The turnout at European elections is very low compared to national elections. It has been argued that the absence of this connection has little to do with a lack of knowledge about the functioning of the parliament or the different political groups which are represented, but has much more to do with the 'second-order' character of European

elections (Hix et al., 2007). EP elections are additional national second-order elections and are more decided by domestic political cleavages (Reif and Schmitt, 1980). Those voters who do come out to vote in European elections do not vote because Europe 'matters' to them, but because they want to reward or punish their national governments. It is thus a mid-term contest for the national government office (Hix and Marsh, 2007). On average, in EP elections, governing parties lose, and opposition parties gain votes. Although there is a 'Europe' effect in these elections, where parties with strong positions on the EU and Green parties do better, this effect is minor (Hix and Marsh, 2007). Besides the problems this creates for the EP when it comes to legitimacy (Scully, 2007), it also has an impact on the internal functioning of the parliament. The developments in the EP, both institutionally and policy-wise, struggle to be explained by an electoral connection and must, therefore, be caused by other factors. As it has been put elsewhere:

"*Without an external motivation, political behaviour in the European Parliament is primarily driven by considerations internal to the institution and the EU policy process*" (Hix et al., 2007).

Thus, when studying the motivation of MEPs to participate in the legislative process, it is important to be aware of the absence of this electoral connection as it is unlikely to provide a plausible explanation for the behaviour of MEPs. The career incentives of MEPs have been mentioned as a possible explanatory factor for trying to understand the legislative behaviour of MEPs (Hix and Høyland, 2013).

This idea, that some MEPs' behaviour can be explained by their making rational career choices, is consistent with Schlesinger (1966), who argued that the career path of politicians is the result of rational individual career decisions and that politicians adjust their behaviour in line with these ambitions. Since Schlesinger,

an extensive body of literature in the US further developed his theory of the role that ambition plays in politics, particularly in the context of the US Congress. This thesis takes a first step into this area in the EP context by linking the career ambitions of MEPs to their participation in the legislative process.

5.1. The importance of studying the interaction between career paths and behaviour

A number of reasons justify looking into this area in more detail. First, there is a societal reason for trying to understand whether career paths influence behaviour. In a representative democracy, the electorate will expect politicians to represent their interests and fulfil the promises they made during the election campaign. This should also be the case for the EP, even though the electoral connection might be weaker than for some other representative bodies, in particular, that of national parliaments. If it is the case that pre- and post-EP careers influence the way MEPs fulfil their mandate, this is important to know when trying to better understand how the EP, as well as representative democracies at large, functions. This would give us a better insight into how different candidates for an EP election could be expected to represent citizens once they are elected. This is particularly important given the increase in powers of the EP in recent decades and expected further increases.

Second, besides gaining a better understanding of the representative democracy at European level, better understanding the interaction of career paths and legislative behaviour also tells us more about how policy is developed. It has been found that those politicians with a longer career path in the EP have more policy influence (Whitaker, 2014; Beauvallet and Michon, 2010). Better

understanding an MEP's career path is therefore relevant for understanding policy outcomes themselves.

Third, longer career paths in a legislative institution are associated with higher quality politicians. Building a longer career in the EP gives politicians the opportunity to develop policy expertise which they can use to improve the quality of legislation. Again, improving our knowledge about an MEP's career path can, therefore, be an indicator of how policy is developed.

Fourth, the length of a career in a legislature can also provide information about the legislative body itself in which the politician serves. Longer careers and more internal promotions are associated with the legislature being institutionalised. As others have found, the emergence of career politicians is strongly associated with party system development and legislative institutionalisation, which are two important aspects of democratisation (Shabab and Slomczynski, 2002).

5.2. Key empirical findings

Although covering different aspects of the careers of MEPs and their behaviour in parliament, the papers in this thesis have highlighted a number of regularities. The main finding is that different career paths can be associated with different levels of participation in certain forms of legislative activity. Those with an interest in staying in the EP for longer are found to participate more actively in various activities. The EPG leadership, which decides the distribution of certain tasks (e.g. rapporteurships) does not distribute these tasks evenly across all MEPs. It has been found that those with longer careers in the EP pick up more of these tasks. This might be because the EPG leadership makes an assessment of who they expect to stay longer and allocates tasks accordingly. However, given that the EPG leadership

cannot decide nor be sure about which MEPs will run for re-election, I find it more likely that the national party leadership seeks to nominate those MEPs for re-election who have been active, built up a role of influence in the EP and can be relied upon to continue playing this role on behalf of the national party in the next EP. This, in turn, creates an incentive for MEPs to participate actively if they wish to stay in the EP for longer.

In the analysis here, it has also been found that particularly the involvement of MEPs in those activities which bring policy influence are rewarded by re-nomination and re-election. Those MEPs who take on more rapporteurships or write more own initiative reports are more likely to have longer careers in the EP. The fact that direct policy influence by holding the pen on a legislative file is found more important than having a senior role in the EP is confirmed by the fact that having had one of the 'mega-seats' in the EP does not make it more likely that an MEP is re-elected. In fact, MEPs who have been in a mega-seat are more likely to leave early before the next EP election. This is not to say that those in mega-seats do not have more influence over policy than other MEPs, but it seems to be particularly those who obtain policy influence by holding the pen on legislative files who are preferred for re-nomination. This confirms findings from others that those with a longer political career have more policy influence (Beauvallet and Michon, 2010; Whitaker, 2014).

For those MEPs who are looking to move to the domestic political level, active participation in the EP's work is not a prerequisite. This could be the case because MEPs with the ambition to move to national politics spend more time fostering their relationships with the national party leadership and local constituents than participating in the EP's work. Also, for others aiming for a career outside of

politics, active participation is not crucial. An example here is those who become lobbyists after their time in the EP but also those who are an MEP for only a short period of time.

In terms of external factors of influence, the electoral rules that MEPs are faced with are not found here to be a key determining factor for which type of MEP is more likely to become (re-)elected. Being a member of a larger group in the EP, either the member state group or political group, is however a relevant factor. Again, this could be because larger groups tend to dominate the work of the EP and are better able to allow their members to specialise and become policy experts.

5.3. Theoretical and empirical contributions

This thesis provides a number of theoretical and empirical contributions. First, this thesis has developed our understanding of the different career paths that MEPs tend to follow. Many to date have argued that three types of MEPs exist, namely the 'stepping stone' politicians, the 'EP careerists' and the retiring MEPs; this thesis has built on this by introducing new types of MEPs, and recognising the more recent arrival of politicians who pursue a 'second' political life in the EP after having had a career in domestic politics. This thesis also introduces a category of 'one-off' MEPs. This group of MEPs has probably always existed but has not been recognised in the literature as such. Particularly for those seeking to understand the behaviour of MEPs, it is important to make sure that this category of MEPs is captured, as this group has different incentives to participate than their peers. In particular, taking post-EP careers into account has made it possible to develop these two new types of MEPs. This categorisation of five types of MEPs now captures

the vast majority of MEPs and brings us closer to developing a complete picture of where EP membership fits in one's career.

Second, the categorisation of career paths to date has mainly been done by combining the career *background* of MEPs and their age. This thesis has, in its attempt to provide a more granular insight into the different career trajectories, also considered the future career steps that MEPs take when they have left the EP. If one wants to explain an MEP's behaviour, it is important to look at these future career steps as well. The additional data collected provides a better picture of the actual career path that an MEP follows. Also, not only has this thesis considered a broad range of careers outside of the EP, it has also taken into consideration the career advancement options that an MEP has when he or she is looking to stay in the EP by including the 'mega-seats' (Carroll et al., 2006) in the analysis.

Third, besides providing greater detail on those MEPs who continue to be politicians (either in the EP or at a different political level), this thesis has also provided new insights into a category of MEPs who leave the EP, but stay in the Brussels 'bubble': the revolving door lobbyists. This group of former politicians has not been studied in great detail before in the EP context and this thesis provides an introduction to this area.

Fourth, besides providing a better insight into the career trajectories of MEPs, this thesis develops our knowledge about legislative *participation* in the EP. It looks at a broad range of forms of legislative participation rather than focusing on just one aspect, such as roll call vote attendance. The analysis shows that when an MEP actively participates in one form of activity, he or she does not necessarily participate actively in other forms of activity.

Fifth, building on the above, the work in this thesis is one of the first attempts to analyse the interaction between the careers of MEPs and their behaviour in the EP. This has deepened our understanding of the motivations of MEPs to participate in legislative work. Legislative participation varies for different types of MEPs irrespective of the political group or member state they represent. MEPs adjust, to a certain extent, their behaviour in line with the career paths which they follow. Besides other aspects of the legislative process, such as voting behaviour, legislative participation is important to consider as it has an impact on democratic representation as well as on policy outcomes. The motivations of MEPs to be active are multiple and this thesis does not claim to have provided a full account, but it has rather focused on one subset of motivational factors. Given the weak electoral connection, the career ambitions of MEPs can, however, be expected to be a more important motivational factor than in some other legislatures.

Sixth, new empirical findings are presented in this thesis around the links between expressed career ambitions, from survey data, and realised ambitions. The findings show that those with a desire to stay in the EP are also more likely to be successful in fulfilling this ambition.

Seventh, from an empirical, data perspective, this thesis contributes by having developed new datasets of various periods of the EP (2004-2007 and 2009-2014). This new data has been combined with existing data sources on legislative activity and information about national parties. The collection of this new data allows us to broaden our perspective on the career paths of MEPs by taking both their pre- and post-EP careers into account.

The empirical analysis here has been conducted through using quantitative methods. For this, the career paths of MEPs were quantified, something which has

so far only been done to a limited extent in the European context. The results show that it is, however, an approach worth pursuing as it can lead to new insights.

5.4. What does this mean for the European Parliament?

The findings in this thesis are important when trying to understand the EP itself. As others have found, there is a growing group of MEPs who consider the EP to be their main political arena. This group consists of those who are pursuing long-term careers in this institution, either with or without having had a career in domestic politics. As shown, this group of MEPs is more actively involved in the EP's work, writes more reports and participates more in other activities. This confirms the idea that this group of politicians has more policy influence than their colleagues. Given the growing powers of the EP in many policy areas, it is important to better understand who holds the policymaking power in the EP. If this small group has a disproportionate amount of influence over legislative issues, it is important to be at least aware of this.

These findings are also important in the context of the EP elections. It is likely that the electorate will look for MEPs who are most actively involved in the work of the institution to which they are elected. Having a better insight into the career paths and ambitions of the candidates on the ballot paper could help voters to make better-informed decisions when seeking a candidate who will work hard when elected.

The national party leadership will also take an interest in the results of this analysis. It has been found here that those MEPs with a longer-term commitment to the EP are more likely to be active and obtain policy influence. If a national party is interested in obtaining influence in the EP, it should better select candidates who

are keen on staying in the EP, rather than those who wish to use the EP as a training ground as 'stepping stone' candidates.

This thesis also focused on the existence of the revolving door in Brussels. Although it is not a significantly large group of MEPs who become lobbyists in relative terms, knowing more about the existence of this phenomenon is important from a social-ethical perspective as the presence of a revolving door might damage the reputation of the EP and undermine the trust of the electorate, thereby contributing to the democratic deficit of the EP. The analysis here shows that particularly MEPs from powerful committees are selected by lobbying firms. And although this does not seem to have an impact on these MEPs' level of engagement, it might influence their voting behaviour. This was beyond the scope of the current analysis and should probably be examined further. The phenomenon might result in the EP wishing to consider introducing a certain 'cooling off' period, which already exists for members of the European Commission. Former commissioners need to seek permission from the European Commission in power if they wish to take up a job within the first two years after having left the commission. An alternative approach could be for the EP to introduce a 'cooling off' period that would not allow MEPs to take on a job for a certain period of time in a policy area that overlaps with the work that they have done as an MEP. This could be particularly important for those revolving door politicians from powerful EP committees. This would be a novelty among parliamentary democracies but could be justified in the case of the EP given the limited electoral connection between MEPs and voters which might make MEPs more receptive to proposals and positions from lobbyists. Controlling the revolving door in the EP would, therefore, be more important than in other parliaments.

5.5. External validity

It is difficult to generalise the findings from this analysis of the EP to other legislatures because of the distinct characteristics of the EP. It is arguably the most powerful supranational, directly-elected institution in the world and yet very diverse in its structure. With representatives from 28 different countries, operating in nearly ten different political groups that are composed of hundreds of national political parties, the EP is truly unique in nature. At the same time, it has a weak connection with its electorate. This creates different opportunities and incentives for MEPs than exist for politicians in other legislatures.

There are however a few findings also potentially applicable to other legislatures. For example, it is important to develop an understanding of the political career paths of those active in legislative institutions, whether at national, regional or local level. Career advancement is a universal goal in professional careers that also applies to politics (Borchert, 2011). The findings in this thesis can, therefore, be of interest to a broader audience than just those who study the EP. Better understanding what the common paths of advancement are provides a better understanding of who is likely to put energy and resources into seeking to reach a certain position. The findings here show that the career paths of politicians are linked to their behaviour and level of participation in the political arena in which they operate. This can provide useful insights for studying this relationship in other political contexts.

The US literature has already confirmed, through ambition theory, that career ambitions have an impact on the way politicians participate in the legislative process in the US. It might well be possible that similar patterns can be found in

other parliamentary settings. Studying this would be worthwhile as it may mean that career paths have an impact on how representative democracies function. When doing this, scholars should take into account the broader multi-level structure in which a legislative institution operates. In order to be able to come to concrete generalisable conclusions about the impact of careers on behaviour, it is important to develop a granular insight into the different career structures that exist. This would allow one to analyse a majority of politicians rather than only a subset.

5.6. Recommendations for further research

As with any research, there is always more analysis that could be conducted but which fell beyond the scope of this thesis. Here, I provide some suggestions for other work that could be done to build on the findings of this thesis.

First, the analysis presented here focuses on a limited timeframe in the EP, namely the sixth EP in the first paper and the seventh EP in the introduction and second and third paper. By collecting information on what, for example, the career paths of those in the current, eighth, EP are, it could be established whether the trends identified in this work continue to be identified. This would also enable reaching further conclusions about whether MEPs from those member states which joined the EU more recently are developing career paths similar to those from the 'older' member states. It would also be possible to collect such information about previous parliaments to be better identify trends over longer periods of time.

Second, although this work has identified various pre- and post-EP careers that politicians take, in the regression analysis the focus was mainly on MEPs with a pre- or post-career at the national political level (with the exception of the third paper which focused on those MEPs who become lobbyists). From the data, it is

clear, however, that there is not only an exchange between the EP and the national political level but that many MEPs also pursue careers at regional or local levels. This is particularly important to consider given the multi-level structure of the EU's political system (Borchert and Stolz, 2011b). Careers in these regional or local political arenas might trigger a distinct form of behaviour but they have now been wrapped up in the post-EP 'other career' category in most of the analyses in this thesis.

Third, further work would benefit from even more granular data on the participation of MEPs in the EP's legislative process. With committees playing a key role in the work of the EP, more data on the activities undertaken in the EP's committees would be useful. This includes, for example, the number of amendments tabled at the committee level, the amount of speaking time used and attendance at committee meetings. This would give a much more complete picture of the participation of MEPs.

Fourth, this thesis very much focuses on the participation of MEPs in the legislative process. An alternative way of looking at the decisions that MEPs need to make, as also Hall (1996) has argued, is at *what* position they take. It might be that the voting behaviour of MEPs is partly impacted by an MEP's career path and this is worth considering for those interested in understanding MEPs' voting behaviour.

Fifth, as became clear from the work for this thesis on the revolving door phenomenon, this is very much uncharted territory and would benefit from further analysis. It would be worth not only looking more into the revolving door of MEPs but also considering the staff who work with MEPs and who subsequently decide

to move into the lobbying world. They might have a significant impact on the EP's policymaking process as well.

While many still consider the EP to be a 'second-order' political arena, this view is not shared by a growing group of politicians. With the EP's powers increasing over the years, so has the attractiveness of pursuing a longer-term career in this institution. The implications of this on the behaviour of politicians in the EP are not yet widely understood and this thesis has sought to fill, at least part of, this gap. For future scholars seeking to understand the behaviour and participation of MEPs, career paths and ambitions will be relevant factors to consider. When trying to understand the functioning of representative democracy at the European level, the presence of career ambitions should not be ignored.

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