

# **Committee Work in the European Parliament: The Distribution of Rapporteurships among Party Groups and National Delegations**

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## **Abstract**

The paper analyses the distribution of reports and rapporteurships in the 1989-99 European Parliament among party groups and national delegations. The data consists of all reports and rapporteurships in the third (1989-94) and fourth (1994-99) Parliament and of interviews with committee staff. We show that the size of a group predicts well its share of the reports. Correlations coefficients between the number of members in a group and the number of reports they produced are very high, generally over .950. Party groups are, within certain limits, willing to make trade-offs and to cede reports to smaller groups, but on the whole they compete hard over the reports in order to influence the EU policy process. The procedures for allocating committee chairs (d'Hondt system), committee seats (proportionality rule), and reports (points system based on groups' share of seats) can be interpreted as mechanisms for the party groups to control the committees in a situation where the former are relatively weak (compared to European national parliaments). The two largest groups, PSE and PPE, control legislative reports. There is considerable variation in the distribution of rapporteurships between national delegations. Scattered distribution over several groups, with weak presence in the core groups, correlates positively with low report production.

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## Introduction

While suffering from declining voter turnout, the European Parliament (EP) has recently received increased attention for its input into the decision-making process of the European Union (EU). Research on the Parliament has primarily focused on the inter-institutional dimension, with scholars using theoretical models and empirical data to analyse the EP's success under the EU legislative procedures. In addition, several scholars have employed survey and roll call data to examine party group behaviour and MEPs' preferences. However, our knowledge of the EP committees remains limited. Apart from the article by Bowler and Farrell (1995) on committee membership and specialization, existing studies have focused on the role of individual committees in the EU legislative process (Judge 1993; Judge & Earnshaw 1994). This paper analyses the distribution of reports and rapporteurships in the third (1989-94) and fourth (1994-99) Parliament. Our main research questions are: How are reports distributed between and within committees? Is there variation between party groups and national delegations? If yes, what explains this variation?

The research questions are particularly important when considering the legislative powers of the Parliament. Under the co-operation procedure, introduced by the Single European Act in 1987, the EP proved effective in getting its amendments accepted by the Commission and the Council (Earnshaw & Judge 1997; Kreppel 1999; Tsebelis & Kalandrakis 1999). Similarly, studies of the Maastricht Treaty version of the co-decision procedure showed that the EP was successful in imposing its views vis-à-vis the Council (Earnshaw & Judge 1996; Scully 1997a; Maurer 1999). To explain this success, scholars have emphasized the organisational and informational efficiency of the chamber, which in turn is mainly attributed to the interaction between party groups and committees (Bowler & Farrell 1995; Tsebelis 1995; Hix & Lord 1997; Raunio 1997; Lord 1998; Hix 1999: 74-98). More specifically, the rapporteurship system, with parliamentary resolutions based on reports drafted by individual members, is seen as crucial. Rapporteurs accumulate policy expertise and mediate with the Commission and the Council, two factors essential for legislative influence (Bowler & Farrell 1995; Tsebelis 1995; Earnshaw & Judge 1997; Tsebelis & Kalandrakis 1999; Wurzel 1999). While representatives are formally equal, the rapporteurs are potentially highly influential in shaping European legislation. Committees and rapporteurs in particular are therefore "privileged groups" within the Parliament (Strøm 1998: 23).

Reports are perhaps the best way for MEPs to ‘claim credit’ (Mayhew 1974). Rapporteurs on major bills are often interviewed by the press, and even the plenary debate, where the report is introduced by the rapporteur, may receive media attention. Reports are visible evidence that MEPs are doing something for their constituents. While such motives are obviously important in terms of re-election, the second incentive for MEPs to receive rapporteurships is policy influence. As described in section three, rapporteurs are the key individuals in steering the bill through the parliament. Thirdly, provided that the MEP is perceived by her colleagues as a good rapporteur, the rapporteurship may secure the representative office benefits in the chamber, i.e. further rapporteurships, or leadership positions in groups and in committees. MEPs have therefore three good reasons to seek rapporteurships - re-election, policy influence, and gaining influence within the Parliament (see Fenno 1973). But what costs are involved in becoming a rapporteur? First, there is the time spent on lobbying your colleagues and the group co-ordinator in order to receive the rapporteurship. Secondly, drafting a report is often very time-consuming and involves a lot of hard work. Therefore politically skilful members, with extensive contacts both in and outside of the Parliament, can try to influence policy by other means: by putting pressure on the rapporteur or the committee chair, or by influencing policy through party groups. Embedded in a separation-of-powers system, and with no real EU government to hold accountable, the main function of the Parliament is to influence the EU policy process. As reports are a key part of the Parliament’s (legislative) work, committees, party groups and individual MEPs compete hard over reports and rapporteurships.

The paper begins with a theoretical discussion, focusing on the importance of committees vis-à-vis the whole legislature. The structure and influence of EP committees and the procedures for allocating reports and rapporteurships are explained in part three. Section four presents our research design. Results of our empirical analysis are presented over the next two sections, starting with the distribution of reports among party groups and examining then the distribution of rapporteurships among national delegations. We show that the size of a group predicts well its share of the reports. Correlations coefficients between the number of members in a group and the number of reports they produced are very high, generally over .950. Party groups are, within certain limits, willing to make trade-offs and to cede reports to smaller groups, but on the whole they hold on to their positions and fight for the reports in order to influence the EU policy process. The procedures for allocating committee chairs (d’Hondt system), committee seats (proportionality rule), and reports (points system based on

groups' share of seats) can be interpreted as mechanisms for the party groups to control the committees in a situation where the former are relatively weak (compared to European national parliaments). In the final section we discuss the implications of the study, emphasizing the importance of internal organisational choices for EP's legislative performance, and suggesting avenues for further research.

### **Committees and parliamentary decision-making**

Committees are established primarily in order to make parliaments more efficient. Committees provide arenas for specialization, thereby enhancing parliaments' ability to influence legislation and to hold the government accountable. The key aspect is information: investment in committee work makes MPs better informed and reduces the informational advantage of the executive (Mattson & Strøm 1995; Longley & Davidson eds. 1998; Norton ed. 1998). Research on committees has primarily focused on their internal structure and external powers, with particularly the choice of procedures attracting much scholarly attention (Evans 1999; Strøm 1998: 22). Most theories on committees stem from research on the US Congress. In the Congress committees are central actors in processing bills, party discipline is weak, and individual representatives enjoy more freedom of action than in legislatures operating in parliamentary systems of government.

Two dimensions are crucial in explaining committee influence: their formal autonomy from the parent chamber, and the autonomy of committee members from their party groups. Mattson and Strøm (1995) list four factors for measuring committee power: the right to initiate legislation, the right to rewrite (i.e. substitute) bills, control of committee agenda, and information rights, especially the right to hear witnesses and obtain documents. The last dimension is particularly relevant here. When making decisions in the parliament, legislators take cues from various sources: their colleagues, group leaders, interest groups, and voters. Committee members constitute an important source of information. For example, in a survey carried out in the Dutch Tweede Kamer in 1972, MPs were asked to rate their own level of information. The respondents judged themselves to be most informed about bills on which they were party specialists, second about bills considered in their committees, third about bills considered in their parliamentary groups, and least informed about bills considered in the plenary (Van Schendelen 1976: 241-242). Such cue-taking is accentuated by the increasing technicality of modern legislation and the heavy workload of parliaments. Damgaard (1995)

reported that in twelve out of eighteen West European parliaments committee members had “medium” or “high” influence on party positions. He argued that party group leadership has three instruments to reduce committee autonomy: the appointment process, i.e. either the MPs themselves or the leadership’s preferences are more important in nominating committee members; the autonomy of committee members vis-à-vis their groups; and whether the group leadership can apply sanctions against MPs.

In the next section we discuss the main features of the EP committee structure. The main argument is that EP committees can be categorized as powerful on both dimensions; they have considerable procedural rights and committee members are fairly autonomous from their party groups.

### **Committees in the European Parliament**

When analysing decision-making in the EP, three factors deserve special attention: First, Euroelections are organised nationally, with national parties in control of candidate selection and electoral campaigns. Second, the EU has no real executive accountable to the Parliament. The priority of the EP is to exercise its legislative and informal powers as effectively as possible. Therefore the Congress, embedded also in a separation-of-powers system, is in many ways a better point of comparison than European national legislatures. And third, coalition behaviour in the EP is mainly driven by the need to manufacture winning floor coalitions, with the Parliament often needing an absolute majority of members (314/626 MEPs) behind its resolution to accept, amend or veto legislation, particularly under the co-decision and budgetary procedures.

#### **TABLE 1**

Table 1 shows the distribution of seats between party groups in the 1989-99 EP. PSE and PPE formed the core of the party system, holding around two-thirds of the seats. Despite rather impressive levels of group unity during voting (Attinà 1990; Hix & Lord 1997; Raunio 1997; Kreppel 2000; Hix 2000), national party cues are arguably more important than the line of the EP group in shaping MEPs’ voting decisions, especially as the exclusive right of national parties to determine candidate selection restricts the ability of the group leadership to sanction troublesome representatives. (Raunio 2000)

Committees dominate decision-making in the Parliament. All legislative initiatives are processed by committees, and with the exception of resolutions adopted at the end of topical and urgent debates, oral questions or question-time, plenary deliberation is based on committee reports. Committee stage occurs always before plenary debates and votes. According to Rule 60(1) of the EP's Rules of Procedure "Proposals from the Commission and other documents of a legislative nature shall be referred by the President to the committee responsible for consideration." This is significant, for as Strøm (1998: 46) argues, "it is reasonable to suggest, more generally, that the role of committees increases if the major debate on a bill has not taken place before it is referred to them." The sequence of events, with plenary involved after the committees, strengthens the hand of the committees.

Committee jurisdictions are defined in Annex VI of EP Rules of Procedure. The Parliament can also establish temporary committees or temporary committees of inquiry, the latter to investigate alleged mal-administration or contraventions of EC law (Corbett et al. 2000: 125-126, 261-264; Shackleton 1998). Committees consider legislative documents sent from the Commission and the Council (Rules 60 and 154), draft own-initiative reports after having been authorised to do so by the Conference of Presidents (Rule 163), organise hearings during which they hear Commissioners and Commission civil servants, and invite experts to give their opinions on matters under consideration. Committees have the right to invite Commission and Council representatives as well as 'any other person' to their meetings, but they cannot force anyone to appear (Rule 166). The Parliament may even decide to grant a committee the authority to adopt a report on behalf of the whole chamber (Rule 62), but this procedure has been used sparingly.

Table 2 shows the name, year of establishment and membership of EP committees in 1989-99. The number of committees increased by two during this period: the Committee on Civil Liberties and Internal Affairs was established at mid-term in January 1992, and the Committee on Fisheries, previously a subcommittee of the Agriculture Committee, after the 1994 elections. The names in Table 2 are those in force at the end of the 1994-99 legislature.

## TABLE 2

Committee assignments are decided in the first session of the newly elected Parliament. The number and size of the committees are decided first, followed by the appointment of committee members and substitutes. According to the Rules of Procedure "Members of

committees and temporary committees of inquiry shall be elected after nominations have been submitted by the political groups and the Non-attached Members. The Conference of Presidents shall submit proposals to Parliament. The composition of the committees shall, as far as possible, reflect the composition of Parliament.” (Rule 152) There are no restrictions on multiple memberships, but the majority of members are full members of one committee and substitutes in another one. Members may be highly active in the committee in which they are substitutes, especially when they did not get seats in their priority committees. Substitutes usually have full speaking and voting rights, and it is not uncommon for them to receive rapporteurships, especially if they are recognised as policy experts. This applies also to the period investigated here. In the Development and Cooperation Committee and Regional Policy Committee about a quarter of reports went to substitutes.

The appointment process can be classified as fairly consensual at the group level, with membership proportional to group size. This reflects the practice in Western European legislatures (Mattson & Strøm 1995). Previous research on committee appointments by Bowler and Farrell (1995: 227) in the 1989-1992 EP showed that “the share of committee places is proportional by both nationality and ideological bloc. Within these limits, set by allocations along ideological or national lines, there is scope for the kinds of specialized membership and recruitment made in the US Congress”. This was also true for the whole 1989-99 period. In their analysis on the background factors explaining individual assignments to six committees<sup>1</sup>, Bowler and Farrell (1995: 231-234) concluded that occupational or interest-group attachments were “the only consistently significant determinants driving committee membership.” Significantly, they also argued that such specialization is coordinated or even controlled by party groups through their control of committee and parliamentary leadership assignments (ibid.: 241).

Within committees are four positions of authority: chairman, vice-chairmen, party group coordinators, and rapporteurs. Committee chairs are highly influential positions. The chair is in charge of committee meetings, speaks on behalf of the committee in the plenary (particularly on politically sensitive matters), and is a major broker in drafting the committee agenda. The committees elect their own chairs<sup>2</sup>, but in practice party groups decide the allocation of chairs and vice-chairmanships. The d’Hondt method is used for this purpose.

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<sup>1</sup> Agriculture and Rural Development, Legal Affairs and Citizens’ Rights, Economic and Monetary Affairs and Industrial Policy, Regional Policy, Employment and Social Affairs, and Environment, Public Health and Consumer Protection.

Chair allocation is thus proportional to group size, again reflecting the procedures found in most European parliaments (Mattson & Strøm 1995). Party group coordinators are responsible for coordinating the work of their groups in the committees. While the job description and importance of coordinators varies between the groups, the practice of nominating coordinators has become more common in the Parliament, especially in the more institutionalised groups. Together with the committee chairman, the coordinators negotiate the distribution of rapporteurships between the groups. Once a group has been assigned a report, the coordinator allocates it to a member of her group. However, the coordinator must take into account the wishes of the group leadership and the national parties, in addition to the wishes of the members themselves.

While the assignment of committee seats and chairs is controlled by party groups, the crucial difference in comparison with party groups in EU member state legislatures is that national parties within the groups, and not the group leadership, carry arguably most weight in determining committee positions. Moreover, the party groups have few if any sanctions available against MEPs whose committee behaviour deviates from group positions. Therefore the EP groups are weaker than their national counterparts and committee members enjoy much autonomy, especially in terms of informational asymmetry.

Committee work revolves around reports. The Parliament produces two main types of reports: legislative and non-legislative reports. The legislative reports can be divided into five categories on the basis of the EU legislative procedures: assent, budget, consultation, cooperation, and co-decision reports.<sup>3</sup> When the bill arrives from the Commission, the legislative co-ordination unit (the sessional service of the EP's General Secretariat seated in Luxembourg) normally decides which committee is responsible for producing a report on the issue, possibly assigning simultaneously other committees as opinion-giving committees. The Conference of Committee Chairmen is also involved in planning forthcoming legislative work. In case of a dispute between two or more committees, the matter can be taken to the Conference of Presidents if the Conference of Committee Chairmen fails to reach an agreement. Usually the allocation of reports is unproblematic. An opinion of another committee, based on a draft opinion formulated by a draftsman, is not binding on the committee responsible for drafting the actual report, but the Parliament has revised its

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<sup>2</sup> For a list of committee chairs since the 1979 elections, see Corbett et al. (2000: 126-129).

<sup>3</sup> For more detailed information on the processing of legislation inside the Parliament, see Corbett et al. (2000: 105-232).



procedures in order to strengthen the role of opinions. (see Neuhold 2001) Sometimes two or even more committees are allocated the right to draft reports on one issue. This occurs, for example, if the initiative is a broader issue with wider repercussions. During the period under analysis here typical examples included reports on relations with third countries, in which cases the Foreign Affairs, Security and Defence Policy Committee and the External Economic Relations Committee or the Development and Cooperation Committee drafted reports on the same matter.

Lacking the formal right to initiate legislation or to rewrite bills, the Parliament produces own-initiative reports<sup>4</sup>. They are drafted following either a motion for resolution tabled by individual members (Rule 48)<sup>5</sup> or following a request by a committee. The Conference of Presidents decides whether the committee is given the right to produce the report. These requests are quite often turned down, especially towards the end of the five-year legislative term, and as a part of the Parliament's attempt to manage its timetable in the face of increasing legislative workload. An individual committee was in 1998 allowed to work on 2 or 3 (depending on the committee) own-initiative reports at the same time. Other non-legislative reports include inter-institutional consultations with the Commission, petitions, and internal matters such as the parliamentary immunity of MEPs and procedural changes. Also the Article 91, 93 procedure for 2nd and 3rd pillar reports, and inter-institutional agreement procedure (Budgetary Control Committee) reports are included here in the non-legislative category.

The rapporteur is responsible for drafting a report on the issue handled in the committee.<sup>6</sup> Other groups may appoint a shadow rapporteur who follows what the actual rapporteur does and keeps her group informed of the preparation of the report. The committee often discusses the issue before the draft report is produced. When drafting the report, the rapporteur must be prepared to compromise in order to accommodate the views of the committee members. Such compromise building is necessary in order to facilitate the smooth passage of the report in the committee and later in the plenary. Moreover, when both main groups, PSE and PPE, back the report, it is probably more acceptable to the Council and Commission, as both are primarily composed of social democrats and conservatives/Christian

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<sup>4</sup> These are produced independently of the other institutions. They may be related to forthcoming or proposed EU legislation, but are not formally a part of the legislative procedures.

<sup>5</sup> In practice, party groups usually table the resolution proposals.

democrats. Kreppel (1999: 532) showed that in cooperation procedure legislation, internal EP unity at the committee stage correlated positively with Commission and Council adoption: “This suggests either that internal EP unity is an indicator of a general lack of controversy or that when the EP presents a unified front it is more able to influence EU policy.” (see also Kreppel 2000)

Drafting a report is often very time-consuming, and the rapporteur normally consults a variety of actors when preparing the report: MEPs, external experts, interest groups, and especially in the case of legislative reports also the Commission and national governments.<sup>7</sup> When the report falls under cooperation, co-decision and budget procedures, the rapporteur needs to follow the processing of the proposal by the Council and the Commission. The rapporteur collects information on the preferences of the member states, and under co-decision procedure often meets Council representatives before the formal meetings of the Conciliation Committee (Wurzel 1999; Neuhold 2001). It is common for the MEPs to rely on the committee staff to carry out the background work, including consulting relevant outside actors, and producing the initial text that the rapporteur then scrutinizes. Much depends on the rapporteur, but in some committees the secretariat prepares up to 90% of the drafts, with the rapporteur providing the staff with general guidelines about the contents of the report.

Party group coordinators or shadow rapporteurs keep their groups informed of the preparation of the report and negotiate with the rapporteur. The draft report is then debated in the committee, with representative(s) of the Commission also commenting on the initial text. The draft report, together with amendments (tabled by any member), is then voted upon in the committee. Groups may debate the bill in their own meetings, but more usually the MEPs of the group seated in the committee convene to agree, if possible, on a common stand. Once adopted (by simple majority), the report is then sent to the plenary. If the committee opinion is not unanimous, the losing minority can give a summary of its position (Rule 161(3)). Before the plenary stage the groups decide their positions: what amendments to propose, and whether to support the report or not. National party delegations, especially the larger ones, often hold their own meetings prior to the group meetings. Finally, the report is presented by the

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<sup>6</sup> According to Bowler and Farrell (1995: 242) rapporteurs are also used in Belgium, the Netherlands, Italy, sometimes in the German Bundestag and have been used in France. The Anglo-American legislatures have no equivalent positions.

<sup>7</sup> Earnshaw and Judge (1997: 550) quote MEP Tom Spencer, according to whom “when you are handling a big report, the relationship between Commission and Parliament is very intimate and it’s not clear who is lobbying who.”

rapporteur in the plenary and tabled amendments (by the committee responsible, a political group or at least 32 members) are voted upon.

The distribution of rapporteurships within committees is not regulated in the standing orders of the Parliament. Instead, party groups have developed a system based primarily on the rule of proportionality. While there are differences between the committees, the process went in 1998 as follows<sup>8</sup>: each group receives a quota of points out of the total point tally based on its share of seats in the committee. In the Budgets Committee the point totals were determined by the groups' share of seats in the Parliament. Coordinators and committee chairmen decide the value of each report to be produced by the committee, and coordinators identify their groups' priority reports and make bids on behalf of their groups in specific coordinators' meetings. To quote Ken Collins, the former chair of the Environment Committee: "it is a combination of a kind of auction and a kind of elaborate game of poker because the technique of the group spokesman is to spend the minimum points for his or her group, and to get the maximum number of reports" (Wurzel 1999: 12).

Average reports normally cost 3 or 2 points and opinions 1 point. Sometimes the major reports are distributed well in advance. For example, in the Budgets Committee the key reports are allocated already at the start of the five-year legislative term. While some committees, such as the Research, Technological Development and Energy Committee, had an elaborate points system for various types of reports<sup>9</sup>, in some committees, such as the External Economic Relations, Petitions, and Rules of Procedure Committee, the allocations were largely consensual without resorting to a points system. The Budgetary Control Committee did not operate a points system. Occasionally rapporteurship is divided between two members, but this is rather rare and mainly used in more complex and politically important issues. Examples from the period under analysis included reports on the annual EU budget in the Budgets Committee and on the Intergovernmental Conferences in the Institutional Affairs Committee. Party groups often accommodate each other's wishes even if a group has already used up its points. Such behaviour is more common if the report is of minor importance. Smaller groups nevertheless complain occasionally about the dominance of PSE and PPE, as "big reports are outside their grasp".

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<sup>8</sup> Information in this section is based on a questionnaire sent to the chairs and secretariats of all committees in April 1998 (see the appendix).

<sup>9</sup> The cost of reports in the Research, Technological Development and Energy Committee was in 1998: simple consultation procedure 2, RTD-specific programs 2, "follow on"-reports 2 (if same

After a group has won a report, it is distributed to one of its members seated in that committee. Committee chairs seldom get involved, leaving intra-group allocation to the groups. Interventions by committee chairs are mainly limited to taking part in the discussions concerning allocations. Within groups, national parties are in a predominant role, but policy expertise is also an asset. According to Corbett et al. (2000: 117-118) “if the suggested rapporteur is recognised as a specialist on the issue it is easier to get agreement on his or her nomination. Certain technical issues on which there is little political controversy but on which a committee member is a specialist are again and again referred to that same specialist, often for very few points.” This suggests that the negotiations between groups include negotiations about the rapporteurs, particularly in the case of more important reports, with party group coordinators normally having someone in mind as a rapporteur when bidding for the report. Apart from the size of national party delegations within groups, nationality as such played no role in the allocation process.<sup>10</sup> Finally, an essential precondition for receiving a rapporteurship is the will to engage in such activity. No MEP is forced by the Rules of Procedure or by party groups’ internal rules to produce a report during her tenure in the Parliament. If no member wants the report, but the committee has already agreed to produce it, then reports can be sold at zero points like in the Regional Policy Committee, or the chairman can nominate herself as the rapporteur, or the committee can use the simplified procedure, i.e. the procedure without report (Rule 158).

This brief account of decision-making in the Parliament shows the strong position of the committees and the rapporteur. The rapporteur system means that individual members, and not committee chairs, are the key persons in the passage of individual pieces of legislation. The arguably rather chaotic decision-making structure of the EP strengthens the autonomy of the committees vis-à-vis the whole chamber, and the rapporteur often has much informational advantage over the other members. Indeed, MEPs with experience from national parliaments have argued that individual representatives wield more influence on legislation in the EP than

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group) or 3 (if other group), important consultation procedure 3, own-initiative 3, cooperation or co-decision 3, RTD-framework programme 4.

<sup>10</sup> When asked “is there a tendency within a political group that if a certain dossier is particularly important for a certain country, then an MEP from that country will stand up and say: ‘I want this dossier!’”, Ken Collins replied: “Usually not in fact. Sometimes in the Environment Committee the opposite is actually the case. We would sometimes take the view that if it was that important to a country then that is precisely why we should not allow this” (Wurzel 1999: 13).

in domestic parliaments.<sup>11</sup> Taking into account the importance of the committees, we expect party groups to be interested in maximising their share of the reports. The next section introduces our research questions and the sources used for data collection.

### **Research questions and data**

Our main research questions are: Is the allocation of rapporteurships between party groups proportional to their share of the seats? Are MEPs from certain member states more active than others? If yes, why?<sup>12</sup> The distribution of rapporteurships among party groups is expected to be proportional to their share of seats in the EP. Additionally, the impact of ideological orientation (pro/anti-integration) and the level of institutionalization of the groups are examined. The distribution of rapporteurships among national delegations is expected to be proportional to their share of seats in the EP, but to a lesser extent than for groups, because allocation procedures inside the committees and the groups do not explicitly take nationality into account. We also test the impact of the electoral system, the distance between constituency and the EP, and the date of accession.

Data on reports produced in the third and the fourth legislature<sup>13</sup> were extracted from official publications. These include the *Official Journal of the European Communities* that publishes the proceedings of the plenaries, and successive editions of the *List of Members* and the *Vademecum* published by EP. Reports and rapporteurships from the 1994 elections onwards are available at the Parliament's web site (<http://www.europarl.eu.int>). The reports and rapporteurships for 1994-1999 were double-checked using the *Official Journal* and EP's

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<sup>11</sup> For example, Alan Donnelly, the former leader of the UK Labour Party's delegation, argued that "individual members of the assembly now have considerably more power in terms of their direct legislative responsibilities than any member of a national parliament who does not hold a ministerial position." Alan Donnelly, 'Parliament needs one home to win respect it deserves', *European Voice*, 27 January - 2 February 2000, p. 14.

<sup>12</sup> For distribution of reports and rapporteurships among committees and individual MEPs, see Mamadouh and Raunio (2000).

<sup>13</sup> Virginie Mamadouh dealt with the third (1989-94) and Tapio Raunio with the fourth (1994-99) legislature. The authors are grateful to Olli Aaltonen for his invaluable help in data analysis of the 1994-1999 period. According to Corbett et al. (2000: 116) the fifth Parliament produced 2084 reports while our data lists 1984 reports. The difference results mainly from the fact that their figures are based on information provided by committee secretariats, while we used the *Official Journal* and the EP's own publications. A similar difference applies to the third Parliament. Also the categorisation of reports in Corbett et al. differs from ours. We classify all reports not part of the legislative procedures as non-legislative reports, while Corbett et al. separate between consultation on non-legislative issues, reports on legal base issues, reports on lifting immunity, own-initiative reports, reports on motions for a resolution pursuant to Rule 48, and reports on EP rules.

own data. For 1989-1994 the three lists of reports<sup>14</sup> published in the *Liste des rapports de la troisième législature* were checked with each other. Additional information on committee decision-making was collected through a questionnaire sent to the chairs and secretariats of all committees in April 1998 (see the appendix). The analysis in section three was mainly based on the answers to the questionnaire.

A few methodological problems should be spelled out. As we review a ten-year period we are confronted with certain practical difficulties caused by the changing nature of the EU and the Parliament. Reforms following German reunification and the 1995 enlargement brought major changes in seat distribution. German reunification increased the number of seats for Germany from 81 to 99, plus the seat shares of all large and medium sized countries, for the 1994 elections, bringing the total number of seats from 518 to 567. The 1995 enlargement with Austria, Finland and Sweden led to a further increase to 626 seats, an increase of 20% in the total number of seats as compared to the 1989 situation. Secondly, the EP Rules of Procedure were revised, especially during the third legislature. This applied to the number, names and tasks of the committees, including the introduction of two new committees (see Table 2). Thirdly, our analysis is complicated by membership changes during the legislatures. The high turnover between elections is relatively easy to accommodate, but shifts between party groups are more difficult to deal with. To handle these shifts as accurately as possible, we have chosen to keep the data on the two legislatures apart. Nevertheless, we felt it necessary to construct an overall data set for each legislature. To do so, we had to disregard shifts during each legislature in the computations (which does not mean that we disregard shifts and changes in our analysis of the figures).

### **The distribution of rapporteurships between party groups**

The distribution of rapporteurships among party groups is reported in Tables 3a and 3b. We expect the distribution to be proportional to the size of the group, and by and large this is the case. Still, the overall disproportionality is about 9%, corresponding to about 180 rapporteurships that should be re-allocated to obtain proportional distribution. This is more than we expected on the basis of the allocation procedures described in section three.

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<sup>14</sup> Reports were listed by rapporteur in the first list, by parliamentary committee in the second one and chronologically in the third.

## TABLES 3a AND 3b

Three possible explanations for the observed distribution are examined: size, ideological orientation, and level of institutionalisation. Because of the auction-like points system, the two largest groups (PSE and PPE) are expected to produce relatively more reports, particularly legislative reports, than the smaller groups. The smallest groups will be under-represented, and the non-attached even more. In addition, groups opposing European integration are expected to produce relatively less reports than those favouring integration, as groups opposing integration are not likely to invest resources in committee work. Finally, the more institutionalised groups are expected to produce relatively more reports than less institutionalised groups.

The size of a group predicts well its share of the reports. As shown in Table 6, correlations coefficients between the number of members in a group and the number of reports they produced are very high, generally over .950 with the noticeable exception of reports falling under the assent procedure<sup>15</sup> which score lower (.927 for the third legislature and .854 for the fourth legislature). Variation in size explains most of the variation in production between groups ( $r^2 = .985$  during the third legislature,  $r^2 = .980$  during the fourth legislature). This means that we can use the size of a group to predict how many reports it has produced. We performed simple regression analyses to consider in which cases the number of reports was much higher or lower than expected. Our discussion is based on the standardized residuals in these regression analyses.

Although largely over-represented, i.e. the group produces a larger percentage of reports than its share of seats, PSE produced much less reports than expected (with the exception of cooperation reports during both legislatures). PPE produced much more reports than expected (with the exception of non-legislative reports during the third legislature and cooperation reports during the fourth legislature). ELDR produced slightly more reports than expected, but with a differentiated pattern depending on the types of reports. During the third legislature, the liberals produced much more non-legislative reports than expected but much less cooperation, co-decision and assent reports. During the fourth legislature, they produced much less cooperation and co-decision reports than expected, but more non-legislative and consultation

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<sup>15</sup> The deviant figures obtained for the assent reports are partly caused by the small number of such reports. However, it is striking that their distribution among both national delegations and groups is much different than for other reports.

reports. ED (third legislature only) produced more reports than expected, especially co-decision, cooperation and assent reports, but also non-legislative reports. The Greens produced slightly less reports than expected during the third legislature but much more during the fourth. During the third legislature they produced much less cooperation and co-decision reports, but more non-legislative reports than expected. During the fourth legislature they produced much more non-legislative but also cooperation and co-decision reports than expected. The radical left (CG, GUE/NGL) produced slightly less reports than expected. Regarding other groups during the third legislature, two produced slightly more reports than expected (RDE, GUE) and two much less reports than expected (DR, ARC). Regarding other groups during the fourth legislature, two produced slightly less reports than expected (I-EDN, UPE) and one slightly more (ARE). Finally, non-attached members produced much less reports than expected, especially during the fourth legislature when this non-group had no less than 27 to 38 members.

Although size is a good predictor, differences in output slightly alter the relative positions of the groups. Although smaller than GUE-NGL, the Greens had significantly more rapporteurships than the former in the fourth legislature. In the third legislature, the radical left GUE scored better than the Greens. DR in 1989-94 and the non-attached members in 1994-99 did not even gather one rapporteurship per seat. The meagre contribution from the extreme right results from two factors. The other groups adopted a negative, if not outright hostile, attitude towards the extreme-right DR. Besides, DR members were known for their overall lack of interest in EP's work and were opposed to a strong EP and further European integration. Non-attached members produced an extremely small number of reports: 35 in total. They were heavily under-represented, especially in the fourth legislature despite holding almost 5% of the seats. Whether this is due to their status as non-attached members, or to their ideological orientation as an overwhelming majority of them represented Eurosceptical far-right parties, is difficult to assess.

The other two factors are far less important. Party groups opposing European integration were expected to produce relatively less reports than those favouring integration. The hypothesis is difficult to test because the pro/anti-integration cleavage cuts across party lines as the EP is organised according to the left/right-dimension. Nevertheless, some small groups during our period of analysis were clearly anti-EU or at least strongly critical of integration: the Communist group (CG), the extreme-right group (DR), and the non-attached members during the third legislature; the Europe of the Nations (EDN), the radical left (GUE-NGL),



and the non-attached members during the fourth legislature. Indeed, groups opposing integration are the most under-represented ones. This applies also to the Rainbow Group (ARC) during the third legislature that consisted of regionalists favouring integration but also of representatives of the Danish anti-EC movement. An anti-EU ideology correlates moderately and negatively but not significantly with report production.

Finally, the more institutionalised groups were expected to produce relatively more reports than less institutionalised groups. We define institutionalisation in terms of group cohesion and extra-parliamentary organisation. Group cohesion is measured by voting behaviour. Indices of agreement of samples of roll call votes are available for both legislatures (Hix & Lord 1997; Raunio 1997). According to these data, the cohesive groups were PPE, ED, V, GUE, DR, and CG in the 1989-94 Parliament, and PSE, PPE, RDE/FE (UPE), and ARE in the fourth legislature. The level of cohesion correlates very moderately and insignificantly with report production. The other indicator is the existence of an extra-parliamentary party organisation at the European level. More organised in that sense are PSE, PPE, ELDR, and the Greens. PPE is the oldest European-level party, founded already in 1976. The socialists and liberals established confederations in the 1970s, and then formed a European party in the early nineties, PSE in 1992 and ELDR in 1993. The European Federation of Green Parties (EFGP) was established in 1993. The age of the European party correlates quite strongly with the production of a group.

In conclusion, the two dominant groups, PSE and PPE, are largely in control of legislative reports.<sup>16</sup> While the overall distribution of rapporteurships seems to indicate that smaller groups more or less get their fair share of the cake, this finding certainly underestimates the position of PSE and PPE, as only these two groups can afford the most contested and influential reports.<sup>17</sup>

### **The distribution of rapporteurships between national delegations**

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<sup>16</sup> This might explain also overall participation by MEPs in parliamentary work, as members from the two core groups have thus on average more at stake in guiding the report through the Parliament. Analysing plenary attendance, Scully (1997b) showed that attendance levels in the chamber were higher under legislative procedures requiring absolute majorities, with especially MEPs from PSE and PPE having an incentive to turn up for voting as they dominate proceedings on such matters, for example on co-decision legislation.

<sup>17</sup> Obviously, groups or individual MEPs may for various reasons prioritise less expensive non-legislative reports. However, this is unlikely. Earnshaw and Judge (1997: 553) report of their interview with Ken Collins, the former chair of the Environment Committee: "When pressed whether

Tables 4a and 4b show the distribution of rapporteurships between national delegations. The distribution is, as expected, less proportional than among party groups. It is less proportional during the fourth legislature than during the third Parliament (partly the logical consequence of the increased number of national delegations). The pattern is fairly consistent over the two legislatures, with the exception of the Belgians who were greatly over-represented in the third legislature and under-represented in the fourth. 12% and 15% of rapporteurships should be reallocated to obtain proportional distribution with the overall seat distribution among member states. This corresponds to 250 and 300 rapporteurships. To explain these distortions, we scrutinise the role of two factors internal to the functioning of the Parliament, the size and political composition of national delegations, and three external factors, the electoral system, the distance between constituency and the EP meeting places (Brussels and Strasbourg) and the date of accession.

#### TABLES 4a AND 4b

The larger national delegations are expected to produce relatively more reports than the smaller ones. Larger national delegations are likely to form large party delegations inside the groups and are thereby well positioned to claim reports. But this hypothesis is rejected. Among larger delegations we find both over-representation (Germany, the UK and Spain) and under-representation (Italy and France). Among smaller delegations we see slight under-representation with the exception of the over-representation of the Netherlands during both legislatures, Belgium in 1989-94 and to a lesser extent Ireland and Luxembourg in 1994-99.

Still, the size of a national delegation predicts rather well its share of the reports. Correlation coefficients between the number of members in a national delegation and the number of reports (see Table 6) they produced are high, between .712 and .908, with the noticeable exception of reports falling under the assent procedure which score much lower (.488 for the third legislature and .568 for the four legislature). Variation in size explains most of the variation in production between national delegations ( $r^2 = .791$  during the third legislature,  $r^2 = .794$  during the fourth legislature). This means that we can use the size of a national delegation to predict how many reports it has produced. We performed simple

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committee members in the 1989-94 Parliament sought co-operation reports rather than consultation reports Mr Collins had no hesitation in answering 'yes'."

regression analyses to consider in which cases the number of reports was much higher or lower than expected. Our discussion is based on the standardized residuals in these regression analyses.

During the third legislature, the British, the Dutch, the Belgian and the German delegations produced more reports than expected. The French and the Italian delegations produced much less<sup>18</sup>, with the French doing so for all types of reports. Smaller national delegations (Denmark, Portugal, Luxembourg, Ireland and Greece) produced less reports than expected. Finally, the Spanish delegation produced slightly more reports than expected, but with more consultation reports and much less cooperation and co-decision reports. During the fourth legislature the pattern is rather similar. Only the Belgian delegation became less productive while the Spanish delegation became more productive than expected, especially for non-legislative and consultation reports, but the Spaniards still show a diverse pattern.

As party groups control the distribution of positions and reports, the political composition of national delegations is expected to affect their strength in the committees. To quote Attinà (1998: 19), “dispersion may bring ‘parliamentary weakness’ to the national delegation. This will be the more true, the less the deputies of a country are concentrated in the largest groups of the EP, because these are the most important actors in the formation of parliamentary majorities.” National delegations with strong presence in the two largest groups should profit from the over-representation of these groups. National delegations with a large share of non-attached members, or with members scattered over a larger number of groups, are expected to be under-represented (Table 5).

#### TABLE 5

The most scattered delegation is the French one (over no less than 8 groups in 1989), with a notably weak presence in PSE and PPE. The share of PSE-PPE seats varies between one-third (Ireland, France and Denmark) and 83% in the Luxembourg delegation in 1989 and 94% in the British delegation in 1994. The main changes between 1989 and 1994 concern the British (due to the adhesion of Conservatives to PPE in 1992) and the Italians (due to the establishment of the mononational Forza Europa group). Of the MEPs in the three new delegations (Austria, Finland, Sweden), 50% or more sit in PSE and PPE. The largest group in the national delegations is PSE or PPE, with the exception of Denmark and Portugal in 1989,

and Italy, Ireland and the Netherlands in 1994. Some national delegations dominate smaller groups, such as the French (RDE, DR and CG in 1989, RDE, ARE and EDN in 1994), the Italians (GUE in 1989, FE in 1994 which was 100% Italian) and the British (ED in 1989). Finally, most delegations do not have any non-attached members. Exceptions were in 1989 Spain (6,7%), Italy (6,2%) the Netherlands (4%), France and the UK (1,2%), and in 1994 Italy (13,8%), France (12,6%) Belgium (12,0%) and the UK (1,1%).

National delegations with a strong presence in the two largest groups are more productive with the exception of the Greeks, whereas the Irish are very productive despite their low participation in these two groups. However, the huge rise of PSE-PPE seats among the British delegation in 1994 did not lead to a rise in its absolute number and share of rapporteurships. The large share of non-attached members (over 10%) partially explains the low activity of the Italian and the French delegations, at least during the fourth legislature. More significant in these two cases is their scattered distribution over several groups, with a relatively weak presence in PSE and PPE. These indicators do not correlate significantly with the amount of reports produced by a national delegation, with the exception of the percentage of seats in the two largest groups in the fourth legislature (the correlation coefficient is then .571 (significant at the 0.05 level)).

#### TABLE 6

We also expect three external factors to influence MEP activity: the electoral system, the geographical distance between the constituency and Brussels and Strasbourg and the date of accession. The electoral systems differ regarding the degree to which electors can vote for individual candidates or party lists. These two systems prompt different strategies to facilitate re-election. In the first, the MEP needs to win personal votes, in the second she has to maintain good networks inside the national party. Earlier research on MEPs' contacts with interest groups and constituents showed that representatives from candidate-centred systems had higher rates of contact (Bowler & Farrell 1993). In countries with open lists, the media, including the local press, will probably also keep a closer eye on what 'their' representatives do in the Parliament. In member states with closed lists, MEPs' priority is to stay in good terms with those responsible for candidate selection. Open list systems are used in Denmark, Finland, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, Northern Ireland (and in Great Britain until 1999).

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<sup>18</sup> For France this amounts to 97 reports less than expected while the UK has 92 more than expected.

Austria, Belgium, the Netherlands, and Sweden have mixed systems where the voter can vote either for a party or a candidate. The remaining countries have closed lists.

Nevertheless, the impact of the electoral system is difficult to predict. We expect MEPs from member states with electoral systems allowing for personal votes to be more interested in distinguishing themselves in the eyes of voters. But whether this is best achieved through legislative activities in the Parliament or through activities in the constituency is open for discussion. The first implies a relatively high share of rapporteurships, the second a low share of rapporteurships. The same dilemma applies to MEPs who are dependent on the national party leadership for their re-election prospects. Indeed, electoral system produces mixed results. MEPs from countries with closed party lists are relatively less productive, except the Germans, whereas the results for the other countries are ambiguous. Further classification of electoral systems may be needed. The British MEPs elected in Great Britain from single member constituencies (until 1999) show a high level of activity. So do the Irish, elected through the Single Transferable Vote, at least during the fourth legislature.

National delegations from the geographical core of the EU are expected to produce relatively more reports than those from the geographical periphery. MEPs need to balance their activities inside the Parliament, including committee work, with their more directly constituency-oriented activities. Because of the time-consuming nature of travelling back home to constituencies, MEPs from the geographical core of the EU have more time to focus on committee work. The geographical core includes Belgium, France, Luxembourg, the Netherlands and Germany. The geographical periphery consists of Finland, Greece, Ireland, Portugal, and Sweden. Regarding the core countries, most of them are over-represented, except France and Luxembourg in 1989-94. Most of the peripheral countries are under-represented, except Ireland in 1994-99.

Finally, the impact of the date of accession is examined. National delegations of the new member states (Austria, Finland and Sweden) are expected to be under-represented in their first term because MEPs need time to get accustomed to the rules of the game, and especially to gain a reputation inside the Parliament. Besides, the first delegations consisted of nominated representatives until elections were held in September 1995 in Sweden and in October 1996 in Austria and Finland. The three new national delegations are under-represented, although Finland much less than the others. The disproportionality is not that dramatic, considering that these delegations joined the EP half a year after the start of the term, which means that our data underestimate their report production. As for other member

states, accession date does not seem to matter. None of the three external factors (electoral system, distance, date of accession) correlates significantly with report production.

In conclusion, the size of a national delegation predicts rather well its report production. Nevertheless, the distribution of rapporteurships between national delegations is more skewed than expected. The enlargement of the German delegation from 81 to 99 seats probably caused the increase in the number of German rapporteurships. But our data reveals how different the real input of a national delegation can be as compared to its mere size. With the same number of representatives, the British delegation held almost twice (1,8) as many rapporteurships than the French one, and the Belgian delegation held more than twice as many rapporteurships than the Greek or the Portuguese ones. Activism even affects the rank order of the delegations. The Spanish delegation (with 60 seats in the third legislature, 64 in the fourth) produced more reports than the French and the Italian ones (with each 81 seats in the third legislature and 84 in the fourth). During the 1994-99 legislature the Dutch delegation (with 31 seats) produced more reports than the French<sup>19</sup> or the Italians. The Irish delegation did better than the Danish one (with one seat less) and even as well as the Portuguese one in 1994-99 (with 10 seats less). Among the new delegations, the Finns held as many rapporteurships as the Swedes (with six seats less) and more than the Austrians (with five seats less). Clearly the input of MEPs themselves is a crucial factor.

## **Discussion**

The starting point of our work was straightforward: while committees and particularly rapporteurs are often recognised as important in the Parliament, scholarly understanding of what goes on inside the committees remains limited. Effective committees are essential for the Parliament both in terms of legislative influence and controlling the executive. Through investment in committee work the Parliament can reduce the informational advantage of the Commission and the Council. In this way the committee system benefits the whole chamber. However, this strategy of delegation has its costs. Committees and rapporteurs acquire political specific expertise that enables them to dominate or at least significantly shape parliament

decision-making. This problem is compounded by the fact that much of internal market legislation is highly technical.<sup>20</sup>

Second, we examined the distribution of reports and rapporteurships in the 1989-99 Parliament. The size of a group predicts well its share of the reports. Correlations coefficients between the number of members in a group and the number of reports they produced were very high indeed, generally over .950. This shows that party group interests drive the allocation of reports. Party groups are, within certain limits, willing to make trade-offs and to cede reports to smaller groups, but on the whole they hold on to their positions and fight for the reports in order to influence the EU policy process. The procedures for allocating committee chairs (d'Hondt system), committee seats (proportionality rule), and reports (points system based on groups' share of seats) can be interpreted as mechanisms for the party groups to control the committees in a situation where the former are relatively weak, at least when compared to European national parliaments (see also Bowler & Farrell 1995).

The two largest groups, PSE and PPE, control legislative reports. Numerically speaking, smaller groups do get their share of the cake, but the auction-like points system means that only PSE and PPE can afford the most expensive reports. Smaller groups may well be pivotal players in coalition formation, and may well have power beyond their pure numerical strength (Nurmi 1997), but the distribution of reports is bound to frustrate ambitious MEPs in small or medium-sized groups.

The distribution of rapporteurships between national delegations produced interesting results, with more disproportionality than expected. For example, in 1994-99 the Dutch delegation (31 seats) produced more reports than the French or the Italians (87 seats each)! Electoral system had no explanatory power. Political composition proved more influential, especially concentration in the two core groups. Scattered distribution over several groups, with weak presence in PSE and PPE, explains low activity.

The fifth directly-elected Parliament, which commenced its work following the 1999 Euroelections, has further attempted to streamline its internal proceedings. The number of committees was reduced from twenty to seventeen. The media and also MEPs themselves have repeatedly criticized the EP for discussing everything under the sun, and there is pressure

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<sup>20</sup> The influential position of the rapporteur would be particularly problematic if their preferences deviated strongly from those of the median MEP (Gilligan & Krehbiel 1994). On the other hand, when committee membership is heterogeneous, i.e. with both sides of the argument presented, committee positions are closer to that of the parent chamber (Krehbiel 1991). According to Bowler

to downsize the number of reports.<sup>21</sup> This implies more competition between committees for reports, and between groups, national delegations, national parties, and individual MEPs for rapporteurships. We expect competition for reports to increase in any case, considering the post-Amsterdam legislative powers of the Parliament.

The European Parliament is a powerful policy-influencing legislature. It participates in producing laws that bind nearly 400 million citizens in the fifteen EU member states. Therefore the distribution of rapporteurships between party groups and national delegations is also important in terms of representation. As Hall (1987: 105) argued in his discussion on committee participation in the Congress: "The range of members involved will directly affect the capacities of Congress as a representative body: who participates (in what ways, to what extent) will determine which values, interests or geographic constituencies are represented at this crucial stage of the legislative process. Such patterns, in turn, will shape the policy decisions that emerge (or fail to emerge) from the committee rooms." (see Hall 1996: 239-254) It is not only assignments that count but who gets involved in the committees. We do not claim there to be a direct relationship between the activity of a national delegation and the legitimacy of Parliament's policy output in that country, but such concerns are important for the EP whose own legitimacy is still very fragile. Last but not least, while the Treaty of Nice will lead to a redistribution of EP seats among the member states, awareness of the factors explaining differential involvement of national delegations in parliamentary work is important in addition to purely arithmetic calculations.

## Appendix

The questionnaire contained the following eight open-ended questions.

1. The committees operate a points system in allocating rapporteurships to party groups. How does this system function in your committee? How much do reports "cost"?
2. Is the committee leadership (Chairman and Vice-Chairmen) involved in the appointment of rapporteurships to particular members within the groups or is this done by the groups alone?
3. Is there a policy to allocate reports proportionally according to nationality?
4. MEPs can not be forced to be rapporteurs. Has it ever been difficult to find a rapporteur in your committee?

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and Farrell (1995) individual specialization in the committees is co-ordinated by party groups who control the assignment process.

<sup>21</sup> MEP James Provan, Vice-President of the Parliament, suggested in his paper on internal reform the creation of a "grand committee" that would handle much of the amendments and votes instead of taking them to the full plenary. However, the group leaders rejected the proposal. See Gareth Harding, 'Parties reject call for "grand committee"', *European Voice* 29 June – 5 July 2000.



5. Do substitute members ever act as rapporteurs in your committee? If yes, how common is this practice?
6. To what extent is the committee secretariat involved in drafting reports?
7. The Conference of Presidents is the body responsible for granting the right to draft own-initiative reports. Is it common for the Conference of Presidents to turn down such a request from your committee?
8. Smaller party groups have often complained about the dominant position of PSE and PPE. Have the smaller groups ever voiced similar concerns in connection with decision-making and the allocation of reports in your committee?"

The questionnaire was sent to the chairs and secretariats of all committees in April 1998. 12 out of 20 committees replied: Budgetary Control, Budgets, Development and Cooperation, Employment and Social Affairs, Environment, Public Health and Consumer Protection, External Economic Relations, Foreign Affairs, Institutional Affairs, Petitions, Regional Policy, Research, Technological Development and Energy, and Rules of Procedure Committee.

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Table 1. Party groups in the European Parliament, 1989-1999.

Party group	1989	%	1992	%	1993	%	1994	%	1995	%	1997	%	1999
S/PSE	180	34.7	180	34.7	198	38.2	198	34.9	217	34.7	214	34.2	214
PPE	121	23.4	128	24.7	162	31.3	157	27.7	171	27.3	181	28.9	201
ELDR	49	9.5	45	8.7	46	8.9	43	7.6	52	8.3	43	6.9	42
ED	34	6.6	34	6.6	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
V	30	5.8	27	5.2	28	5.4	23	4.1	28	4.5	28	4.5	27
GUE	28	5.4	29	5.6	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
RDE	20	3.9	21	4.1	20	3.9	26	4.6	-	-	-	-	-
DR	17	3.3	14	2.7	14	2.7	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
CG / GUE-NGL	14	2.7	13	2.5	13	2.5	28	4.9	33	5.3	33	5.3	34
ARC	13	2.5	15	2.9	16	3.1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
FE	-	-	-	-	-	-	27	4.8	-	-	-	-	-
ARE	-	-	-	-	-	-	19	3.4	19	3.0	20	3.2	21
EDN / I-EDN	-	-	-	-	-	-	19	3.4	19	3.0	18	2.9	15
UPE	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	56	8.9	56	8.9	34
NA	12	2.3	12	2.3	21	4.1	27	4.8	31	5.0	33	5.3	38
Total	518	100.1	518	100.0	518	100.1	567	100.2	626	100.0	626	100.1	626

Party group abbreviations: ARC = Rainbow Group (1989-1994), ARE = European Radical Alliance (1994-1999), CG = The Left Unity Group (1989-1994, see GUE-NGL), DR = European Right (1989-1994), ED = European Democratic Group (1989-1992, joined PPE), EDN = Europe of Nations (see I-EDN) (1994-1999), ELDR = European Liberal, Democrat and Reform Party, FE = Forza Europa (1994-1995, see UPE), GUE = European United Left (1989-92), GUE-NGL = Confederal Group of the European United Left (since 1994; since 1995 the group included the sub-group Nordic Green Left), I-EDN = Group of Independents for a Europe of Nations (1994-1999, first EDN), NA = Non-attached, PPE = European People's Party, S/PSE = Party of European Socialists, RDE = European Democratic Alliance (until July 1995, see UPE), UPE = Union for Europe (1995-1999), V = The Green Group.

Dates: 1989 = after the third Euroelections; 1992 = mid-term of the third legislature; 1993 = situation in January 1993 following the mergers between PPE and ED in May 1992 and between GUE and PSE in January 1993; 1994 = after the fourth Euroelections; 1995 = situation in October 1995 after the latest EU enlargement (January 1995) and the establishment of the UPE (by merging of RDE and FE in July 1995); 1997 = mid-term of the fourth legislature; 1999 = end of the fourth legislature.

**Table 2. Committees of the European Parliament, 1989-1999.**

Number	Name of the committee	Established	1989 seats	1992 seats	1994 seats	1997 seats
C1	Foreign Affairs, Security and Defence Policy	1953	56	56	53	65
C2	Agriculture and Rural Development	1958	47	45	46	46
C3	Budgets	1958	32	30	34	40
C4	Economic and Monetary Affairs and Industrial Policy	1958	52	49	51	60
C5	Research, Technological Development and Energy	1958	34	31	29	31
C6	External Economic Relations	1961	29	25	25	25
C7	Legal Affairs and Citizens' Rights	1958	34	30	25	27
C8	Employment and Social Affairs	1953	41	36	43	45
C9	Regional Policy	1973	38	35	37	44
C10	Transport and Tourism	1953	30	30	35	40
C11	Environment, Public Health and Consumer Protection	1973	51	50	44	50
C12	Culture, Youth, Education and the Media	1961	31	30	36	40
C13	Development and Cooperation	1958	43	40	36	38
C14	Civil Liberties and Internal Affairs	1992	-	30	32	34
C15	Budgetary Control	1979	28	25	24	28
C16	Institutional Affairs	1981	38	37	40	40
C17	Fisheries	1994	-	-	23	26
C18	Rules of Procedure, the Verification of Credentials and Immunities	1987	27	25	23	25
C19	Women's Rights	1979	33	30	36	40
C20	Petitions	1987	25	25	27	30
	Total number of MEPs		518	518	567	626
	Total number of committee seats		669	659	699	774
	Committee seats per MEP		1.29	1.27	1.23	1.24

Sources: European Parliament: *List of Members; Official Journal of the European Communities.*

Table 3a. Rapportheurs by party group, 1989-1994.

Party group	seats 1989		1994-99 non-legislative		1989-94 consultation procedure		1989-94 assent procedure		1989-94 cooperation procedure		1989-94 co-decision procedure		Total 1989-94	
	abs	%	abs	%	abs	%	abs	%	Abs	%	abs	%	abs	%
S/PSE	180	34.7	340	36.1	213	32.9	10	33.3	193	42.0	45	41.7	801	36.6
PPE	121	23.4	227	24.1	195	30.1	10	33.3	135	29.3	32	29.6	599	27.4
LDR/ELDR	49	9.5	108	11.5	70	10.8	2	6.7	27	5.9	5	4.6	212	9.7
ED	34	6.6	70	7.4	50	7.7	5	16.7	54	11.7	16	14.8	195	8.9
V	30	5.8	62	6.6	36	5.6	1	3.3	7	1.5	1	0.9	107	4.9
GUE	28	5.4	64	6.8	34	5.2	2	6.7	16	3.5	1	0.9	117	5.3
RDE	20	3.9	37	3.9	25	3.9	0	0	21	4.6	6	5.6	89	4.1
DR	17	3.3	8	0.8	7	1.1	0	0	3	0.7	0	0	15	0.7
CG/GUE-NGL	14	2.7	9	0.9	8	1.2	0	0	0	0	0	0	20	0.9
ARC	13	2.5	12	1.3	7	1.1	0	0	0	0	0	0	19	0.9
FE	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
ARE	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
I-EDN	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
UPE	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
NA	12	2.3	7	0.7	3	4.6	0	0	4	0.9	2	1.8	15	0.7
Total	518	100.1	943	43.1	648	29.6	30	1.4	460	21.0	108	4.9	2189	100%

Table 3b. Rapportheurships by party group, 1994-1999.

Party group	seats 1994		1994-99 non-legislative		1994-99 consultation procedure		1994-99 assent procedure		1994-99 cooperation procedure		1994-99 co-decision procedure		Total 1994-99	
	abs	%	abs	%	abs	%	abs	%	abs	%	abs	%	abs	%
S/PSE	198	34.9	373	40.7	174	34.6	11	22.0	63	33.0	107	33.1	728	36.7
PPE	157	27.7	297	32.4	174	34.6	15	30.0	48	25.1	140	43.3	674	34.0
LDR/ELDR	43	7.6	74	8.1	45	8.9	4	8.0	11	5.8	12	3.7	146	7.4
ED	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
V	23	4.1	40	4.4	19	3.8	4	8.0	14	7.3	23	7.1	100	5.0
GUE	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
RDE (see UPE)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
DR	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
CG/GUE-NGL	28	4.9	36	3.9	18	3.6	6	10.0	7	3.7	1	0.3	68	3.4
ARC	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
FE (see UPE)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
ARE	19	3.4	21	2.3	21	4.2	3	12.0	9	4.7	3	0.9	57	2.9
I-EDN	19	3.4	1	0.1	9	1.8	0	0	8	8.9	4	1.2	22	1.1
RDE/FE/UPE	53	9.3	74	8.1	38	7.6	7	14.0	21	11.0	29	9.0	169	8.5
NA	27	4.8	1	0.1	5	1.0	0	0	10	5.2	4	1.2	20	1.0
Total	567	100.2	917	46.2	503	25.4	50	2.5	191	9.6	323	16.3	1984	100.0

Table 4a. *Rapporteurships by national delegation, 1989-1994.*

Member State	seats 1989		1994-99 non-legislative		1989-94 consultation procedure		1989-94 assent procedure		1989-94 cooperation procedure		1989-94 co-decision procedure		Total 1989-94		
	abs	%	abs	%	abs	%	abs	%	abs	%	abs	%	abs	%	
Germany	81	15.6	159	16.9	98	15.1	4	13.3	93	20.2	26	24.1	380	17.4	
UK	81	15.6	176	18.7	109	16.8	3	10.0	100	21.7	28	25.9	416	19.0	
France	81	15.6	104	11.0	75	11.6	0	0	35	7.6	13	12.0	227	10.4	
Italy	81	15.6	117	12.4	56	8.6	11	36.7	63	13.7	6	5.6	253	11.6	
Spain	60	11.6	115	12.2	94	14.5	3	10.0	35	7.6	6	5.6	253	11.6	
NL	25	4.8	84	8.9	58	9.0	1	3.3	42	9.1	14	13.0	199	9.1	
Belgium	24	4.6	69	7.3	53	8.2	4	13.3	31	6.7	2	1.9	159	7.3	
Greece	24	4.6	32	3.4	28	4.3	0	0	24	5.2	5	4.6	89	4.1	
Portugal	24	4.6	40	4.2	33	5.1	0	0	11	2.4	3	2.8	87	4.0	
Denmark	16	3.1	18	1.9	10	1.5	4	13.3	16	3.5	2	1.9	50	2.3	
Ireland	15	2.9	15	1.6	32	4.9	0	0	7	1.5	1	0.9	55	2.5	
Luxembourg	6	1.2	14	1.5	2	0.3	0	0	3	6.5	2	1.9	21	1.0	
Sweden	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Austria	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Finland	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>518</b>	<b>99.8</b>	<b>943</b>	<b>43.1</b>	<b>648</b>	<b>29.6</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>1.4</b>	<b>460</b>	<b>21.0</b>	<b>108</b>	<b>4.9</b>	<b>2189</b>	<b>100%</b>	



Table 4b. Rapporateurships by national delegation, 1994-1999.

Member State	seats 1995		1994-99 non-legislative		1994-99 consultation procedure		1994-99 assent procedure		1994-99 cooperation procedure		1994-99 co-decision procedure		Total 1994-99	
	abs	%	abs	%	abs	%	abs	%	abs	%	abs	%	abs	%
Germany	99	15.8	172	18.8	113	22.5	10	20.0	31	16.2	89	27.6	415	20.9
UK	87	13.9	152	16.6	77	15.3	3	6.0	40	20.9	58	18.0	330	16.6
France	87	13.9	76	8.3	45	8.9	7	14.0	18	9.4	40	12.4	186	9.4
Italy	87	13.9	87	9.5	53	10.5	3	6.0	17	8.9	23	7.1	183	9.2
Spain	64	10.2	124	13.5	70	13.9	5	10.0	16	8.4	30	9.3	245	12.3
NL	31	5.0	88	9.6	44	8.7	0	0	22	11.5	35	10.8	189	9.5
Belgium	25	4.0	42	4.6	15	3.0	5	10.0	4	2.1	11	3.4	77	3.9
Greece	25	4.0	30	3.3	14	2.8	9	18.0	9	4.7	5	1.5	67	3.4
Portugal	25	4.0	27	2.9	19	3.8	1	2.0	5	2.6	1	0.3	53	2.7
Denmark	16	2.6	19	2.1	7	1.4	1	2.0	1	0.5	11	3.4	39	2.0
Ireland	15	2.4	23	2.5	17	3.4	2	4.0	8	4.2	3	0.9	53	2.7
Luxembourg	6	1.0	15	1.6	7	1.4	0	0	1	0.5	4	1.2	27	1.4
Sweden	22	3.5	25	2.7	8	1.6	0	0	6	3.1	2	0.6	41	2.1
Austria	21	3.4	17	1.9	10	2.0	1	2.0	7	3.7	4	1.2	39	2.0
Finland	16	2.6	20	2.2	4	0.8	3	6.0	6	3.1	8	2.5	41	2.1
Total	626	100.2	917	46.2	503	25.4	50	2.5	191	9.6	323	16.3	1984	100.0

Table 5. The political composition of national delegations in 1989 and 1994 (1995 for Austria, Sweden and Finland).

	1989	1989	1989	1989	1989	1989	1989	1989	1989	1989	1989	1989	1989	1989	1989	1994	1994	1994	1994	1994	1994	1994	1994	1994	1994	1994	1994	1994	1994	1994	1994	1994	1994	1994
	a	b	c	d	e	f	g	h	1994	a	b	c	d	e	f	g	h																	
Germany	81	5	63	77.8	PPE	PPE	0	0	99	3	87	87.8	PPE	V*	0																			
UK	81	4	47	58.2	S*	ED*	1	1.2	87	4	82	94.3	PSE*	PSE	1	1.1																		
France	81	8	28	34.6	S	RDE*	1	1.2	87	7	28	32.2	PSE	RDE*	11	12.6																		
						DR*								ARE*																				
						CG*								EDN*																				
						LDR																												
						V																												
Italy	81	6	41	50.6	PPE	GUE*	5	6.2	87	7	30	34.5	FE	FE*	12	13.8																		
Spain	60	6	42	71.7	S		4	6.7	64	5	52	81.3	PPE	GUE	0	0																		
NL	25	4	18	72.0	PPE		1	4.0	31	5	18	58.1	PPE	ELDR	0	0																		
													ELDR																					
Belgium	24	6	15	62.5	S		0	0	25	5	13	52.0	PPE		3	12.0																		
Greece	24	5	19	79.2	PPE		0	0	25	4	19	76.0	PSE		0	0																		
Portugal	24	5	11	45.8	LDR		0	0	25	5	11	44.0	PSE		0	0																		
Denmark	16	6	6	37.5	S	ARC	0	0	16	5	6	37.5	ARE		0	0																		
													ELDR																					
Ireland	15	5	5	33.3	PPE		0	0	15	5	5	33.3	RDE		0	0																		
Luxembourg	6	3	5	83.3	PPE*		0	0	6	4	4	66.7	PSE		0	0																		
													PPE																					
Sweden	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	(22)		(12)	(54.5)																						
Austria	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	(21)		(13)	(61.9)																						
Finland	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	(16)		(8)	(50.0)																						
Total	518	10	301	58.1	PSE	-	12	2.3	626	9	355	62.6	PSE	-	27	4.8																		

Explanations: a = seats; b = number of groups (Non-attached excluded); c = number of PSE and PPE seats; d = idem, percentage; e = largest group in national delegation (\* = share is 50% of the national seats or more); f = group(s) in which it is the largest delegation (\* = share is 50% of group seats or more); g = number of non-attached members; h = idem, percentage.

**Table 5. Correlation coefficients, size of party groups and national delegations and rapporteurships.**

Number of rapporteurship	Third legislature		Fourth legislature	
	Size 11 Party groups	Size 12 National delegations	Size 9 Party groups	Size 15 National delegations
Total r'ships	.993**	.889**	.990**	.891**
Non-legislative	.993**	.908**	.995**	.880**
Consultation	.978**	.843**	.982**	.892**
Assent	.927**	.488	.854**	.568*
Cooperation	.981**	.821**	.990**	.828*
Codecision	.961**	.712**	.939**	.842**

\*\* Correlation significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

\* Correlation significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed)