Personalised Parliamentary Behaviour Without Electoral Incentives: The Case of the Netherlands

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Abstract

Most theories of legislative behaviour explain behaviour of MPs through electoral incentives, but these fall short in explaining variation in parliamentary activity when individual electoral incentives are largely absent. This article studies MPs' activity in such a parliament: the Dutch *Tweede Kamer*. It examines four clusters of incentives to be active parliamentarians: re-election (by the voters), reselection (by their party), promotion within parliament and the context in which MPs operate. The activities explained are the introduction of motions, amendments and written questions during five parliamentary periods. The party and committee environment provide the best explanation for the level of activity of individual MPs. Reselection and promotion prospective explain MPs' behaviour, but only under more particular specifications. Re-election prospective was not found to affect the level of activity.

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1. Introduction[1]

Individual parliamentary behaviour has recently received more scholarly attention (Bräuninger *et al.* 2012, Depauw and Martin 2009, Proksch and Slapin 2012). Most of the literature focuses on the electoral connection following the paradigmatic work of Mayhew (1974): MPs are thought to be active in parliament to signal to voters that they are working for them, hoping to boost their re-election chances. What is crucial however is that this incentive only exists in a particular institutional setting, namely in polities with personalised electoral systems, such as single-member constituencies (Alemán *et al.* 2009, Kessler and Krehbiel 1996, Krehbiel 1995) or a strong preference vote (Bräuninger *et al.* 2012). The electoral connection cannot, however, explain why in institutional settings without such individual election pressures, MPs seem to care about individual parliamentary output. What keeps them from leisure-shirking (Müller 2000)?

A number of alternative explanations for MP behaviour have been proposed by Strøm (1997): MPs behaviour can be understood through their preference for reselection and promotion (Rahat and Hazan 2001, Shomer 2009, Martin 2014). We also add the parliamentary institutions (parliamentary parties and parliamentary committees) in which MPs are socialized, which may have their own norms and expectations (Crowe 1986; Andeweg and Thomassen 2011; Asher 1973; Clarke and Price 1980). These factors are derived from the literature on parliamentary behaviour but have not been used previously to explain parliamentary activity. The key contribution of this study to the comparative literature is that we examine an institutional setting where there are *limited* electoral incentives for personalisation. This allows us to test to what extent these alternative mechanisms may matter. The main research question of this paper is: *what explains variation in parliamentary activity in polities without personalised electoral systems?*

This study examines the *Tweede Kamer*, the lower house of the Dutch parliament. It is elected in a single national electoral constituency by means of a semi-open list system. Preference voting is, effectively, not used by voters (Van Holsteyn and Andeweg 2012). Parliamentary behaviour is characterised by high levels of party unity and specialisation (Andeweg and Thomassen 2011: 12). This makes it an ideal case to study why individual

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MPs are active when personalised electoral incentives are largely absent. We study MPs' individual activity, in terms of sponsoring motions and amendments as well as asking parliamentary questions, in five parliamentary terms between 1998 and 2012. Our main finding is that the parliamentary institutions, particularly behavioural norms among committee peers, forms the most important explanation of the level of individual activity.

2. Why MPs act (and some more than others)

In this article we define personalised parliamentary activity as the extent to which individual MPs make use of the tools at their disposal. Because we are interested in their individual behaviour, we will focus on those tools that are at least to some extent at the disposal of individual MPs. We examine parliamentary motions/resolutions, amendments and written questions. While parliamentary party groups often do try to impose some constraints on how MPs can use these instruments, decisions by the individual MP largely impacts how often she uses them. As access to the floor in terms of parliamentary speech is strictly controlled by parties, at least in the case we are studying, we will not analyse how often MPs speak in the Chamber.

We examine four factors that may shape MP behaviour: first, their desire to be re-elected by the voters. This is the dominant theoretical perspective in the literature. We look at three alternative explanations: MPs desire to be reselected by their party, their desire to be promoted to higher (parliamentary) office and the parliamentary institutions (specifically parliamentary parties and parliamentary committees) in which MPs are socialized.

The traditional theory of individual legislative behaviour focuses strongly on the electoral connection: MPs sponsor legislation, table questions and speak in parliament to better their chances of re-election (Mayhew 1974). Parliamentary activity is primarily a way to send information to voters, NGOs and donors (Alemán *et al.* 2009, Kessler and Krehbiel 1996, Krehbiel 1995). The electoral system influences the extent to which MPs can foster a personal vote. The literature for institutional settings with single member districts shows that MPs in vulnerable electoral districts are more likely to sponsor bills and those who receive less media attention will sponsor more as well (Bowler 2010, Campbell 1982, Koger 2003). The underlying mechanism to explain this connection is that these MPs seek to boost their public profile. In single member district systems, the question is whether MPs represent *swing districts*, where their party just barely wins, or *safe districts*, where it wins by a large margin (Gordon 2007, Bildook and Kerby 2011). The more precarious an MP's position is, the more active she will be. In different institutional settings, such as polities with a list

system in multimember constituencies (or mixed systems), we can operationalize safe and swing seats in terms of having been elected on preference votes:

1. **Preference seat hypothesis:** MPs who failed to obtain enough votes for a preference seat will be more active in parliament, than MPs who did win a preference seat.

In open list systems voters have a preference vote, which allows them to influence the order in which candidates from a party are elected for parliament. Candidates can use their parliamentary activity to boost their preference votes, which will ensure their re-election (Sieberer 2010). The degree to which this relationship holds is likely to depend on the use of preference voting (Bräuninger *et al.* 2012). In some countries, preference votes can be material in determining which candidates are elected. In other countries, such as the Dutch case studied here, preference voting has practically no impact on the selection of candidates (Van Holsteyn and Andeweg 2012). Those candidates who receive enough preference votes would have been elected based on their list position anyway. Therefore, we have to take the preference seat hypothesis derived from the dominant theoretical perspective with a grain of salt: we can reasonably expect that in a system without a strong personal vote, this hypothesis will not be supported.

In electoral systems that employ party lists a candidate's list position is arguably more important than their personal vote base. Those MPs who were positioned high on the electoral list during previous elections, have little to fear in terms of re-election: their high position on the party list will ensure that they will be re-elected even if no-one actually casts a preference vote for them. Those further down on the list might want to boost their public profile by being more active in order to obtain a more favourable list position or preference votes during next elections.

2. **List position hypothesis:** MPs with a lower list position in the previous election will be more active in parliament, than MPs with a higher list position.

Even to this hypothesis we might add a caveat: results from Van Vonno and Louwerse (2012) indicate that MPs who are more active in parliament by using the tools studied here are more likely to get a higher list position. It thus seems that parties put more active MPs higher on

their lists, and those ending up at the bottom are generally not capable (or willing) to change this expectation once elected.

The electoral system determines the relevance of the re-election mechanism. In some political systems, reselection means re-election (Strøm 1997). In single-member districts where MPs have no (serious) competitor, being selected as their party's candidate is sufficient to be re-elected. In list PR-systems, the top candidates of the list of most parties that are already in parliament are sure of their re-election. The kind of selection system an MP operates in, may create different incentives. A key aspect of a selection regime is its inclusiveness. In many countries, voters do not directly control the selection process of MPs.[2] Instead party members decide which candidates will run for the party in the elections (Rahat and Hazan 2001; Hazan and Rahat 2010). Parties can give different groups control over this process: this ranges from the most inclusive parties, where all members decide in a referendum to the most exclusive parties where only the party leader decides. If the party leader decides, personal loyalty may be an important element, while if the party membership decides and MPs openly compete with their co-partisans, MPs will need to stand out from their competitors. An impressive parliamentary track record may be one way to stand out.

3. **Selectoral pressure hypothesis:** The more open a party's candidate selection procedure, the more active its MPs will be in parliament.

In addition to re-election and reselection MPs might be motivated by a desire to move up the political ladder. Strøm (1997) distinguishes conceptually between legislative and party offices but notes that this distinction may be less valuable empirically. These 'mega-seats' or leadership positions include committee chairs and leadership of the party's frontbench (Martin 2014). Party offices are controlled by the parliamentary parties and legislative offices are controlled by parliament as whole. MPs that do not have such a position may become more active in parliament, in order to impress those who control the appointments. Serving in such a parliamentary office may also affect activity: we expect party leaders and committee chairs to be less active in terms of the day-to-day activities we are studying. These kinds of positions give MPs the status and the public profile that they allow them to be less active in order to be re-elected or reselected: one could hardly imagine that a party leader would not be

[2] Israel and United States are exceptions to this rule.

reselected, because she asked too few parliamentary questions. For those on the backbench, however, parliamentary activity might be a way to demonstrate potential and ability for leadership positions:

4. **Leadership hypothesis:** MPs who do not occupy leadership positions will be more active in parliament than MPs who do occupy leadership positions.

The hypotheses formulated above see MPs as goal-directed actors. They take a rational choice institutionalist perspective (Shepsle 2008): this sees MPs as rationally pursuing their own ends in institutions (parties, electoral systems, legislative offices) that shape their incentives. Alternatively, we could argue that MPs are socialised in the institutions that they operate in: particular parties and committees are likely to come with their own norms about behaviour. MPs may internalize the 'pattern of norms that make up a particular role' (Kornberg 1967: 8). We know from existing research that socialization plays a role in shaping party discipline (Crowe 1986; Andeweg and Thomassen 2011) and compliance to general norms about parliamentary behaviour or expectations about their role as Member of Parliament (Asher 1973; Clarke and Price 1980). Here, we propose that different committees and parties come with diverging expectations about MP behaviour: an MP's level of activity is likely to reflect the activity of their peers who are member of the same committee and the colleagues in the same party.

Note, however, that the parliamentary parties and committees MPs operate in, also forms the context that they are evaluated against: MPs that desire reselection will be evaluated against the MPs of the same party. MPs that would want to be promoted in parliament, would be evaluated against MPs of the same committee.

Parties are of pivotal importance in parliamentary democracies to the point where representatives are often regarded as party delegates (Andeweg and Thomassen 2011, Rozenberg and Blomgren 2012, Van Vonno 2012). This means that MPs work within political parties. The norms and expectations about parliamentary activity may differ from party to party. Some parties might be more activist and will table many proposals and questions, while in other parties this kind of activity is less common – some right-wing parties, for example, argue that answering parliamentary questions takes too much civil service capacity (Raad voor het Openbaar Bestuur, 2005: 17-21). The party's members control the reselection of MPs and the party leaderships controls the career advancement options of individual MPs. Therefore the performance of MPs will be evaluated in relation to

their co-partisans. The more active one's co-partisans are the more active one has to be in order to stand out.

5. **Party hypothesis:** The more active an MP's co-partisans, the more active she will be.

The party is not the only setting that might impact on the level of activity of individual MPs. Committee work is an important aspect of parliamentary work. Committees differ in terms of expectations about the use of parliamentary tools. This relates both to the overall level of activity (particular committees might be more activist than others) or the type of tools used (legislative-intensive committees may see more amendments proposed and scrutiny-oriented committees may see more questions). We expect an MP's level of activity to be related to the activity of peers working in the same policy field:

6. **Peers hypothesis:** The more active an MP's peers who work on similar issues, the more active she will be.

We know that specialization is an important norm from the literature on the American Congress (Asher 1973: 501). Committee work brings with it a degree of specialisation, which itself is expected to have an effect on parliamentary activity. More important MPs are usually able to ensure the more broadly defined policy portfolios (e.g. 'foreign affairs', instead of just 'Europe' or 'foreign trade'). The portfolio an MP has, constrains her activity: generalist MPs with broad portfolios have a more opportunities to sponsor motions and table questions than their specialist colleagues. After all, there is only so much one can propose and ask about or 'culture and recreation' compared to, say, a portfolio comprised of finance, taxes, agriculture, nature, Europe, education, culture and science:[3]

7. **Specialisation hypothesis:** The less specialised an MP, the more active she will be.

[3] One might argue that part of the specialisation effect is due to party size. In small parties, all MPs are forced to be generalists: they work on a broad portfolio. At the same time, these MPs are expected to be relatively active to ensure that their relatively small party will produce noticeable parliamentary output. Our analysis controls for party size and will demonstrate that both party size as well as specialisation impact upon the level of activity.

3. Case selection

The Netherlands is a case of a parliamentary system in which personalised electoral incentives are least likely to matter. We focus on the directly elected lower house, the *Tweede Kamer*. Though a semi-open list system is in use, only one or two MPs per election owe their election to preference voting. This mainly has to do with the electoral system, but also with the behaviour of voters. Formally, the Netherlands has an open list system in a single national district. Voters have one vote, which they have to cast for a single candidate. They cannot vote for a party. The votes are aggregated nationally per party; seats are allocated to the parties using D'Hondt's largest average system. A party's seats are filled by the candidates in order of the number of votes they received, but only if they received more than 25% of the electoral quota.[4] If there are still seats left those go to the unelected MPs in order of their list position. Technically, every vote cast is a personal vote, but these votes hardly affect who is elected: between 2002 and 2010, almost 80% of the votes are given to the *first* candidate on the list and more than 90% of the personal votes are given to candidates who would have be elected anyway based on their list position (Kiesraad 2002, 2003, 2006, 2010). These three factors together (the single electoral district, the threshold for receiving a personal mandate and the limited use of personal votes by the electorate) mean that in the Netherlands personalised electoral incentives are limited. Therefore these factors make the Tweede Kamer ideal for the analysis of the research question why parliamentarians act in systems with limited personalized electoral incentives. The Netherlands stands out compared to all other advanced, industrial democracies in that it has an electoral system that because its lack of regional representation or preference voting, practically does not foster any kind of personal vote.

4. Data & Methods

We scrutinise our hypotheses in a large-N regression analysis, which includes more than a decade of parliamentary activity (1998-2012). We treat a single MP in one parliamentary term as a single case.[5] We look at three different kinds of parliamentary activity: sponsorship of amendments and motions and the submission of written questions. These three types of

[4] I.e. the number of votes necessary for a party to receive a single seat in parliament, The Hare quota is used, which is calculated as the total number of (valid) votes divided by the number of seats. For the 2010 elections, a quarter of the electoral quota was 15.700 votes.

[5] We only include parliamentary party groups (PPGs) that participated in the preceding election and thus ignore split-off PPGs, as we cannot observe electoral incentives or party-level variables for these cases.

activity are relatively common and represent visible expressions of parliamentary work. Asking questions as well as introducing motions and amendments has become more popular over the last decade, signalling their increasing importance for parliamentarians. Basic descriptive statistics of our variables can be found in Table 1.

Our first two dependent variables are the number of **Motions** or **Amendments** that MPs introduce. We look at the number of motions or amendments proposed by MPs who proposed at least one motion or amendment.[6] We do not include the introduction of Private Member's bills, which are relatively rare.[7] Motions and amendments represent two significant aspects of parliamentary activity. Amendments are used to change legislation. Motions, which usually concern policy and are equivalent to resolutions in some other legislatures, are used by MPs when they oversee the government and as a way to request government policy changes. Multiple MPs can sponsor motions or amendments together (Louwerse and Otjes 2015). We count primary and subsidiary sponsorship equally as there is no legal difference between the two. The motions were obtained from the Dutch Parliamentary Voting Dataset (Louwerse *et al.* 2014). The first full parliamentary period for which the data is available is 1998-2002; the last period available is 2010-2012. We count the number of motions and amendments proposed per MP per parliamentary term, divided by the number of days the parliament is in session (sitting days), as MPs can only propose motions during these days.

The third dependent variable is the number of written **Questions** an MP has submitted to a minister (mean per sitting day). Questions are strongly tied to the oversight function of parliament: they are a way to obtain information from a minister and gauge at a minister's willingness to address certain developments. We obtained the parliamentary questions from the government's website (Ministry of Home Affairs and Kingdom Relations 2014), using scripts developed for this specific goal.

There is a substantial difference between motions, amendments and questions in terms of the level of freedom an individual MP has in pursuing them. Motions and amendments can only be submitted if a debate or legislative initiative on the subject has been scheduled. The number of motions an MP can table depends on speaking time because MPs

[6] Only a very limited number of MPs did not propose any motions. The reason to limit ourselves is that a number of the independent variables are dependent on having at least one document submitted. While this might introduce some bias, it would most likely be against confirmation as we delete cases that have a value of zero on both the dependent and some of the independent variables.

[7] Over the entire period, MPs proposed 113 private member bills.

have to read motions into the parliamentary records. Many parties require that the board of the parliamentary party group board clears motions before submitting them (Andeweg and Thomassen 2011). For an MP to submit an amendment there must be a bill under parliamentary consideration that she wants to amend. Questions are not limited by official rules – one can ask as many as one wants about any subject – although some parties do use internal rules about submitting questions. All in all, there is a continuum of parliamentary tools ranging from those that are least constrained (questions) to those that are most constrained (amendments).

The explanatory variables were operationalised as follows. **Preference Seat** occupation is simply a dummy variable, which equals one when an MP gained enough votes for a personal mandate and zero otherwise. Most of this data was drawn from Van Vonno and Louwerse (2012). Additional data was derived from the public records of the Dutch Electoral Council (Kiesraad 2002). Twelve per cent of the MPs in the dataset were elected by preference votes, although one should note that most of these MPs would also have been elected on the basis of their list position. One percent of MPs are effectively elected by preference votes.

The **Relative List Position** variable is measured in terms of the position an MP had on the electoral list of her party in the election in which she was elected to the parliament she served in. It is calculated relative to the number of seats a party has, so that a zero is awarded to the party leader on top of the list and one to the last candidate that was elected.[8] This measure thus expresses how safe a candidate was during the last election.

Selectoral pressure was measured using the scale developed by Hazan and Rahat (2010). This ranges from full control of the selection by the party leader to an open party primary where voters decide. Most Dutch parties have a two-stage selection procedure, where some party body first screens aspirants (Hazan and Voerman 2006). During this stage, a list of hundreds is reduced to a number close to the party's expected number of seats. This stage therefore has real impact on the selection procedure. In the second step, some larger body decides on the order of the candidates on the party list. Hazan and Rahat (2010) propose to develop separate ordinal scales for the two stages and then take an average score. The two stages were scored from very inclusive to very exclusive on their 24-point scale and then the

[8] Note that MPs elected based on preference votes and MPs who entered parliament at a later stage as a successor for someone who resigned have a relative list position larger than one.

average was calculated.[9] Effectively, the scores lie between 0 and 14. These scores were awarded on the basis of the party by-laws, which are archived by the Documentation Centre Dutch Political Parties.[10]

The next set of variables taps into the mean level of activity of one's party. We look at the mean activity of one's fellow parliamentary party group members. **Activity of Party Colleagues** thus captures the mean activity (per sitting day) of an MP's party colleagues. The activity relates to the dependent variable, so to explain the mean number of motions introduced, the measure looks at the introduction of motions by party colleagues. This set of variables captures whether the MP works in parliamentary party that is very active in parliament or that takes a more passive role.

Another set of variables refers to the **Activity of Committee Peers**. Here 'peers' are defined as those who work in the same field as the MP (e.g. they propose motions and amendments on the same issues and they ask questions about the same topic). Ideally, we would look at activities of those that are a member of the same committee as the MP of interest, but unfortunately there is no public register of MP's committee membership for the entire period of study.[11] Therefore, we calculate the mean activity of those that work in the same field (e.g. propose motions or amendments or ask questions on the same subject). This excludes the activity of the relevant MP herself. Our measure of peer activity thus refers to the mean activity of those working in the same issue area as an MP in the previous parliamentary term.[12]

In order to measure the **Specialisation** of MPs, we calculate a Herfindal index of how an MP divides her attention over different issue categories (Hirschman 1964). Again, we relate specialisation to the dependent variable, so for explaining Motions we look at Motions Specialisation. The website officielebekendmakingen.nl has linked each motion, amendment or question to one or more of 17 issue categories. These are used to calculate the (normalized) Herfindal indices. A value of 0 indicates that the MP devotes equal attention to

[9] Note that there is no statistical relationship between the openness of the first and second stage (Spearman's rho = 0.03)

[10] Where no specific information on selection strategies was available from the statutes, as was the case for CDA 1998, CU 2002, 2006, LPF 2002, 2003, LN 2002, PvdD 2006, SP 2003, 2006, 2010 and PVV 2006, 2010 scores from earlier years were used, if those were not available general decision-making procedures were used and for PVV the procedure described by former PVV MP Hernandez (2012) were used.

[11] We did obtain committee memberships for one of the parliamentary terms under study. Online Appendix B contains results of a robustness test when using this data source instead, which largely shows similar patterns to the analysis presented here.

[12] A full explanation can be found in Online Appendix A.

each of these issue categories, while a value of 1 indicates that she devotes all her attention to only one issue category. Higher values indicate more specialisation.

The **No Leadership** variable expresses whether an MP did not hold any leadership position: committee chair (10% of MPs serve in this capacity), member of the parliamentary presidency (5%), parliamentary party leader (5%) or member of the parliamentary party board (16%). In order to limit the number of explanatory variables in our model, the variable is dummy coded and equals one when the MP did not hold any of these offices at any time during a parliamentary term. Data about the background of MPs were derived manually from the database of the Dutch Parliamentary Documentation Centre (Parlementair Documentatie Centrum 2010).

We include six control variables, which are measured as follows. First, some of the differences we observe might be due to gender issues, as we know that women have different conceptions of their political role (Thomas 1994). **Female**, as dichotomous variable, is drawn from the PDC database (Parlementair Documentatie Centrum 2010). Second, we include **Age**. It serves two purposes: first, it may reflect a person's experience in parliament: has MP learned all the necessary knowledge and skills to operate as an MP? Younger MPs may be less active because they are less experienced. And second it may reflect a person's career perspectives: is she starting her parliamentary career or is rather at the end of it? Younger MPs may want to build a reputation through their activity (Bailer 2011: 312). Age is measured in years at the start of the relevant parliamentary term (Zwinkels forthcoming). Third, those who have been around in parliament for a long time may be more successful in tabling proposals and asking questions (Bräuninger et al. 2012). **Experience** is expressed as the number of years an MP served in parliament at the end of the parliamentary period (Parlementair Documentatie Centrum 2010). Age and experience correlate only moderately ($r = 0.28$, $p < 0.001$). Fourth, belonging to a government party is likely to lower parliamentary activity. MPs are likely to be pressured to use their tools less as prying questions or controversial motions or amendments may undermine the stability of the coalition. MPs are also less likely to need these tools: governments are expected to do what the coalition parties agreed to and government MPs have informal channels of influencing government policy and obtaining information at their disposal, which are not (always) open to opposition MPs. **Government party** membership is measured as one for members of a government party and

zero for MPs from opposition parties.[13] Fifth, parliamentary parties might adjust the division of labour between their members, based on their size. **Party Size** is simply the number of MPs a party has at the beginning of the parliamentary term. Sixth, parties' policy positions might inform their use of parliamentary tools. On the one hand, one might argue that left-wing parties are more likely to actively seek the government's involvement in many policy areas. In addition, parties with more extreme policy positions might be more actively using certain parliamentary tools to broadcast their message. **Left-Right Position** and **Extremism** were obtained from the Chapel Hill Expert Survey (Steenbergen and Marks 2007, Bakker *et al.* 2015, Hooghe e*t al.* 2010). For the latter measure, we calculated the distance between the party of the MP and the mid-point of the general left-right scale.

[Table 1 about here]

A number of MPs were not included in the subsequent analyses: the speaker of parliament, MPs who left parliament to serve in cabinet and outgoing ministers who were re-elected but retired from national politics as soon as their ministerial tenure ended.[14]

As our dependent variables are strictly positive and not normally distributed, we use gamma regression models (Alimadhi and Bailey 2015). In these models, the degree of skew in the distribution is estimated separately by a scale parameter. We use a log link, which displays better properties for model convergence. We display expected values for our significant variables graphically to illustrate the size of the effects (Imai *et al.* 2008). As our data contains a hierarchical structure, with individual MPs present in one or more parliamentary periods as well as being a member of political parties, we apply a multilevel gamma regression model. We use two (crossed) levels: the parliamentary term and the political party. We present separate models for each dependent variable (Motions, Amendments and Questions).

[Table 2 about here]

[13] The radical right-wing populist Party for Freedom (*Partij voor de Vrijheid*/PVV), which served as support party for the supported minority cabinet-Rutte I between 2010 and 2012, is coded as an opposition party.

[14] Normally, membership of parliament and government are incompatible, but the constitution stipulates an exception for the government formation period during which outgoing ministers may hold both ministerial office and a parliamentary seat.

5. Results

The results of the regression models are displayed in Table 2; Figure 1 visualises the expected values for the main variables that were significant in at least one of the models, to aid with the interpretation of the effect sizes. Concerning the electoral connection, we hypothesised that MPs who were elected on the basis of preference votes would be less active in parliament, than MPs who were elected solely on the basis of their list position. This hypothesis is not supported by the data: in none of the models does preference vote have a significant effect on activity in parliament.

We hypothesised that MPs who were lower on the electoral list, would be more active in an attempt to boost their (s)electoral chances. We find a significant relationship regarding motions and questions. However, the relationship runs contrary to the expectation of the 'electoral incentives' model: MPs with higher list positions are actually asking *more* parliamentary questions and sponsor more motions than those lower on the list (see Figure 1a). There is no significant relationship for amendments. On the basis of the results for preference seats and the list position, we conclude that, as expected, in a political system with limited electoral incentives for personalisation, individual electoral incentives are a poor predictor of legislative activity. MPs who are in a more precarious position electorally, were not found to be more active in parliament.

The third hypothesis concerns selectoral pressures that MPs face: do party leaders determine reselection or is reselection left to independent agencies and party members? More open selection procedures have a small but significant positive effect on sponsoring amendments. The more control members have, the more amendments MPs propose. As can be seen in Figure 1b, this relationship is moderate in size: MPs from parties that have the most and the least inclusive selection procedures are expected to introduce just under 0.07 amendments per day, compared to just over 0.04 amendments per day for MPs of very exclusive parties. For questions, we find the opposite relationship, with those in exclusive parties being more active. This seems to reflect a different style in politics between those parties, with more inclusive parties focusing on policy making instruments (amendments), while more exclusive parties focusing more on oversight via parliamentary questions. The hypothesis that overall more inclusive selection leads to more activity finds very little support in the data.

[Figure 1 about here]

We proposed that incentives for promotion to leadership roles within parliament encourage MPs to be active. In order to measure the effect of (the appeal of) mega-seats we look at the activity of MPs that serve in leadership positions, such as committee chairs. When it comes to motions and amendments, MPs without leadership offices were neither significantly more active nor less active than MPs with leadership offices. We do find a small positive different for parliamentary questions, with those in leadership positions asking fewer (0.20) questions per day than those outside of the leadership (0.23). As questions are the least party controlled tools, it is not so surprising to find that this is where we do find an effect (see Figure 1c). It might be the tool that is most easily used by back benchers. All in all, we find only limited support for the leadership hypothesis.

The variables related to the institutions in which an MP operates, show strong explanatory power. Parties and committees constrain MP actions but also offer the context in which their behaviour will be evaluated. For parties, the mean activity of one's fellow party MPs is a significant predictor of the number of questions asked, but not of motions or amendments introduced (although for these models, the coefficients are still in the expected direction). This does not mean that there are no between-party differences, but these are explained by other party-level variables in our model, such as party size, government party and left-right. Thus for motions and amendments, party level differences can be explained by those variables, with smaller parties, opposition parties and left-wing parties showing higher levels of activity (see Table 2). If we exclude these party-level variables from the model, the Activity of Party Colleagues has a significant effect on individual activity (not reported). This suggests that the activity of party colleagues co-varies with the activity of MPs, but both can be explained by party-level variables such as party size, ideology and government participation.

We do find a significant effect of party colleague activity on parliamentary questions: if party colleagues ask more questions, an MP is also more likely to do so (see Figure 1d). Thus here we find variation between parties that cannot be explained (fully) by their size, government participation, candidate selection mechanisms or their left-right position.

We find that the activity of committee peers affects how active MPs are. If their committee peers use a tool more often, MPs will also use that tool more often. Figure 1e shows that these effects are substantially large. If we move from the first quartile on the Activity of Committee Peers variable (0.19) to the third quartile (0.37), the expected number of motions per day increases by 0.18. This is a sizeable effect, given that the average number of motions introduced is 0.20 (with a standard deviation of 0.23). The difference in the

expected number of amendments between the first and third quartiles of Activity of Committee Peers is 0.014 (mean number of amendments proposed is 0.05), while for questions it is 0.098 (mean number of questions asked is 0.18). Figure 1e shows that the effects are even larger at the high end of the Activity of Committee Peers variables, suggesting that MPs will be even more active when working in an exceptionally active field, but the confidence intervals are also considerably wider. All in all, the data provides strong support for our Peers hypothesis.

Specialisation also has a considerable effect on activity. MPs sponsor fewer proposals or amendments or ask fewer questions when they are specialised in a limited number of portfolios. As can be seen in Figure 1f the sharpest effect is visible in the lower half of the scale, with MPs who have very diverse portfolios being substantially more active than MPs with moderately diverse portfolios. This provides ample support for the specialisation hypothesis. The size of an MP's portfolio limits her activity: generalists with broad portfolios have a better opportunity to sponsor motions and table questions than specialists.

All in all, we find strong results for the activity of committee peers. The extent to which motions, amendments and questions are used by an MP is closely related to the use of that tool by their committee peers. For party-level variation these patterns can largely be explained by looking at party size, government participation and left-right position. This provides ample evidence for the notion that in parliament MPs operate within the context of their party and, particularly, their committee.

Our explanations seem to work better for questions than for motions and amendments, in terms of the number of significant explanatory variables, which might be related to the amount of individual liberty MPs have to use these different tools. In most parties MPs have the freedom to table written questions whenever they want, while the introduction of motions and certainly amendments is restricted by the parliamentary agenda and the Parliamentary Party Group leadership. Therefore individual level differences in proposing questions can be explained better using individual-level variables.[15]

[Table 3 about here]

[15] We performed a number of checks to assess the robustness of our findings, including alternative measures for our Committee Peers and Specialisation variables. None of these analyses substantively affect our conclusions. Details can be found in Online Appendix B.

6. Conclusion

The key contribution of this study to the comparative literature is that it showed that in addition to re-election, there are other mechanisms that can help to explain MP behaviour. We examined a case where we expected that the dominant hypothesis in the literature (namely that re-election chances shape behaviour) was not expected to matter. We found that despite the fact that re-election pressures are largely absent, many MPs are active. We examined reselection, promotion and the expectations that come from the parliamentary committee and parliamentary party MPs are member of as alternative expectations. Table 3 provides an overview of how these hypotheses fared.

Variation in their activity can be explained well by how active their party colleagues and, particularly, committee peers are. Those with active party colleagues and committee peers are more likely to show increased parliamentary activity. MPs from parliamentary parties and committees with hard-working colleagues, work harder in parliament, although the party-effect can be explained by a party's size, its participation in government and its left-right position. The context in which MPs operate structures their behaviour: each committee comes with its own behavioural norms and expectations about what kind of tools are appropriate and how active MPs should be. Characteristics of parties (their size, ideology and government participation) also affected MP activity. Moreover, MPs who have diverse portfolios are more active in parliament than their colleagues that have less diverse portfolios, because they have more opportunities to be active. This is true for all three types of behaviour that we looked at.

As expected, electoral connection theory has very little explanatory value in the Dutch institutional setting as MPs do not face re-election on the basis of their individual reputation, but on the basis of the performance of their party. MPs who were elected with preference votes did not show more activity in parliament than MPs who did not have an individual mandate. In addition, MPs with a high list position ask *more* written questions and table more motions in parliament than MPs who were elected by the skin of their teeth. This cannot be understood from the perspective of re-election incentives shaped by the electoral system. As we proposed above, it may be that instead of list position determining activity, activity may determine list position (cf. Van Vonno and Louwerse 2012): the MPs with safe seats are more active in parliament *because* these MPs are rewarded with good list positions for their activity.

If MPs are re-elected on their party's coattails, this points to the possibility that MPs' behaviour may be caused by reselection pressures. We examined the incentives shaped by the

party selection regime and their list position. We found only limited proof that MPs from more open parties are more likely to submit amendments. Reversely, they asked fewer written questions. All in all, party rules on reselection appear to play only a limited role in parliamentary activity.

Similarly, the prospect of earning a promotion seems not to affect the levels of parliamentary activity. Although it is difficult to establish which MPs are looking for a promotion, at least we observed that those who are not currently in leadership positions are not much more active than those who are, with parliamentary questions being the exception. Moreover, those who are in the leadership might want to stay there and may be active to protect their position. Further research may want to probe this relationship by dividing between *promotion* and *protection* incentives. It may also want to examine to what extent and which kind of activity is necessary for MPs to be promoted to leadership positions.

The fact that we do not find an effect of party candidate selection procedures does not mean that MPs do not care about re(s)election. The fact that they stick to the behavioural norms and expectations in terms of activity of their party and committee peers might suggest that MP conform behaviour towards the norms that they are socialized in, but it might also display an attempt of many politicians to keep up with what in their party is regarded as the adequate level of activity. If their party colleagues are comparatively inactive, it might be actually bad for their reselection chances to diverge from that norm. In some right-wing parties, introducing many motions or questions, is seen as wasteful, costing the taxpayer a lot of money while diluting the power of these parliamentary instruments. To the extent that these pressures exist, however, they seem to affect all MPs from the same party in similar ways, through the norms about parliamentary activity.

Overall, we find that MPs conform to the rules and expectations MPs are socialized to follow. The data shows that the expectations of MP behaviour, measured in terms of the activity of their colleagues, can help to explain MP behaviour much better than the direct effects of re-election or promotion. If an MP's colleagues submit many motions, amendments or questions, MPs will also submit many of these themselves. MPs who operate within committees where the main policy-influencing tool is submitting motions or amendments, sponsor more proposals but use the tool of parliamentary questions less often. These effects on the committee level suggest that activity is not just a matter of 'sticking to the party norms in order to be reselected', but it is also reflective of how active other parties' MPs working on the same issues are. Moreover, the strong effects of (issue) specialisation on activity suggests that MPs 'go with the flow': how active they are depends on the norms and expectations in

the parties and fields they are working in, as well as their level of specialisation. We showed that for motions and amendments, party mean activity can be explained quite well by means of party size, government participation and left-right positions, while for questions there is variation in party-level activity that cannot be accounted for by those variables. Similarly, future research may want to examine in greater detail what the prevailing norms per committee are (that is which committees are more or less active or show a preference for a particular tool over others) and how these can be explained.

The results of this study of the Netherlands are relevant beyond its borders. In the Netherlands, the one major incentive for legislative behaviour found in the literature, the electoral incentive, is absent for all intents and purposes. Here we identified an important role for specialisation and the pressures from committee and party colleagues (cf. Andeweg and Thomassen 2011 and Louwerse and Otjes 2015). Further research may want to find out whether the kind of alternative pressures found here, also affect MPs in systems that *do* have electoral incentives. It may very well be that in addition to electoral incentives, factors like specialisation and norms about activity from committees and parties, matter more in other systems than is generally expected.

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Tables

Table 1: Descriptive statistics

	N	Mean	SD	Min.	Max.	Units/scale
Motions	827	0.20	0.23	0.00	1.63	Mean per sitting day
Amendments	827	0.05	0.06	0.00	0.40	Mean per sitting day
Questions	827	0.17	0.20	0.00	1.44	Mean per sitting day
Preference Seat	827	0.12	0.33	0.00	1.00	0 = No, 1 = Yes
Relative List Position	827	0.68	0.42	0.00	4.43	see text
Selectoral Pressure	827	8.98	2.52	0.00	15.00	0-24 scale, 24 = most open
No Leadership Positions	827	0.61	0.49	0.00	1.00	0 = Leadership 1 = Not in Leadership
Motions						
Activity of Party Colleagues	827	0.21	0.19	0.06	1.63	Mean per sitting day
Activity of Committee Peers	791	0.22	0.07	0.10	0.51	Mean per sitting day
Specialisation	791	0.26	0.17	0.04	1.00	0-1 Scale, 1 = most specialised
Amendments						
Activity of Party Colleagues	827	0.05	0.03	0.01	0.22	Mean per sitting day
Activity of Committee Peers	656	0.06	0.02	0.03	0.19	Mean per sitting day
Specialisation	656	0.38	0.25	0.03	1.00	0-1 Scale, 1 = most specialised
Questions						
Activity of Party Colleagues	827	0.18	0.14	0.02	1.44	Mean per sitting day
Activity of Committee Peers	762	0.19	0.07	0.05	0.35	Mean per sitting day
Specialisation	762	0.25	0.19	0.02	1.00	0-1 Scale, 1 = most specialised
Age	827	44.80	9.17	18.88	71.17	Years
Experience	827	5.78	4.42	0.16	29.02	Years
Female	827	0.36	0.48	0.00	1.00	0 = Male, 1 = Female
Party Size	827	27.62	13.14	2.00	45.00	Seats
Government Party	827	0.53	0.50	0.00	1.00	0 = No, 1 = Yes
Extremism	827	1.80	1.01	0.00	3.90	0-5 scale
Left-Right Position	827	5.32	2.04	1.10	8.80	0-10 scale, 0 = left

Table 2: Explaining Individual Parliamentary Activity: Motions, Amendments & Questions

	(1) Motions	(2) Amendments	(3) Questions
(Intercept)	-1.00*	-2.64***	-0.76**
	(0.41)	(0.41)	(0.28)
Preference Seat	-0.05	-0.10	-0.12
	(0.07)	(0.11)	(0.09)
Relative List Position	-0.22***	-0.06	-0.19**
	(0.06)	(0.10)	(0.06)
Selectoral Pressure	0.01	0.03*	-0.04**
	(0.01)	(0.02)	(0.01)
No Leadership Positions	0.01	-0.00	0.14*
	(0.05)	(0.08)	(0.06)
Activity of Party Colleagues	0.29	2.21	1.19***
	(0.26)	(1.61)	(0.33)
Activity of Committee Peers	5.88***	16.70***	4.00***
	(1.11)	(2.19)	(0.45)
Specialisation	-1.85***	-1.27***	-1.11***
	(0.14)	(0.15)	(0.14)
Age[a]	-1.05***	-0.89*	-1.51***
	(0.26)	(0.37)	(0.31)
Experience[a]	0.08	0.14	0.22**
	(0.07)	(0.09)	(0.07)
Female	-0.04	-0.16*	0.00
	(0.05)	(0.07)	(0.06)
Party Size[a]	-4.56***	-2.18**	-1.52***
	(0.57)	(0.68)	(0.45)
Government Party	-0.22***	-0.14	-0.27***
	(0.07)	(0.09)	(0.08)
Extremism	-0.03	-0.05	-0.06
	(0.04)	(0.05)	(0.03)
Left-Right Position	-0.04*	-0.07**	-0.07***
	(0.02)	(0.02)	(0.02)
Log Likelihood	857.26	1393.17	775.97
Num. obs.	791	656	762
Num. groups: Party	12	12	12
Num. groups: Period	5	5	5
Variance: Party.(Intercept)	0.01	0.00	0.00
Variance: Period.(Intercept)	0.01	0.01	0.00
Variance: Residual	0.37	0.69	0.50

***$p < 0.001$, **$p < 0.01$, *$p < 0.05$

[a] Age, Experience and Party Size were divided by 100, 150 and 10 respectively for purposes of model convergence.

Table 3: Summary of results

#	Hypothesis	Expected direction	Motions	Amendments	Questions
1	Preference seat	-	(-)	(-)	(-)
2	(Low) List position	+	-	(-)	-
3	Selectoral Pressure	+	(+)	+	-
4	(No) Leadership	+	(+)	(-)	+
5	Activity of Party Colleagues	+	(+)	(+)	+
6	Activity of Committee Peers	+	+	+	+
7	Specialisation	-	-	-	-

Note: + stands for a positive relationship, - a negative relationship. Results in between brackets are not statistically significant.

(Online) Appendices

Appendix A: Measurement of activity variables

This appendix outlines how we measured the variables relating to the activity of an MP, their party colleagues, peers and their level of specialisation. We provide an explanation of the measurement for Questions here, but the relevant variables for Amendments and Motions have been calculated in the same way.

We use the following symbols in the explanation.
i = Subscript for MP
I = Number of MPs
p = Subscript for party
t = Subscript for parliamentary term
c = Subscript for issue categories
C = Number of categories
n_{pt} = Number of MPs in party p in term t

Questions
The number of Questions an MP asked on average per day the parliament was in session (in a parliamentary term):

$$q_i = \frac{Questions\ Asked_i}{SittingDays_i} \tag{1}$$

Party Colleagues
The mean number of questions an MP's party colleagues, excluding the MP herself, asked on average per day the parliament was in session (in a parliamentary term):

$$qpc_i = \frac{(\sum_{a=1}^{I} q_a) - q_i}{n_p - 1} \tag{2}$$

Committee Peers
Measuring question activity of peers is somewhat more complicated, because we have to determine who one's 'peers' are. This is based on specialisation: the issue categories on which the MP asked questions.

We use the classification of questions provided by the official documentation. This classification is, however, not exclusive: one question can be classified as both 'Environment' and 'Government', for example. If a question had multiple category codings, we count the question as $1/m$, where m is the number of categories assigned. For example, if three categories were assigned to a question, it counts as $1/3$ towards each issue category.

We start with the number of questions each MP asked about each issue category. Again this is expressed as the mean number of questions per sitting day: q_{cit}

Based on this we calculate a category weight for each MP, which expresses the proportion of questions asked on each issue category. For example a weight of 0.1 would indicate that one in 10 questions was on this issue.

$$w_{cit} = \frac{q_{cit}}{\sum q_{cit}} \tag{3}$$

We normalize these weights so they add up to 1 for each category:

$$wn_{cit} = \frac{w_{cit}}{\sum_{a=1}^{C} w_{ait}} \tag{4}$$

Next, for each issue category, we calculate how many questions *in total* were asked by MPs also asking a question on category c, weighted by the category weights. Thus, if an MP exclusively asks questions on category c, she has a big weight in the category mean. If an MP does not ask any questions on category c, she will not affect the mean for that category. Therefore, our measure represents mean (question) activity by MPs who also work on this topic, weighted by how important the topic is for them:

$$q_{ct} = \sum_{a=1}^{I} q_{at}\, wn_{cat} \tag{5}$$

Note that we exclude the MP for which we are calculating the Committee Peers measure, so that one's own activity does not factor into the mean activity of one's peers.

Next we calculate mean number of questions per day of an MP's peers, as a weighted mean of q_{ct}, using weights w_{cit}:

$$qe_{it} = \sum q_{ct} w_{cit} \tag{6}$$

We might interpret this statistic as the expected number of questions asked by someone with the same specialisation as MP i.

Specialisation

Specialisation is measured by the Herfindahl index, which is calculated from the proportion of questions on each issue (see above):

$$h_{it} = \sum w_{cit}^2 \tag{8}$$

In fact, we use the normalized Herfindahl index, which ensures that all values run from 0 to 1 for ease of interpretation:

$$qs_{it} = h_{it}^{*} = \frac{h_{it} - 1/C}{1 - 1/C} \tag{9}$$

Where C refers to the number of categories in the dataset, which equals 17 for our data.

Appendix B: Robustness checks

We performed a number of checks to assess the robustness of our findings.

B.1 Committee Peers

As an alternative measure of our Committee Peers variables, we obtained a list of committee memberships for the 2006-2010 term.[16] Unfortunately, this list only included committee assignments shortly after the term started, which means that we ignore changes in committee memberships and cannot observe this variable for those who entered parliament later on.

We calculated the mean activity of an MP's colleagues in the committees she sat on. The measure correlated moderately strongly with our specialisation-based measure: $r = 0.55$ for amendments, $r = 0.56$ for motions, and $r = 0.42$ for questions. On inspection we find the specialisation-based measure more plausible in many cases, especially for MPs who sit on a large number of committees. The committee membership-based measure weights all of these committees as equally important for an MP, which is most likely an unfair assumption.

Moreover, the committee-based measure does not take into account changes in committee membership, which affects the validity of the measurements for some MPs. This especially true for parliamentary questions as the between-committee differences are relatively large for those (for example an average of 0.19 questions per day for the Education Committee, but 0.40 for the Foreign Affairs Committee). Because our committee membership data only speaks to the first assignments in a term, those who changed committee membership receive wildly different estimations compared to our specialisation-based measure. Take the example of Jan Jacob van Dijk (CDA): after the 2006 election he remained in the Foreign Affairs Committee for the first couple of months. After coalition formation was concluded he got promoted to chief spokesperson on education and therefore also changed committees. Therefore the committee-membership based measure shows a very high level of peer activity (based on Foreign Affairs), while the specialisation-based measure gives a low level of peer activity (based on his activity in the area of Education). If we omit three known cases where people changed committees, the correlation between the committee and speech-based measures for questions already increases to 0.55.

We rerun our models for the 2006-2010 term only, using both measurements of peer activity in turn (see Table B.1). The findings in the multivariate models are similar for each measure and are significant at the 10 per cent level in all models, except for the one on

[16] We thank the PATHWAYS project (NWO 464-13-055) for sharing this data with us.

parliamentary questions, where the significance level increases to 0.11 when using the committee membership-based measure.

Table B.1 Gamma Regression Models for Alternative Committee Peers Measure

	Motions 1	**Motions 2**	**Amendments 1**	**Amendments 2**	**Questions 1**	**Questions 2**
(Intercept)	-0.18	-0.64	-3.94**	-3.87**	0.81	1.01
	(1.02)	(1.25)	(1.40)	(1.31)	(1.75)	(1.53)
Preference Seat	-0.34	-0.29	0.55	0.55	-0.42	-0.27
	(0.17)	(0.20)	(0.31)	(0.31)	(0.24)	(0.25)
Relative List Position	-0.39**	-0.28	0.00	-0.16	-0.48***	-0.39*
	(0.12)	(0.15)	(0.19)	(0.23)	(0.14)	(0.18)
Selectoral Pressure	-0.04	-0.01	0.16**	0.16**	-0.09	-0.06
	(0.03)	(0.03)	(0.05)	(0.05)	(0.05)	(0.05)
No Leadership Positions	-0.03	-0.05	0.11	0.00	0.13	-0.02
	(0.10)	(0.11)	(0.15)	(0.16)	(0.12)	(0.13)
Activity of Party Colleagues	-0.11	0.52	-12.94	-12.16	0.50	0.44
	(0.72)	(0.81)	(8.44)	(7.50)	(0.91)	(0.74)
Activity of Committee Peers	8.49***		18.57		5.67*	
	(2.06)		(10.62)		(2.50)	
Activity of Committee Peers (Alternative)		5.08*		19.41*		1.93
		(2.09)		(8.58)		(1.21)
Specialisation	-1.73***	-2.58***	-2.09***	-2.43***	-0.49	-0.03
	(0.30)	(0.43)	(0.38)	(0.39)	(0.34)	(0.46)
Age	-0.45	-0.31	-0.35	-0.67	-1.43*	-1.94**
	(0.48)	(0.58)	(0.76)	(0.77)	(0.58)	(0.65)
Experience	-0.11	-0.10	0.25	0.22	0.10	0.04
	(0.13)	(0.14)	(0.19)	(0.21)	(0.17)	(0.19)
Female	0.06	0.08	-0.42**	-0.35*	0.06	-0.05
	(0.08)	(0.10)	(0.13)	(0.14)	(0.11)	(0.12)
Party Size	-6.21***	-4.83**	-6.07*	-5.31*	-1.51	-1.51
	(1.49)	(1.78)	(2.41)	(2.39)	(1.44)	(1.51)
Government Party	-0.62	-0.48	0.66	0.64	-1.21*	-1.03
	(0.32)	(0.37)	(0.52)	(0.52)	(0.58)	(0.56)
Extremism	-0.29	-0.13	0.25	0.29	-0.46	-0.28
	(0.17)	(0.19)	(0.26)	(0.27)	(0.27)	(0.26)
Left-Right Position	-0.05*	-0.04	-0.05	-0.06	-0.06	-0.04
	(0.02)	(0.03)	(0.04)	(0.04)	(0.04)	(0.04)
Log Likelihood	203.77	134.19	364.41	289.50	120.87	77.74
Num. obs.	167	125	149	119	169	126
Num. groups: Party	10	10	10	10	10	10
Variance: Party.(Intercept)	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.01	0.01
Variance: Residual	0.22	0.21	0.53	0.51	0.36	0.34

*** $p < 0.001$, ** $p < 0.01$, * $p < 0.05$

B.2 Specialisation

We calculated two alternative versions of our specialisation variable. A concern might be that some issue categories are much broader (or simply more popular) than others, which would influence our measure. Inspection of the distribution of issues shows that the Finance issue is particularly popular (for amendments and motions), because all proposals that relate to the budget are classified as such (see Table B.2). Moreover, the Governance category seems to be used for general debates, such as the 'Queen's Speech Debate'. A measure that excludes these variables, however, correlates highly with our main variable ($.82 < r < .94$). A second alternative measure is obtained by looking how many actions an MP took as a percentage of the total number of actions (motions/amendments/questions) and using this data to calculate the specialisation index. This effectively controls for differences in popularity between issue categories. These measures also correlate highly with our main variable ($.85 < r < .86$). If we update our regression models with each of these alternative measures, this does not substantially affect the results (see Table B.3).

Table B.2: Distribution of Proposals over Issues

Issue Category	Amendments	Motions	Questions
Government	819	1886	1879
Culture and recreation	398	1442	2551
Economy	1097	2983	4422
Finances	2225	11070	2398
Housing	311	670	839
International	188	3249	5910
Agriculture	167	1777	1472
Migration and integration	169	1198	2038
Environment and nature	703	3163	3691
Education and science	1237	2652	2901
Public order and security	460	1975	5462
Law	1249	2452	5927
Infrastructure and public planning	329	1348	1106
Social security	668	1220	1234
Traffic	424	2354	2942
Employment	832	1463	2142
Health care and public health	891	4350	7361

Note: Proposals that were assigned multiple categories, were counted as $^1/_k$-th, where k is the total number of issue categories assigned. Numbers have been rounded to the nearest integer.

Table B.3: Gamma Regression Models for Alternative Specialisation Measures

	Motions 1	Motions 2	Amendments 1	Amendments 2	Questions 1	Questions 2
(Intercept)	-1.14**	-0.68*	-2.49***	-2.76***	-0.77**	-0.76**
	(0.41)	(0.32)	(0.42)	(0.41)	(0.28)	(0.27)
Preference Seat	-0.10	-0.06	-0.10	-0.05	-0.11	-0.12
	(0.08)	(0.07)	(0.11)	(0.11)	(0.09)	(0.09)
Relative List Position	-0.23***	-0.20***	-0.12	-0.08	-0.19**	-0.16**
	(0.06)	(0.06)	(0.09)	(0.09)	(0.06)	(0.06)
Selectoral Pressure	0.01	0.01	0.03	0.04**	-0.04**	-0.03**
	(0.01)	(0.01)	(0.02)	(0.02)	(0.01)	(0.01)
No Leadership Positions	-0.00	0.01	-0.01	0.00	0.12*	0.11
	(0.05)	(0.05)	(0.08)	(0.07)	(0.06)	(0.06)
Activity of Party Colleagues	0.12	0.03	1.94	1.65	1.22***	1.32***
	(0.26)	(0.24)	(1.64)	(1.57)	(0.33)	(0.31)
Activity of Committee Peers	7.05***	4.65***	16.60***	16.14***	3.80***	3.32***
	(1.06)	(0.55)	(2.13)	(2.28)	(0.45)	(0.44)
Specialisation (Alt.1)	-1.03***		-1.14***		-1.03***	
	(0.11)		(0.14)		(0.13)	
Specialisation (Alt.2)		-1.76***		-1.69***		-1.68***
		(0.12)		(0.13)		(0.13)
Age	-1.09***	-0.95***	-0.88*	-0.56	-1.50***	-1.37***
	(0.27)	(0.26)	(0.38)	(0.35)	(0.31)	(0.30)
Experience	0.07	0.09	0.13	0.12	0.19**	0.18*
	(0.07)	(0.06)	(0.09)	(0.08)	(0.07)	(0.07)
Female	-0.03	-0.04	-0.13*	-0.15*	-0.00	0.01
	(0.05)	(0.05)	(0.07)	(0.06)	(0.06)	(0.05)
Party Size	-5.08***	-4.55***	-2.29***	-1.67*	-1.48**	-1.35**
	(0.58)	(0.56)	(0.69)	(0.68)	(0.45)	(0.44)
Government Party	-0.22**	-0.23***	-0.14	-0.12	-0.26***	-0.26***
	(0.07)	(0.07)	(0.09)	(0.09)	(0.08)	(0.07)
Extremism	-0.04	-0.04	-0.06	-0.02	-0.04	-0.05
	(0.04)	(0.04)	(0.05)	(0.05)	(0.03)	(0.03)
Left-Right Position	-0.04*	-0.05*	-0.06**	-0.06**	-0.07***	-0.06***
	(0.02)	(0.02)	(0.02)	(0.02)	(0.02)	(0.02)
Log Likelihood	817.84	867.52	1312.80	1432.30	776.27	812.29
Num. obs.	785	791	625	656	761	762
Num. groups: Party	12	12	12	12	12	12
Num. groups: Period	5	5	5	5	5	5
Variance: Party.(Intercept)	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.00	0.00
Variance: Period.(Intercept)	0.03	0.00	0.00	0.01	0.00	0.00
Variance: Residual	0.38	0.36	0.66	0.63	0.49	0.45

***p < 0.001, **p < 0.01, *p < 0.05

B.3 Leadership

One might argue that different types of leadership functions, such as being a committee chair or serving on the board or as leader of the PPG, might have a different effect on parliamentary activity. When we model these two variables separately, we find small but mostly statistically non-significant differences between the two, with PPG leaders/board members generally being more active than Committee Chairs (see Table B.4).

Table B.4: Gamma Regression Models for Alternative Leadership Measures

	Motions 1	Motions 2	Amendments 1	Amendments 2	Questions 1	Questions 2
(Intercept)	-1.14**	-1.00*	-2.80***	-2.64***	-0.96**	-0.71*
	(0.42)	(0.40)	(0.43)	(0.01)	(0.34)	(0.28)
Preference Seat	-0.06	-0.07	-0.09	-0.10***	-0.14	-0.12
	(0.07)	(0.07)	(0.11)	(0.01)	(0.09)	(0.09)
Relative List Position	-0.22***	-0.19**	-0.06	-0.05***	-0.15*	-0.18**
	(0.06)	(0.06)	(0.09)	(0.01)	(0.06)	(0.06)
Selectoral Pressure	0.01	0.01	0.03*	0.03***	-0.04**	-0.04**
	(0.01)	(0.01)	(0.02)	(0.01)	(0.01)	(0.01)
Not a Committee Chair	0.10		0.11		0.22**	
	(0.07)		(0.10)		(0.08)	
Not in PPG Leadership		-0.07		-0.03*		0.12
		(0.06)		(0.01)		(0.06)
Activity of Party Colleagues	0.28	0.29	2.03	2.52***	1.11**	1.20***
	(0.25)	(0.25)	(1.60)	(0.01)	(0.36)	(0.33)
Activity of Committee Peers	5.96***	6.02***	16.83***	16.49***	4.18***	3.99***
	(1.11)	(1.08)	(2.19)	(0.01)	(0.46)	(0.45)
Specialisation	-1.87***	-1.83***	-1.27***	-1.26***	-1.10***	-1.10***
	(0.14)	(0.14)	(0.15)	(0.01)	(0.14)	(0.14)
Age	-1.00***	-1.04***	-0.81*	-0.89***	-1.41***	-1.62***
	(0.27)	(0.26)	(0.38)	(0.01)	(0.32)	(0.31)
Experience	0.11	0.06	0.18	0.14***	0.23**	0.19**
	(0.06)	(0.06)	(0.09)	(0.01)	(0.07)	(0.07)
Female	-0.04	-0.03	-0.16*	-0.16***	0.01	0.01
	(0.05)	(0.05)	(0.07)	(0.01)	(0.06)	(0.06)
Party Size	-4.50***	-4.52***	-2.12**	-2.11***	-1.30**	-1.53***
	(0.56)	(0.56)	(0.67)	(0.01)	(0.47)	(0.46)
Government Party	-0.23***	-0.24***	-0.15	-0.14***	-0.29***	-0.27***
	(0.07)	(0.07)	(0.09)	(0.01)	(0.08)	(0.08)
Extremism	-0.03	-0.03	-0.05	-0.05***	-0.05	-0.06
	(0.04)	(0.04)	(0.05)	(0.01)	(0.03)	(0.03)
Left-Right Position	-0.04*	-0.04*	-0.07**	-0.07***	-0.07***	-0.07***
	(0.02)	(0.02)	(0.02)	(0.01)	(0.02)	(0.02)
Log Likelihood	858.41	858.00	1393.75	1393.21	777.37	775.02
Num. obs.	791	791	656	656	762	762
Num. groups: Party	12	12	12	12	12	12
Num. groups: Period	5	5	5	5	5	5
Variance: Party.(Intercept)	0.01	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Variance: Period.(Intercept)	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.00	0.00
Variance: Residual	0.37	0.37	0.69	0.70	0.50	0.50

***p < 0.001, **p < 0.01, *p < 0.05

B. 4 Relative List Position

Relative list position is measure on a scale where 0 means that the MP was the first person on the list and 1 means that the MP was the last person on the list to be elected (due to their list position). For example, if a party won 33 seats, the MP placed number 33 on the list would have a Relative List Position of 1. As a very small number of MPs are elected based on their preference votes, they would receive a list position larger than 1. This is also true for those who entered parliament later on, as successors of MPs leaving the parliament. As some of these values can be relatively large (the maximum is 4.43), we reran our models with the relative list position capped at 1. The results are very similar (see Table B.5)

Table B.5 Gamma Regression Models for Alternative Relative List Position Measure

	Motions	**Amendments**	**Questions**
(Intercept)	-0.92*	-2.68***	-0.59*
	(0.42)	(0.40)	(0.29)
Preference Seat	-0.11	-0.09	-0.21*
	(0.08)	(0.13)	(0.10)
Relative List Position (Alt.)	-0.32***	-0.02	-0.38***
	(0.09)	(0.13)	(0.10)
Selectoral Pressure	0.01	0.03	-0.04**
	(0.01)	(0.02)	(0.01)
No Leadership Positions	0.02	-0.01	0.16**
	(0.05)	(0.08)	(0.06)
Activity of Party Colleagues	0.30	2.49	1.18***
	(0.26)	(1.63)	(0.33)
Activity of Committee Peers	5.82***	16.47***	4.00***
	(1.13)	(2.06)	(0.45)
Specialisation	-1.88***	-1.26***	-1.09***
	(0.14)	(0.15)	(0.14)
Age	-1.06***	-0.90*	-1.57***
	(0.26)	(0.39)	(0.31)
Experience	0.08	0.15	0.21**
	(0.07)	(0.10)	(0.07)
Female	-0.04	-0.16*	-0.00
	(0.05)	(0.07)	(0.06)
Party Size	-4.50***	-2.11**	-1.58***
	(0.56)	(0.68)	(0.45)
Government Party	-0.22**	-0.15	-0.24**
	(0.07)	(0.10)	(0.08)
Extremism	-0.03	-0.04	-0.06*
	(0.04)	(0.05)	(0.03)
Left-Right Position	-0.04*	-0.07**	-0.07***
	(0.02)	(0.02)	(0.02)
Log Likelihood	858.05	1392.94	779.12
Num. obs.	791	656	762
Num. groups: Party	12	12	12
Num. groups: Period	5	5	5
Variance: Party.(Intercept)	0.01	0.00	0.00
Variance: Period.(Intercept)	0.01	0.01	0.00
Variance: Residual	0.37	0.70	0.48

*** $p < 0.001$, ** $p < 0.01$, * $p < 0.05$

B.5 Comparing basic and novel model specifications

Table B.6 compares regression specifications with and without our three main 'novel' variables: Activity of Party Colleagues, Activity of Peers and Specialisation. In each case the full model is a significantly better fit than the basic model ($p < 0.001$). The substantive effect and significance of our other main independent variables is not affected by the inclusion of the three novel effects.

Table B.6 Gamma Regression Models with and without Party Activity, Peer Activity and Specialisation

	Motions 1	Motions 2	Amendments 1	Amendments 2	Questions 1	Questions 2
(Intercept)	0.28	-1.00*	-1.26**	-2.64***	0.62	-0.76**
	(0.30)	(0.41)	(0.45)	(0.41)	(0.36)	(0.28)
Preference Seat	-0.10	-0.05	-0.22	-0.10	-0.11	-0.12
	(0.08)	(0.07)	(0.12)	(0.11)	(0.09)	(0.09)
Relative List Position	-0.16*	-0.22***	-0.06	-0.06	-0.21**	-0.19**
	(0.07)	(0.06)	(0.10)	(0.10)	(0.07)	(0.06)
Selectoral Pressure	0.01	0.01	0.03	0.03*	-0.06***	-0.04**
	(0.02)	(0.01)	(0.02)	(0.02)	(0.02)	(0.01)
No Leadership Positions	-0.01	0.01	-0.08	-0.00	0.08	0.14*
	(0.06)	(0.05)	(0.08)	(0.08)	(0.06)	(0.06)
Age	-1.01***	-1.05***	-1.25**	-0.89*	-1.71***	-1.51***
	(0.29)	(0.26)	(0.40)	(0.37)	(0.32)	(0.31)
Experience	0.11	0.08	0.16	0.14	0.19*	0.22**
	(0.07)	(0.07)	(0.10)	(0.09)	(0.08)	(0.07)
Female	-0.09	-0.04	-0.17*	-0.16*	-0.05	0.00
	(0.05)	(0.05)	(0.07)	(0.07)	(0.06)	(0.06)
Party Size	-6.03***	-4.56***	-3.06***	-2.18**	-2.64***	-1.52***
	(0.53)	(0.57)	(0.80)	(0.68)	(0.54)	(0.45)
Government Party	-0.23**	-0.22***	-0.21*	-0.14	-0.35***	-0.27***
	(0.08)	(0.07)	(0.10)	(0.09)	(0.08)	(0.08)
Extremism	-0.06	-0.03	-0.13	-0.05	-0.06	-0.06
	(0.04)	(0.04)	(0.07)	(0.05)	(0.05)	(0.03)
Left-Right Position	-0.05*	-0.04*	-0.08*	-0.07**	-0.10***	-0.07***
	(0.02)	(0.02)	(0.03)	(0.02)	(0.02)	(0.02)
Activity of Party Colleagues		0.29		2.21		1.19***
		(0.26)		(1.61)		(0.33)
Activity of Committee Peers		5.88***		16.70***		4.00***
		(1.11)		(2.19)		(0.45)
Specialisation		-1.85***		-1.27***		-1.11***
		(0.14)		(0.15)		(0.14)
Log Likelihood	750.44	857.26	1337.21	1393.17	736.04	775.97
Num. obs.	791	791	656	656	762	762
Num. groups: Party	12	12	12	12	12	12
Num. groups: Period	5	5	5	5	5	5
Variance: Party.(Intercept)	0.01	0.01	0.03	0.00	0.01	0.00
Variance: Period.(Intercept)	0.03	0.01	0.05	0.01	0.10	0.00
Variance: Residual	0.50	0.37	0.74	0.69	0.52	0.50

$^{***}p < 0.001$, $^{**}p < 0.01$, $^{*}p < 0.05$