Rapporteur-Shadow Rapporteur Networks and Policy-Making in the European Parliament

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Introduction

Policymaking in the European Parliament (EP) is dominated by a small number of policy "entrepreneurs" (Benedetto 2005), or a subset of committee actors who dedicate their time, energy, and resources to deliberating and negotiating particular policy proposals. While previous research recognizes the importance of these individuals - committee chairs (e.g., Neuhold 2002), party group coordinators (e.g., Kaeding and Obholzer 2012), rapporteurs (e.g., Kaeding 2004; Kaeding 2005; Mamadouh and Raunio 2003; Yoshinaka *et al.* 2010), and shadow rapporteurs (e.g., Hurka *et al.* 2015) - research has paid little attention to the importance of *groups* of policymakers in EP politics (with the exception of some qualitative accounts, e.g., Ringe 2010). This paper examines policymaking networks in the EP composed of those key actors that deliberate and negotiate specific policy proposals: rapporteurs (the MEPs in charge of drafting committee reports and the EP's lead negotiators) and shadow rapporteurs (who work alongside the rapporteurs on behalf of other party groups, hereafter "shadows"). These "negotiating teams" (Hurka *et al.* 2015) can "practically constitute informal sub-committees" (Corbett *et al.* 2011: 159) as they "work in tandem and jointly lead [proposed legislation] through the decision-making process" (Ringe 2010: 59), both inside the EP and in the EP's inter-institutional negotiations with the Council of Ministers. Indeed, their importance has increased over time with the advent and rise of so-called trilogue negotiations to reach early agreements outside the formal legislative procedure (e.g., Rasmussen and Toshkov 2011; Reh et al. 2011; Toshkov and Rasmussen 2012).

We investigate policymaking networks composed of rapporteurs and shadows, who are tied to one another by virtue of having collaborated on at least one legislative proposal. Using quantitative methods to map these networks and to examine associations between MEPs' network positions and exogenous party group and ideology variables, we examine who is actively involved in EP policymaking networks, what the structural positions are of different actors in policymaking networks, and who is marginalized. Finally, we rely on a series of in-depth, semi-structured interviews with respondents in the EP to aid the interpretation of the results and gauge the causal mechanisms generating them.

Our investigation of policymaking networks in the EP has important implications for discussions of the European Union's (EU) "democratic deficit" (see especially Follesdal and Hix 2006), because it considers who is and is not actively involved in the law-making process inside the EU's only directly elected institution. As such, it relates to the extent to which EP decision-making is "input legitime," a notion that builds on Fritz Scharpf's (1999) distinction

between input legitimacy (based on proper levels of political participation and representation of the people) and output legitimacy (based on effective governing for the people). On the "output" side, a key concern is appropriate policy congruence between constituents and representatives (e.g., Clinton 2006; Dalton 2015; Hobolt and Klemmensen 2008), which has been investigated in the EU context by Costello et al. (2012) and Toshkov (2011). But in order to evaluate the quality of representation in the EU, it also is imperative to consider who actively partakes in decision-making, as there is a difference between being merely present and *actually* participating in the lawmaking process.

We find that Members of the EP (MEPs) from small party groups are more central in policymaking networks, because they have to work on a greater number of dossiers, which connects them to a greater number of colleagues from other party groups. These relational benefits, our interviews suggest, may somewhat mitigate the disadvantages associated with being a small party group but they do not fully outweigh the costs of a heavier individual workload, lower efficiency, and the difficulty of specializing in more policy areas.

We also find that members of pro-EU parties are more likely to be included in the networks, but that they do not have greater centrality. Finally, members of parties with positions that are more "green/alternative/libertarian (Gal)" (as opposed to "traditionalist/authoritarian/nationalist," or Tan) on a "new politics dimension" that engages "lifestyle, gender, environment, participatory decision-making, and national culture" (Marks *et al.* 2006) are both more likely to be included in policymaking networks and have greater centrality. This last finding stands to reason given the association of Gal positions with support for key EU policies, a stronger EP, and support for democratic participation (in and of itself).

In terms of participation by MEPs from different party groups, these findings entail that members of the far right Europe of Freedom and Democracy (EFD) group are systematically excluded from EP policymaking, while the 'soft' Euroskeptics on left (members of the European United Left/Nordic Green Left, or GUE/NGL) and right (members of the European Conservatives and Reformists, or ECR) do take part in the EU's legislative process - indeed, actively so. EP policymaking is thus quite inclusive, except that the radical right is marginalized. Notably, our interviews suggest that this exclusion is mostly (although not entirely) driven by self-marginalization: members of the Eurosceptic far right choose not to engage in the legislative process, rather than being side-lined by the other political groups.

The paper proceeds as follows: we briefly review the roles of rapporteurs and shadows and the conceptualization of EP policymaking in terms of social network analysis. We then derive hypotheses that we test in a series of empirical analyses. The final section concludes.

Rapporteurs and Shadow Rapporteurs

Rapporteurs are responsible for drafting the EP's official reports on specific policy proposals and shepherding it through the lawmaking process, both inside the EP and inter-institutionally in negotiations with the EP's co-legislator, the Council of Ministers (Costello and Thomson 2011; Farrell and Héritier 2004). Rapporteurs are selected in a kind of "auction," where party groups bid on reports using "points" they receive according to their size. Only one group can win the rapporteurship on a given report, which would leave it with a disproportionate influence on the legislation. The task of shadows is to counterbalance the role of the rapporteur; they are "to follow the progress of the relevant report and find compromises within the committee on behalf of the group (EP Rules of Procedure, Title VIII, Rule 205.4).

While rapporteurs have received a considerable amount of scholarly attention, the role of shadows is less well understood, with some notable exceptions (Corbett *et al.* 2011; Judge and Earnshaw 2011; Ringe 2010; Settembri and Neuhold 2009). This is despite the active and increasingly important role shadows play in EP policymaking. Ringe (2010), for example, writes that:

> Shadow rapporteurs … inform the other members of their party groups of the progress of the deliberation and negotiation process, give them recommendations, draw up amendments, lead the discussion, and rally the troops when 'their' issue is discussed in committee or plenary … They are the primary negotiation partners of the rapporteur within the committee, as well as the primary sources of information for their party colleagues (Ringe 2010: 2, 59).

Building on these observations, Ringe (2010) shows that the final decisions in the EP concerning particular policy proposals are significantly shaped by rapporteurs and shadows. In the absence of perfect information about the content and consequences of proposed legislation, regular MEPs without expertise in the relevant policy area follow the lead of their colleagues in the responsible standing committee when voting on the EP floor. The positions in committee, in turn, are endogenous to the policymaking process in committee, which is dominated by the small teams of rapporteurs and shadows in charge of particular policy proposals. In other words, the positions of rapporteur and shadows drive the positions of the other committee members on a given policy proposal, which in turn drives the positions taken

by the bulk of MEPs when they vote in plenary. This translation of positions is, of course, neither perfect not determinative, but it is clear that teams of rapporteurs and shadows have a disproportionate influence on the content of legislation and the decision-making of the chamber as a whole (see also Costello and Thomson 2011; Reh *et al.* 2011).

EP Policymaking Networks

Until recently, information on shadow rapporteurships was not made available in any systematic and reliable fashion, meaning that their function and influence in EP politics was generally highlighted in qualitative accounts of EP policymaking. Only with the onset of the EP's 7th term in 2009 did the EP website start listing shadows for each legislative dossier, and these quantitative data have not yet been used extensively. The notable exception is a recent article by Hurka, Kaeding, and Obholzer (2015), which examines the extent to which MEPs from the countries that joined the EU in and after 2004 are under-represented in EP policymaking teams. Our contribution takes a broader look at groups of rapporteurs and shadows by examining who is included in and excluded from EP policymaking *networks*. The empirical part of our paper thus relies on an analytical and methodological approach, social network analysis, that has become increasingly popular in the study of legislative politics in American politics, but has not yet taken a strong hold in the study of lawmaking institutions outside the US (see Ringe *et al.* 2016 for a review).

Social network analysis conceptualizes politics explicitly in *relational* terms, which sets the approach apart from most previous legislative research that focuses on the individual lawmaker as the unit of analysis. In social network analyses of legislative politics, in contrast, the focus is on the ties, or *edges*, between network components, or *nodes*, and the ways in which relationships shape political processes and outcomes. The analyses in this paper focus on rapporteurs and shadows (our nodes), who are tied to one another by having collaborated on one or more legislative proposal.

The social ties and network structures we investigate are a function of party groups' decisions to bid for rapporteurships and to assign shadows to dossiers where the rapporteurship was awarded to another party group. The process of tie formation in rapporteur-shadow rapporteur networks thus involves both formal and informal mechanisms: social ties and network structures are *endogenous* to the choices made by network participants within certain *exogenous* constraints outside their immediate control (Ringe and Victor 2013: 26). The networks we investigate are, therefore, different from those considered

in most previous research, which tends to focus on legislative networks that are either (mostly) exogenous[1] *or* endogenous.[2]

While the assignment of rapporteurships has been the subject of previous work, little is known about the process of assigning shadows. A key contribution of our mixed methods approach is that our qualitative data allow us to investigate the assignment of shadows, and to thus capture the endogenous component of the tie formation process. What our interviews show is that the process of allocating shadow rapporteurships is remarkably bottom-up. Every one of our respondents explained independently from one another, and fairly consistently across political groups and committees, that MEPs indicate which reports they are interested in covering and receive those reports whenever no other party colleague wants them.[3] If more than one MEP claims a report for himself or herself, the committee coordinator will make a final determination, taking into account who is already treating which other reports (Interviews 6, 8, 10, 11);[4] substantive expertise and competence (Interviews 3, 6, 8, 10, 11);[5] the level of activity and engagement an MEP has demonstrated over time (Interviews 2, 3, 11); and the geographic and national makeup of the negotiating team as a whole (Interviews 4, 6, 11). Moreover, the selection of the shadow may, at least at times, be a reaction to who has been picked as rapporteur, since political groups want to "match" a strong rapporteur with strong shadows (Interview 6). These criteria are not hard and fast rules but conventions that reflect best practices and are at least in part subject to the committee coordinators' ways of running their political groups' affairs in the relevant committee (Interviews 2, 3, 7, 8, 9, 10). In general, however, respondents agree with the conclusion of one MEP who describes the process as generally collaborative and "collegial" (Interview 4).

But party groups do not always assign a shadow to a legislative dossier, for a variety of reasons. For example, party groups may care more about some policies and consciously forego participating in the negotiation of others; they may generally not care about policy and focus instead on position-taking, signaling, and obstructionism; or they may anticipate being marginalized and, as a result, do not bother participating at all. Moreover, their choices are

[1] e.g., networks based on shared committee membership (e.g., Porter *et al.* 2007).
[2] e.g., networks based on membership in legislative member organizations or cosponsorship (see Ringe *et al.* 2016 for details).
[3] Small groups in particular have to prioritize some reports over others, which they do based on who is willing to take on the task of shadow rapporteur (Interviews 4, 9), whether a report is legislative or non-legislative (Interviews 8, 9), and the substantive and political priorities of the political group (Interviews 1, 4, 11).
[4] Balancing the work load of committee members is a key role of the coordinator, to keep everybody satisfied and to ensure effective policymakingpolicymaking (Interviews 3, 6, 8, 9, 10, 11).
[5] For some policy areas, parties have their "go-to" people with relevant expertise and experience (Interviews 1, 3, 7, 8, 9), although this is more difficult to achieve for the smaller party groups (Interview 9).

subject to exogenous constraints, as emphasized above. In the selection of rapporteurs, the most important constraints are party size and the number of associated points that can be bid on particular reports, which sets an exogenous limit to the number of rapporteurships a party group can secure. The main external constraint in the allocation of shadow rapporteurships is the limit of one shadow per party group, but party size once again enters the equation because it entails varying levels of resource scarcity, in particular when it comes to expending manpower on particular legislative dossiers. And indeed, we expect to find notable differences in the level of partipication of different party groups, as discussed in our hypothesis section below.

One important complication, in this regard, is that two of our interview respondents suggested that shadow rapporteurships may be underreported for the two largest party groups, the European People's Party (EPP) and the Progressive Alliance of Socialists and Democrats (S&D). They claimed that the two largest party groups always provide a shadow, which is not borne out by our data. We thus have to first determine if any potential underreporting is due to random measurement error or if it may bias our results. In a first step, we considered how many of those instances where no shadow was reported for EPP (19% of all observations) and S&D (24%) involve legislative files where no shadows are reported for *any* party group. We found that only 5.2% and 8.7% of observations relate to reports where a shadow is reported for at least one other party but not for EPP or S&D, respectively. In other words, most instances of possible underreporting of shadow rapporteurships for EPP and S&D involve legislative files where no shadows are reported at all. This suggests that the main problem with the data would be one of general underreporting. Therefore, our descriptive results concerning the *relative* involvement of different parties in rapporteur-shadow rapporteur networks and the results of our regression analyses are unlikely to be biased.

Second, we systematically compared our shadow rapporteurship data, which is collected from the biographical webpages of each MEP on the EP website, to shadow rapporteurships reported in the EP's Legislative Observatory. There are small discrepancies between the two data sources (3.5% of all observations in the combined dataset),[6] which at first glance may seem problematic. Yet, this finding actually supports our view that any potential underreporting of shadow rapporteurships would likely be due to random measurement error rather than systematic bias. After all, the discrepancies suggest that the

[6] This figure of 3.5% concerns discrepancies that are *unexplained*. The remaining differences between the two data sources concern shadow rapporteurships for opinions, which are not recorded in the Legislative Observatory. Given our focus on social ties between legislators, it is important not to disregard shadow rapporteurships for opinions.

two data sources are not functionally linked, but they nonetheless provide largely consistent information. It is quite unlikely that two independent data sources would suffer from the same bias.

Hypotheses

Broadly, we expect two main factors to drive participation in EP policymaking networks: size and ideology. First, we expect party size to impact network membership in a direction that may appear counterintuitive at first glance, in that we hypothesize that:

H1a: MEPs from small EP parties are more likely to be part of policymaking networks.

The reasoning behind this expectation is that there is a greater likelihood that members of small parties will be called on to actively participate in the deliberation and negotiation of a particular policy proposal than their colleagues from larger party groups, especially as shadows, simply because there are fewer of them. Similarly, members of small parties will have to work on a greater number of dossiers, which will connect them to a greater number of colleagues from other party groups. Therefore, we also expect that:

H1b: MEPs from small parties are more central in policymaking networks.

Aside from party group size, we expect there to be variation in network membership and centrality across parties. Broadly, we expect members of mainstream party groups to be more involved and more central in policymaking networks. Ultimately, however, we seek to explain variation across party groups by examining the impact of ideology. The EP's ideological space is generally described as two-dimensional, with the classic left-right divide found in domestic politics as the dominant dimension and a secondary dimension that "captures government-opposition conflicts as well as national and European party positions on European integration" (Hix *et al.* 2006: 494). Looking beyond the institutional confines of the EP, however, Marks *et al*. (2006: 157) argue that a "noneconomic or cultural, new-politics dimension" has increasingly been structuring competition among political parties in Europe, which they describe in reference to the dimension's opposite poles: green/alternative/libertarian (Gal) versus traditionalism/authority/nationalism (Tan). With regard to politics at the EU level, this Gal/Tan dimension engages "lifestyle, gender, environment, participatory decision-making, and national culture," and Gal positions are "strongly associated with its support for an EU environmental policy (R = -0.62), for an EU asylum policy (R = -0.46), and for strengthening the powers of the EP (R = -0.50)" (Marks *et al.* 2006: 164); they also involve support for 'greater democratic participation' (Bakker *et al.*

2015). Strikingly, the authors find that "the Gal/Tan divide is considerably more powerful than Left/Right in predicting party positioning across most policy areas" (Marks *et al.* 2006: 164), and a set of analyses reported in the appendix support this proposition: any impact of left-right ideology is washed out by the inclusion of a Gal/Tan indicator. For these reasons, we focus the analyses presented below on parties' pro-/anti-EU and Gal/Tan positions. Given the association of Gal positions with support for key EU policies, a stronger EP, and support for democratic participation (as a value in itself), we hypothesize that:

H2a: MEPs from parties that are more pro-EU are more likely to be part of policymaking networks.

H2b: MEPs from parties that are more pro-EU are more central in EP policymaking networks.

H3a: MEPs from parties that are more Gal are more likely to be part of policymaking networks.

H3b: MEPs from parties that are more Gal are more central in EP policymaking networks.

Data and Methods

In the empirical analysis, we examine rapporteurship networks of standing committees in the 7th EP (2009-14). We collected information about rapporteurships and shadow rapporteurships for reports and opinions from MEPs' official EP webpages. Information about committee and party group membership was also derived from that source.[7] In total, we collected information about the involvement of all 857 MEPs in the drafting of a total of 4021 reports and opinions. In line with our theoretical focus on substantive policymaking activities, we dropped 797 reports and opinions formulated in budgetary, discharge, interinstitutional agreement, Parliament's rules of procedure, or members' immunity procedures. Furthermore, we are not considering five reports drafted by temporary committees.[8]

The focus of this study is on drafting policy documents in committees. Thus, separate networks are constructed for each standing committee. Since we are aggregating policymaking ties over the entire legislative term, any MEP who was a member at any time a report or opinion was adopted is counted as a committee member and can potentially form part of the network. For our sample of reports and opinions, 847 of the 857 MEPs met this

[7] Information was downloaded from EP website (europarl.europa.eu) on 21 July 2015 using Python. See appendix for more information.
[8] See Table A1 in appendix for breakdown by type of parliamentary procedure.

criterion. Furthermore, since MEPs can be full and substitute members of more than one committee, they can also form part of more than one committee network. As a result, the analysis is based on 2246 MEP-by-committee observations.[9] For each committee, we collapse two-mode networks defined by MEPs and reports (nodes) and rapporteurships (edges) into one-mode networks defined by MEPs (nodes) and the number of reports they worked on (weighted edges, where more reports indicate a stronger connection).

In the empirical analysis, we use two types of dependent variables. First, we are interested in why some committee members form part of the policymaking network and others do not. To measure network membership, we use a binary variable coded as 1 if a committee member was connected to at least one other committee member in the weighted one-mode network and coded as 0 otherwise. Second, for those committee members that form part of the network, we are interested in why some members occupy more central or bridging positions than others. We employ two types of network centrality measures, eigenvector and betweenness, as well as one bridging measure, network constraint. Eigenvector centrality is based on the idea that central nodes are nodes who are strongly connected to many other strongly connected nodes. In our context, eigenvector centrality measures the level of embeddedness of a committee member in the policymaking network as a whole. Committee members with high eigenvector centrality scores are involved in writing many reports together with a large number of other committee members, who are themselves involved in writing many reports with a large number of other committee members, and so on.

Betweenness centrality measures the relative number of times a node lies on the shortest paths connecting other nodes in the network. In our context, committee members with high betweenness centrality scores are central in terms of being able to control the flow of information from one part of the network to the other. In the drafting of legislation, exchanging information about the potential effects (and side-effects) of different policy instruments and the design of effective and feasible policy solutions can significantly increase the quality of policy. Furthermore, in a situation where committee members are not only involved in the drafting of policy but also in negotiations with other institutional actors, the exchange of information about successful negotiation strategies and workable compromise

[9] There is variation across committees in terms of the total number of committee members and their involvement in policymaking as rapporteurs and shadows (see Table A2 in the appendix for more detail). Because of this variation, our models below include fixed effects for committee. Note that some committee members were rapporteurs but their report was not shadowed by anybody else. These members do not form part of the policymaking network.

solutions can improve the efficiency of inter-institutional bargaining and the negotiation success of Parliament.

Finally, network constraint describes the extent to which a person's network is concentrated in redundant contacts (Burt 1992, chapter 2), such that a *lower* constraint score indicates that an actor connects more people who are not otherwise tied to each other. Whereas Eigenvector and betweenness centrality are global measures that take information into account from the entire network, network constraint is a local measure that is calculated based only on information from a node's direct ties to other nodes and the interconnections amongst those (Valente and Fujimoto 2010).

The main independent variables in our study are EP party group membership and variables measuring attributes of these groups. The party group membership variable is a categorical variable indicating MEPs' membership in one of the seven party groups during the EP's 7th term or their status as being non-affiliated to any of the groups. Once we have established differences in network inclusion and centrality across parties, we investigate the reasons for these differences through a number of variables measuring the attributes of parties and their members. Importantly, differences in inclusion and centrality might simply be a quasi-mechanical result of differences in party group size (H1a and H1b). In the analysis of network membership, we measure party group size by counting the number of committee members that were affiliated with a particular group. In the analysis of network centrality, we count the number of party group members that form part of the network. This approach is consistent with our assumption that the network generation process can be split into separate phases: the first determining whether or not an MEP takes part in the policymaking network at all, and the second determining the centrality of the network position of those MEPs that take part in the network. In the latter phase, the relevant reference group for determining network centrality of an MEP is not the party group delegation in the committee as whole, but the members of the party group that form part of the network. In either case, the party group size variable varies across committees for the same party group. As we expect the effect of differences in party group size to wear off with increasing size (e.g., an additional member is more likely to matter for a party group of size 3 than a party group of size 50), we log-transform the variables for the analyses.

Our remaining hypotheses relate to MEPs' ideology. For measures of ideology and policy positions, we rely on the 2010 Chapel Hill Expert Survey (CHES) (Bakker *et al.* 2015). Measures based on roll call votes have the advantage of providing position estimates for each individual MEP. However, voting occurs at the end of the policymaking process and

is thus endogenous to our dependent variables. Furthermore, roll call vote analyses are only able to identify broad and basic patterns underlying voting in the EP, usually a general left-right and a pro-/anti-European integration dimension. Relying on the CHES expert survey estimates allows us to consider the relevance of more specific policy positions, like those on the Gal/Tan dimension, as well. Finally, it is important to note that the CHES provides party position estimates for national parties, not entire European party groups. Given the small size of many national party delegations in the EP, the position measures still provide a considerable amount of variation within European party groups. At the same time, they are almost guaranteed to be exogenous to MEP behaviour in the 7th EP term. The data for the survey was collected in Spring 2011, less than half-way through the 7th term, and national experts were asked to evaluate the positions of national parties. It is unlikely that experts based their position estimates to any significant degree on the behaviour of party members in the EP, especially when considering positions on general policy issues that are not directly linked to the EU.

Regarding the effects of policy positions, we expect that MEPs supporting European integration are more likely to be included in the network (H2a) and have higher centrality scores than Eurosceptic MEPs (H2b). Eurosceptic MEPs might be less motivated in taking part in EP policymaking, or they might be marginalised by the more Europhile majority. To estimate a party's support for European integration, experts were asked the following questions: 'How would you describe the general position on European integration that the party leadership took over the course of 2010?' Answers were recorded on a 7-point scale ranging from 1 'strongly opposes' to 7 'strongly favours'. MEPs' position on the Gal/Tan dimension might also affect their network inclusion (H3a) and centrality (H3b). Experts were asked the following question to estimate the position of parties on this dimension: 'Parties can be classified in terms of their views on democratic freedoms and rights. ''Libertarian'' or ''postmaterialist'' parties favour expanded personal freedoms, for example, access to abortion, active euthanasia, same-sex marriage, or greater democratic participation. ''Traditional'' or ''authoritarian'' parties often reject these ideas; they value order, tradition, and stability, and believe that the government should be a firm moral authority on social and cultural issues.' Answers to this question were recorded on an 11-point scale ranging from 0 (libertarian/postmaterialist) to 5 (center) to 10 (traditional/authoritarian).

In order to gain deeper insights into the practical selection of shadows, as well as the mechanisms underlying the generation of the observed networks and the associations connecting network positions to exogenous party variables, we complement our quantitative

analysis with qualitative data from ten in-depth, semi-structured interviews. We also exchanged several emails with one MEP who was not available to meet in person. Despite this relatively small number of interviews, our sample includes respondents from seven (of eight) political groups and ten member states who have been or are involved with ten (and thus half) of the EP's standing committees. Among our respondents were MEPs, MEP legislative assistants, party group advisors, and members of the EP secretariat. The responses we received were highly consistent across interviews, in particular with regard to the key question we sought answers to – on the selection process of shadows, the marginalization of the Eurosceptic far right, and the (dis-)advantages of being a small party group. This suggests that our qualitative data do not suffer from any apparent selection bias.

Effect of Party Group Membership on Network Membership

Figure 1 shows the overall network participation rate for different parties across all committees, with party groups on the x-axes ordered according to their ideological positions on the left-right dimension. The three smaller groups of the centre and the left – Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe (ALDE), Greens/European Free Alliance (Greens/EFA), and GUE/NGL – are the most strongly involved party groups. The two largest groups, the centre-left S&D and, even more so, the centre-right EPP, are considerably less involved. The moderately Eurosceptic ECR has similar membership rates as the two largest groups. Finally, the far-right Eurosceptic EFD group has by far the lowest network membership rate of any political group. Only non-aligned MEPs have an even lower probability of being involved in the policymaking network.

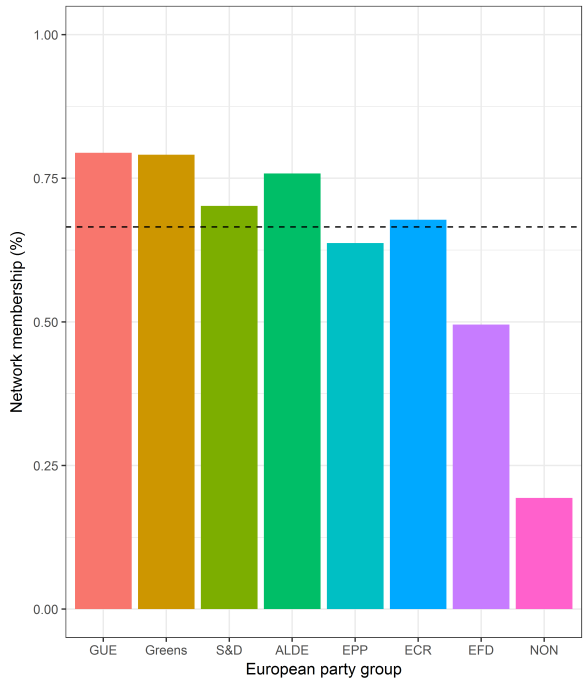

Figure 1 Network membership by party group, across committees

Note: Dashed horizontal lines indicate sample mean

Overall, network membership rates seem to decrease when moving from party positions on the far left to positions on the far right, with the rates of larger groups being somewhat smaller than their position on the left-right spectrum would otherwise suggest. Considering the size of party group delegations in committee and their positions not only on the traditional-left right divide, however, but also the pro-/anti-EU and Gal/Tan dimensions, already gives us an impression of the validity of our hypotheses. On the face of it, party group size seems to moderately reduce the propensity to participate in the network (H1a), while the idea that Eurosceptic MEPs are generally less involved in policymaking seems to be at best partially supported (H2a). On the one hand, members of the Eurosceptic EFD and (the often Eurosceptic) non-attached MEPs are quite marginalized, but the Eurosceptics on the left (GUE/NGL) and members of the Eurosceptic ECR on the right are very involved in policymaking. In contrast, party groups' Gal/Tan ideology seems to be more closely related to participation rates (H3a), with parties on the Gal end of the spectrum (GUE/NGL, Greens/EFA, S&D, ALDE) apparently more involved than those on the Tan side (EPP, ECR, EFD, non-attached)..

To investigate differences across party groups and the possible reasons for these differences more systematically, we conduct a number of logistic regression analyses. The dependent variable in these regressions is a dummy variable indicating whether or not a committee member is part of the committee's rapporteurship network. All regressions include committee dummies to account for committee specific differences that affect the baseline probability of being part of the network, especially committee membership size and the "supply" of reports. For reasons of space, the coefficients for these dummy variables are not reported. As a comparison of the committee-specific participation rates show (indicated by dashed horizontal lines in the panels of Figure A9 in the online appendix), this baseline probability varies considerably from committee to committee. Model 1 in Table 1 presents the regression coefficients for the categorical party membership variable. To aid the interpretation of the party membership effects, Models 2 to 3 report the results of bivariate regressions using party group size and party policy positions as independent variables. Finally, Model 5 includes all three independent variables simultaneously to control for their respective effects.[10]

Model 1 examines how the probability of rapporteurship membership varies across party groups, and the remaining models examine which attributes of these party groups can account for this variation. As the categorical party group and the party group attribute variables at least partly tap the same characteristics (i.e. the categorical party group variable is essentially a multidimensional combination of a large number of party group attributes), including them simultaneously in a single model would be problematic and its results difficult to interpret. However, for reasons of transparency, we report results for models including both types of variables in the appendix.

In the analysis, we are specifically interested in identifying the effects of party group size and party ideology positions on the dependent variable, not in explaining variation in the dependent variable as fully as possible. Thus, we only need to include additional variables if they are likely confounders for one of the relationships we are focusing on. Both party group size and party positions are exogenous to the usual array of explanatory variables used in the related literature on the allocation of committee memberships and rapporteurships. In fact, many of these variables, like seniority, roll call participation, voting loyalty to the European party group or the national party, leadership positions in the EP, in the committee, or in the party group, are likely partly a consequence of party group membership, party group size or

[10] Results for models including only particular independent variables and further possible combinations thereof are reported as robustness checks in the appendix.

policy positions of national parties. The inclusion of such intervening variables in the analysis is not only unnecessary, but would likely lead to underestimating the coefficients for the more remote causes that are of primary interest here (Ray 2003).

Table 1 Logistic regression of network membership

	Model 1	**Model 2**	**Model 3**	**Model 4**	**Model 5**
Intercept	0.79***	0.45*	-0.14	1.66***	1.13***
	(0.26)	(0.26)	(0.23)	(0.23)	(0.31)
GUE/NGL	0.62**				
	(0.30)				
Greens/EFA	0.57**				
	(0.26)				
ALDE	0.41*				
	(0.23)				
S&D	0.10				
	(0.20)				
EPP	-0.18				
	(0.19)				
EFD	-0.80***				
	(0.27)				
NON	-2.30***				
	(0.32)				
Party group size (log)		0.08			-0.02
		(0.06)			(0.10)
European integration			1.11***		0.60*
			(0.18)		(0.33)
Gal/Tan				-1.87***	-1.58***
				(0.22)	(0.28)
AIC	2675.07	2805.37	2606.75	2568.17	2564.59
BIC	2829.43	2925.43	2725.53	2686.94	2694.67
Log Likelihood	-1310.54	-1381.69	-1282.38	-1263.08	-1259.30
Deviance	2621.07	2763.37	2564.75	2526.17	2518.59
Num. obs.	2246	2246	2113	2113	2113

Note: ***p < 0.01, **p < 0.05, *p < 0.1; the dependent variable is a dummy variable indicating membership in the committee network; standard errors in parentheses; committee dummies included as control variables in all models; the baseline category for the committee variable is the Economic and Monetary Affairs Committee and the baseline category for the party group variable is the ECR group.

The results of Model 1 reproduce the pattern seen Figure 1. The intercept in the model reflects the effect of a category or a combination of categories whose values are as close as possible to the overall sample mean. The corresponding category for the committee variable is the Economic and Monetary Affairs Committee, and the corresponding category for the party group variable is the ECR for the party group variable. The effects of other party groups have to be interpreted in relation to the approximate sample mean value of the ECR. Accordingly, membership in the far left GUE/NGL has the highest effect on membership in the rapporteurship network, closely followed by membership of the Greens/EFA and the

ALD. The effect for membership in the S&D is marginally positive, while the effect for the EPP is marginally negative. Finally, membership in the EFD or being non-aligned is associated with a much lower probability of being part of the rapporteurship network.

The quantitative results suggest that the participation pattern we observe across party groups is at least partly due to their members' stance on European integration and the Gal/Tan dimension. An MEP's degree of support for European integration has a positive effect on network membership, which supports H3a, and his or her degree of Tan views has a negative effect, as H4a suggested. In contrast, H1a does not find confirmation, as the party size indicator does not achieve statistical significance.

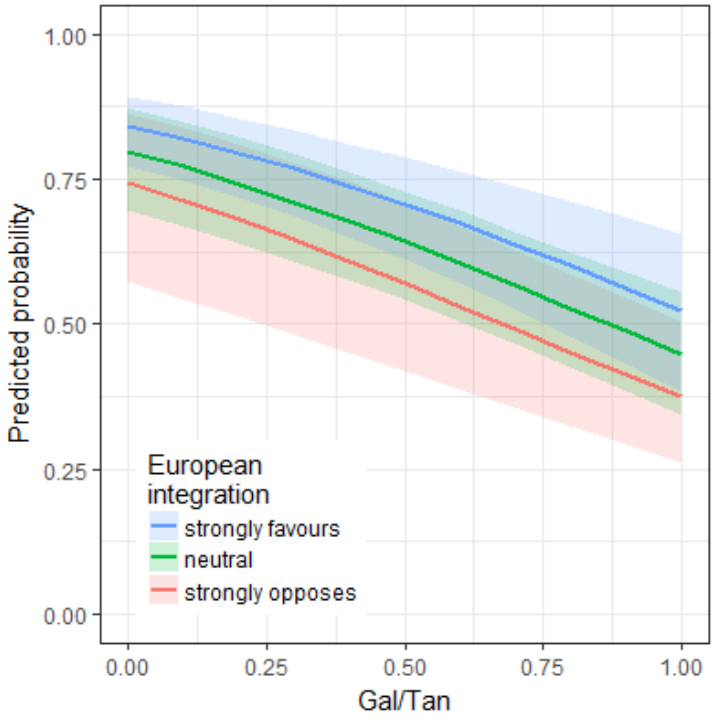

Figure 2 Predicted probability of network membership

Note: The figure displays predicted probabilities based on Model 5 in Table 1 for a member of the Constitutional Affairs Committee, keeping party group size constant at its mean and varying the Gal/Tan and European integration variables.

Figure 2 illustrates the change in the predicted probability of network membership as a result of different values of the party position variables for a member of the Economic and Monetary Affairs Committee, holding party group size constant at its mean. Depending on the value of Gal/Tan, a change from 'strongly opposed' to 'strongly in favour' of European integration increases the probability of network membership by between 9 and 14 percentage points. Depending on the level of support for European integration, a change from the Gal to

the Tan end of the dimension is associated with a decrease in the probability of network membership of between 27 and 35 percentage points. Thus, the effects of both variables are of substantive size, but views on Gal/Tan issues show a stronger effect on network membership than views on European integration. In contrast, party group size does not seem to matter for explaining variation in network membership.

Finally, we relied on our qualitative interview data to investigate in more detail the finding that membership in the EFD and being non-aligned decreases an MEP's probability of being part of the rapporteurship network. We were particularly interested in whether this marginalization of the far Eurosceptic right was self-imposed or the result of exclusion from the policymaking process by the other groups. Across the board (including our two Eurosceptic right-wing respondents), our interviews suggest that it is a lot of the former and some of the latter. In general, there is agreement that the far-right only has a handful of members who are active and present in legislative affairs and that they only rarely seek to influence legislation (Interviews 1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 7, 8, 10, 11). As one respondent puts it:

> "They just have no intention of playing the game. They're here by default. They were elected, they will get the money—the salary every month, I'm talking about—and that's about it. And all they're interested in is standing up in plenary when all the cameras are on and making populist speeches. It's not about trying to improve the legislation." (Interview 7)

Another respondent states bluntly that "they exclude themselves" (Interview 6). However, some recognize that the exclusion of the far right may stem at least in part from human resource scarcities—not only at the level of MEPs and their offices, but also in the secretariats of those political groups (Interview 2)—and the difficulty of assuming specific policy positions in political groups that are ideologically incoherent (Interviews 2, 8, 9). Nonetheless, marginalization is also self-imposed and quite purposeful, as one MEP of the United Kingdom Independence Party (UKIP) readily acknowledges when he explains that:

> "As a UKIP MEP I am not fully involved with the law making process … [We] make it clear when we stand for election that we will not assist the EU law-making process. We are the opposition. In practice this means that we are never rapporteurs, we do not seek chairmanships of committees and we do not get involved in trialogues. We attend committees, we speak in committees, we are coordinators in committees where the opportunity arises, as this gives us an insight into what is coming up. We will vote in favor of certain amendments on a 'least bad' basis, but will almost always vote against the legislative report as a whole." (Interview 5)

Another respondent affiliated with a right-wing Eurosceptic party similarly acknowledges that many members are not interested in being shadows and instead assume a position of "complete opposition" on key topics. But this is not true for all MEPs of the Eurosceptic right, he also emphasizes: those who take a constructive approach and seek to join the deliberation process can and do engage in policymaking (Interview 9). This is confirmed and recognized by several respondents from other parties, who describe that certain individuals or national delegations from the far Eurosceptic right are more active and productive legislators than others (Interviews 4, 10, 11).

All else equal, however, other political groups prefer not to deal with members of the far Eurosceptic right, given divergent values and preferences over political outcomes (Interviews 3, 4, 7). And while they cannot be barred from official proceedings, including rapporteur-shadow rapporteur meetings in those instances when the far right has chosen to appoint a shadow (Interviews 1, 7), it does happen that the more mainstream parties decide to principally engage with each other in less formal settings and negotiations (Interviews 7, 8, 9, 11). There is, in other words, some sidelining of Eurosceptic far-right legislators by other party groups. A more recent phenomenon—which apparently did not exist during the 2009-14 time period covered by our data, however (Interview 6)—are explicit rules not to engage with the far Eurosceptic right. During the ongoing 8th EP legislative term, for example, the S&D group has a "strict policy" of not working with the 'Europe of Nations and Freedom' (ENF) group (although it does engage, on a case by case basis, with members of the somewhat more moderate "Europe of Freedom and Direct Democracy" group) (Interview 11). Similarly, a respondent of another leftist political group describes consciously eschewing collaboration with members of the ENF and some far-right non-attached members (Interview 8).[11]

Effect of Party Group Membership on Network Centrality

The analysis in the previous section was concerned with examining the variation across party groups in the membership of committee policymaking networks and with identifying variables that can account for that variation. This section examines variation across party groups in the centrality of MEPs that form part of the network.

[11] It also appears that it appeared that EPP, S&D, and ALDE joined forces to prevent MEPs from the Eurosceptic Europe of Freedom and Direct Democracy group from gaining influential positions in in EP committees in the inaugural session of the 2014-19 EP in July 2014 (Crisp 2014).

We again start by considering descriptive information on the relative network centrality of MEPs from different party groups, which Figure 3 plots for one of our dependent variables, Eigenvector centrality.[12] The figure seems to suggest that members of the smaller groups indeed tend to be more central in the network (H1b). In contrast, pro- and anti-Europeans show up as both central (Greens/EFA, ALDE vs. GUE, ECR) and not central (S&D, EPP vs. EFD), which contradicts our expectations (H2b). Finally, there may be a relationship between Gal values and network centrality (H3b), but it is less obvious in Figure 3 than in Figure 1.

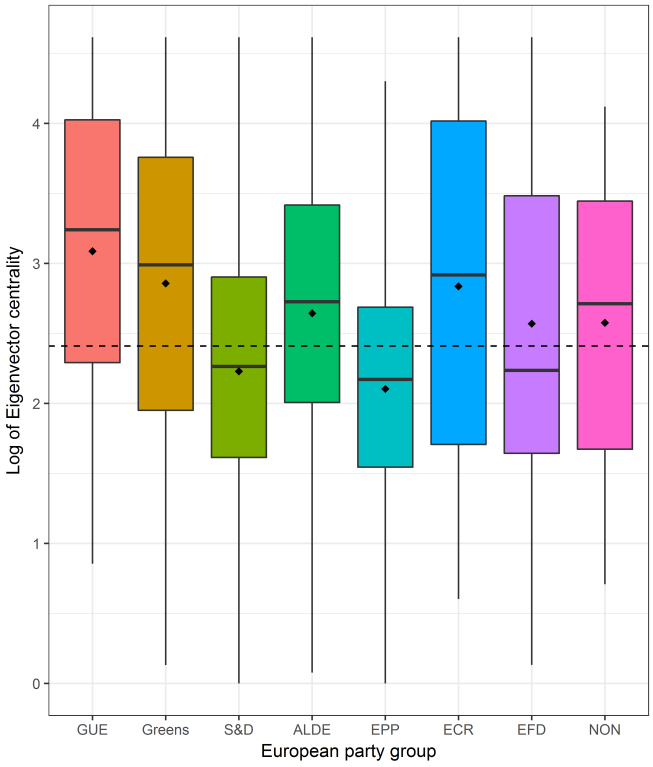

Figure 3 Eigenvector centrality of MEPs, by party group

Note: The diamond-shaped points indicate the mean of the conditional distribution. Dashed horizontal lines indicate sample mean.

[12] Figures showing equivalent patterns for betweenness centrality and network constraint are in the appendix. Given the strongly left-skewed distributions of all three variables, we take their natural logarithm as dependent variables in the regression analyses. By default, the centrality and brokerage measures are normalised to range between 0 and 1. Before taking the natural logarithm, we rescaled the variables to range from 0 to 100. As the logarithm of 0 is undefined, we added 1 to all values before transforming the variable.

To examine the distribution of centrality values across party groups more systematically and to identify party group member attributes that are related to these differences, we conduct a number of linear regression analyses. But since our dependent variables are social network measures, we cannot assume that our observations are independent of one another (see especially Cranmer *et al.* 2017). To address this problem, we rely on a node-level regression approach that computes an OLS regression and then randomly permutes the elements of the dependent vector and re-computes the regression, a step that is repeated multiple times (10,000 iterations, in our case). It then estimates significance levels from these simulations.[13]

We use the same specifications of independent variables as above, except that the independent variable party group size refers to the number of party group members in the network, rather than the committee as a whole. We expect the effect of party group size to wane with increasing size and therefore use its log-transformed form. Just as in the analysis of network membership, we also consider the effects of MEPs' stance on European integration and Gal/Tan issues and we include fixed effects for committees (again, the coefficient estimates for the latter are omitted for reasons of space). The Constitutional Affairs Committee and the EFD group are the categories with values closest to the overall sample mean. Thus, these categories form the baseline for the interpretation of the effects of the remaining categories. The results of the analyses are reported in Table 2.

[13] Note that regression procedures in UCINET (Borgatti, Everett, and Freeman 2002) only provides significance levels and p-values, not standard errors. This is reflected in Table 2.

Table 2 QAP regression of network centrality measures

	Eigenvector centrality				Betweenness centrality				Network constraint			
	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5	Model 6	Model 7	Model 8	Model 9	Model 10	Model 11	Model 12
Intercept	2.62***	3.25***	3.72***	3.58***	1.23***	1.76***	2.03***	1.93***	3.55***	3.29***	3.11***	3.16***
	(0.000)	(0.000)	(0.000)	(0.000)	(0.000)	(0.10)	(0.12)	(0.11)	(0.08)	(0.07)	(0.08)	(0.08)
ECR	0.25**				0.30***				-0.13**			
	(0.045)				(0.001)				(0.032)			
GUE/NGL	0.51***				0.43***				-0.21***			
	(0.002)				(0.000)				(0.005)			
Greens/EFA	0.29**				0.27***				-0.13**			
	(0.022)				(0.002)				(0.032)			
S&D	-0.33**				-0.15**				0.13**			
	(0.007)				(0.028)				(0.020)			
ALDE	0.07				0.17**				-0.07			
	(0.271)				(0.018)				(0.126)			
EPP	-0.46***				-0.26***				0.17**			
	(0.001)				(0.002)				(0.006)			
NON	-0.06				0.05				0.06			
	(0.481)				(0.370)				(0.311)			
Party group size (log)		-0.41***		-0.38***		-0.29***		-0.27***		0.16***		0.15***
		(0.000)		(0.000)		(0.000)		(0.000)		(0.000)		(0.000)
European integration			-1.07***	-0.14			-0.71***	-0.04			0.42***	0.06
			(0.000)	(0.227)			(0.000)	(0.350)			(0.000)	(0.282)
Gal-tan			-0.93***	-0.49***			-0.69***	-0.37***			0.39***	0.22***
			(0.000)	(0.001)			(0.000)	(0.000)			(0.000)	(0.002)
R^2	0.19	0.17	0.16	0.19	0.24	0.21	0.18	0.22	0.43	0.41	0.42	0.43
Adj. R^2	0.18	0.16	0.15	0.18	0.23	0.20	0.17	0.21	0.42	0.40	0.41	0.43
Num. obs	1494	1494	1403	1403	1494	1494	1403	1403	1494	1494	1403	1403

Note: $^{***}p < 0.01$, $^{**}p < 0.05$, $^{*}p < 0.1$; the dependent variable is the log-transformed value of the respective network centrality measure; p-values are in parentheses; committee dummies included as control variables in all models; the baseline category for the committee variable is the Constitutional Affairs Committee and the baseline category for the party group variable is the EFD group.

Not surprisingly, the coefficient sizes of the party membership variable correspond closely to the ranking of means of party groups on different dependent variables shown in Figure 3. As expected (H1b and H3b), party group size and Gal/Tan position have a statistically significant negative effect on Eigenvector centrality and betweenness centrality, and a positive effect on network constraint. Support for European integration shows the same pattern of relationships in models that do not account for party group size, but controlling for party group size demonstrates that these relationships are spurious. H2b is thus not confirmed. Regarding substantive effect sizes, holding all other variables constant, a one per cent increase in party group size decreases Eigenvector centrality by about 0.38 per cent and betweenness centrality by about 0.27 per cent. Network constraint is increased by about 0.15 per cent. Moving from the theoretical minimum (0) to the maximum (1) of the Gal/Tan scale decreases Eigenvector centrality by 47 per cent, decreases betweenness centrality by 37 per cent, and increases network constraint by 22 per cent.

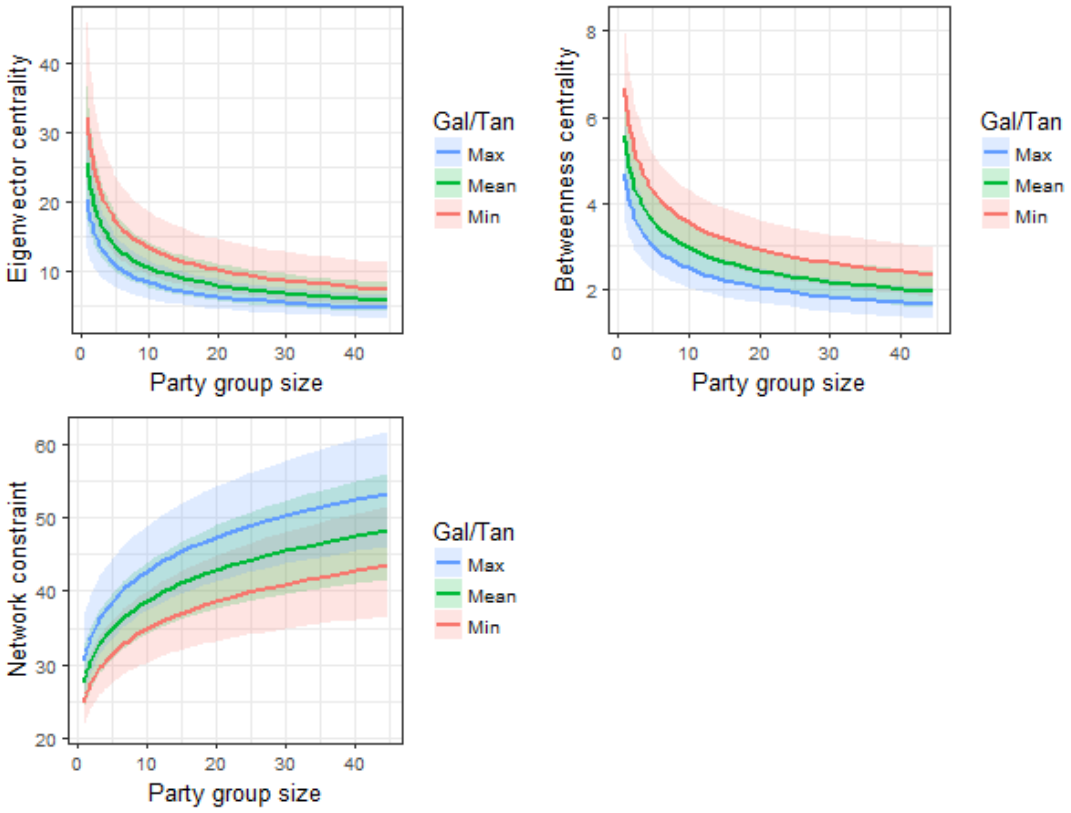

Figure 4 Predicted values of network centrality measures

Note: The figure displays predicted values based on Models 4, 8, and 12 in Table 2 for a member of the Constitutional Affairs Committee, keeping party group size constant at its mean and varying the Gal/Tan and party group size variables. Confidence intervals are based on t-distribution, not simulated distributions.

The effects of Gal/Tan and party group size on the predicted values of the centrality measures on their original scale are further illustrated in Figure 4. Note that 90 per cent of all Eigenvector centrality values are located between 1 and 64.2, 90 per cent of all betweenness values are located between 0 and 5.8, and 90 per cent of all network constraint values are located between 9.5 and 55.3. Although the effect of party group size is considerably stronger than the effect of Gal/Tan, taking the difference in predicted values from the minimum to the maximum of the respective variable as a yardstick, both effect sizes cover a substantial proportion of the overall value ranges of the dependent variables.

The findings that MEPs from small party groups are more central in the policymaking networks and connect more colleagues who are not otherwise tied to one another are notable from a social networks perspective, as the reasoning behind Hypothesis 1 already suggested above: because there are fewer members of small political groups, they have to work on a greater number of reports *(ceteris paribus),* which connects them to a greater number of colleagues from other party groups. This may have distinct relational and informational benefits (e.g., Burt 1992; Coleman 1988; Krackhardt 1992; Ringe and Victor 2013). Whether this proposition holds water in the perceptions of participants in the policymaking process was another topic in the interviews we conducted in the EP, and there was some recognition of relational benefits of being a small group. For example, one respondent (Interview 8) from a smaller political group explained that he may walk into the second or third meeting of the day having already interacted with the representatives of some of the other small groups in earlier meetings, while the person from the EPP is a "new" to the group. Another respondent agreed that it can matter when you know and have collaborated with people before, especially because MEPs from the large groups may only show up to meetings when "their" files are being dealt with; it can also be an advantage to be familiar with an array of different topics (Interview 4).

But respondents were also quite clear about the costs of having comparatively little manpower, which may entail having to do more work less thoroughly (Interviews 4, 9). A respondent from one of the large groups believes that these realities come at the expense of policy expertise, efficiency, and effectiveness, which in her mind clearly outweighs the benefit of being more connected (Interview 11).[14] And, in the end, small groups naturally have more difficulty filling all necessary shadow slots (Interviews 1, 4), and their

representatives may be forced to miss some meetings when they conflict with responsibilities on another file (Interview 6).

Conclusion

This paper and its findings make a series of notable contributions, beginning with the recognition that small parties are not as sidelined in the EP policymaking process as one might expect *a priori*. They surely face important disadvantages, in that they receive fewer rapporteurships and, because of limited human resources, are unable to field shadows as consistently as the larger groups. Moreover, MEPs from small party groups have to be able to cover a broader range of policy proposals and may therefore be less able to specialize and focus narrowly on only specific policy issues. The need to assign the same actors a greater number of reports, however, entails that members of small parties hold potentially advantageous positions in *relational* (or social network) terms: they are more central and connect a greater number of colleagues who are not otherwise tied to one another. As such, they may act as brokers and transmitters of information between other members of the network and across policy proposals. Our interview data suggest that these benefits may not outweigh the downsides of being small, but they may at least alleviate them.

We also find that members of pro-EU parties are more likely to be included in policymaking networks, yet they are not more central. This suggests a pro-EU bias in negotiating teams, but Europhiles are not found to be in structurally advantageous positions inside policymaking networks. In contrast, members of Gal parties are both more involved *and* more central in policymaking networks than those of Tan parties. This is notable, in part, because this "new politics" dimension trumps the impact of the traditional economic left-right divide, which previous work has shown to be the principal cleavage in EP politics. When it comes to policymaking, however, Gal MEPs dominate.

Given that Gal positions are associated with support for key EU policies and a stronger EP, pro-EU attitudes may come into play after all even when it comes to structural positions of MEPs in policymaking networks, as do values associated with democratic governance and participation more generally (which are also partially captured by Gal positions). And it is apparent from our analyses that those who reject certain democratic values and processes (in general or at the EU level) are less involved in the EU's legislative process. It is thus primarily, although not entirely, the *self*-marginalization of the far Eurosceptic right that explains the systematic side-lining of the far right EFD group during the 2009-14 EP term. This is an important result, given how much was made of the success of

far right parties in the 2014 EP election; after all, these parties do not matter much when it comes to policymaking processes inside the EP.

In the end, it is perhaps a more remarkable finding that EP policymaking networks only marginalize the far Eurosceptic right, but are otherwise broadly inclusive - they even incorporate 'soft' Eurosceptics on both left and right. While this is not to say that parties outside the mainstream necessarily or regularly achieve the policy *outcomes* they prefer - in fact, they most likely do not—they do have a voice and are included in democratic policymaking at the EU level, which positively reflects on the input legitimacy of decision-making in the EP.

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