

# 4

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## What Officials Believe

Over the past few decades the European Union has been transformed from a system for interstate collaboration to a polity (Hix 1994; Caporaso 1996; Marks et al. 1996; Hooghe and Marks 2009) in which Commission officials are active players. They initiate and implement EU decisions across a broad swathe of policies, frame the European interest, and represent the European Union in international forums. Their attitudes and beliefs help shape Europe's future. This chapter describes their views on the governance, ideological direction, and policy scope of the European Union.

There is considerable variation among Commission officials about how the balance of power between the Commission, member states, and European Parliament should look. Differences range from supranationalism and state-centrism to institutional pragmatism. We begin by outlining these conceptions, show their relative strength in the Commission, and then examine to what extent territorial and functional factors help us understand variations in EU governance beliefs. In the next sections, we document ideological diversity among Commission officials and explore whether DGs have indeed recognizable partisan make-ups. In the final section, we examine which policies, Commission officials desire to centralize or decentralize, and how intensely, and we take up the question whether bureaucratic politics motivates Commission officials' beliefs on Europe's policy agenda.

### COMMISSION OFFICIALS AND EU GOVERNANCE

What form of EU governance is favoured by Commission officials? What, in their view, is the appropriate balance of power among the Commission, member states, and European Parliament? There are several viable options:

- an intergovernmental or state-centric Union which conceives the Commission as an agent under close member state supervision; that is,

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member states steer the course of European integration (Moravcsik 1998);

- a proto-federal or supranational European Union in which the Commission is the primary authority. This vision was theorized by early neo-functionalists (Lindberg and Scheingold 1970). Later work refined the argument by highlighting the role of the European Court of Justice as the engine of integration and downplayed the teleology associated with original formulations (Sandholtz and Stone Sweet 1998);
- a multilevel polity in which the Commission and the member states are interlocking and complementary institutions (Marks et al. 1996). This option echoes Ernst Haas, who observed in *The Uniting of Europe* that the European Coal and Steel Community constituted ‘a hybrid in which neither the federal nor the intergovernmental tendency has clearly triumphed’ (Haas 1958: 526–7). He described it as a fundamental departure from traditional conceptions of government.

State-centrism has broad support amongst Europe’s publics and national elites; and since national loyalties and interests may influence Commission officials’ beliefs, some of these views are likely to carry over into the Commission. The supranational and multilevel options are in line with the general expectation that Commission officials favour strong European Union institutions. This is consistent with utility maximization, according to which bureaucrats are bureau-maximizing (Pollack 2003). It also chimes well with an organizational understanding that expects the views of Commission officials to be shaped by organizational location (Egeberg 2001). And it corresponds with the observation that, given a choice, few individuals pursue careers in an organization with antithetical values.

Supporters of a federal Union or a multilevel polity find common ground in their defence of the Treaty rules that invest the Commission with the monopoly of legislative initiative and the member states (or the Council of Ministers) with the power to pass legislation. Haas drew attention to this institutional innovation in the ECSC Treaty, which became later known as the Community method (Weiler 1991; Wallace 2000; Dehousse 2011).

The Community method has ambiguous constitutional implications. Commission President Walter Hallstein believed that it required federalism (Hallstein 1963: 168). But Haas thought that the Community method was a stable equilibrium, and apparently so does the Commission: ‘The Community method . . . provides a means to arbitrate between different interests by passing them through two successive filters: the general interest at the level of the Commission; and democratic representation, European and national, at the level of the Council and European Parliament, together the Union’s legislature’ (Commission 2001: 8). When stripped of its federal ambition, the Community method side-steps institutional power struggles by regulating

Table 4.1. EU governance views

	Some people want the College of Commissioners to become the government of Europe.	Some argue that member states—not the Commission or European Parliament—should be the central players in the European Union.
<i>Strongly agree</i>	7.4	1.1
<i>Agree</i>	29.9	7.1
<i>Neither agree nor disagree</i>	16.1	11.8
<i>Disagree</i>	26.2	40.7
<i>Strongly disagree</i>	13.5	34.3
<i>Not sure/missing</i>	6.9	4.9

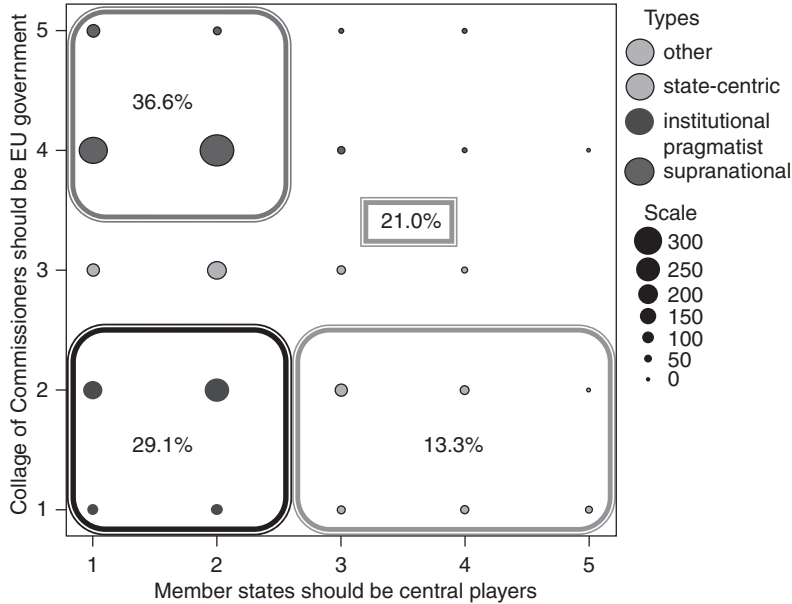
Note: Percentages; n = 1,846.

the separate roles of Commission and member states in policy-making, and that is an attractive strategy for defenders of the Commission in a time of resurgent nationalism (Hooghe 2012). So the method has been linked with federalism and with multilevel governance. The Community method party is diverse indeed—a theme we explore in chapter 5.

Where do officials stand on these three options? Table 4.1 provides the distribution of responses on two statements concerning power relations between the Commission and member states. There is considerable ambivalence. The first statement expresses the supranational view that ‘the College of Commissioners should become the government of Europe’. As many Commission officials disagree as agree with the statement, and 16 per cent sit on the fence. The state-centric statement that ‘member states—not the Commission or European Parliament—should be the central players in the European Union’ produces a more uniform picture: 75 per cent oppose, though 20 per cent would not object.

Figure 4.1 typologizes Commission officials on EU governance based on their responses to these statements. Supranationalists agree that the College of Commissioners should be the government of Europe and disagree that member states should remain the central pillars, while state-centrists disagree with the former and agree with the latter. But some officials—institutional pragmatists—believe that *neither* the College of Commissioners *nor* the member states should be the kernel of European government. From the survey, 13.3 per cent of Commission officials can be classified as state-centrists, 36.6 per cent as supranationalists, and 29.1 per cent as institutional pragmatists. One out of five officials cannot be placed into any of these categories.

Table 4.2 breaks these percentages down by rank, gender, and EU-12 vs EU-15. The strongest difference runs along gender lines. Women are much less likely to be supranationalists. Interestingly, this echoes the finding from



**Fig. 4.1.** EU governance options and types of Commission officials

*Note:* n = 1,698. Five-point scales ranging from 1=strongly disagree; 2=disagree; 3=neither disagree nor agree; 4=agree; 5= strongly agree.

**Table 4.2.** EU governance options by seniority, gender, and enlargement

	Commission (all)	Top officials	Rank and file	Men	Women	EU-15 officials	EU-12 officials
Supranationalists	36.6	39.5*	36.1*	40.4**	29.8**	38.8**	30.4**
State-centrists	13.3	9.2*	13.5*	12.0*	15.8*	12.8	14.7
Institutional pragmatists	29.1	29.4	28.7	27.2*	32.6*	28.9	29.7
Other	21.0	21.8	21.7	20.4	21.8	19.5*	25.2*
N	1692	119	1498	1068	614	1278	401

*Note:* Percentages. \* indicates that differences of means is significant at 0.05 level and \*\* at 0.01 level between subgroups, e.g. men are significantly more likely to be supranationalists than women, and EU-15 officials are more likely to be supranationalists than EU-12.

public opinion studies that women are slightly more reluctant than men to embrace European integration (Gelleny and Anderson 2000; Nelsen and Guth 2000). Some have explained this in terms of economic interest: women are more vulnerable to economic competition and might be wary of the single market. Others emphasize cultural or even biological differences: women are compassionate and less competitive and are more circumspect about power battles. This might explain why women are predisposed to institutional pragmatism.

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EU-12 officials are less likely to be supranationalist and more likely not to fall in any of these categories, although these differences wash out once we exert controls (see below). An official’s nationality, DG location, self-selection, and gender tell a more convincing story.

There is much that unites supranationalists, state-centrists, and institutional pragmatists. They tend to agree that a) the Commission should not focus on managing existing policies; b) posts in the Commission should not be distributed to achieve geographical balance; c) officials should put loyalty to the Commission over DG loyalty. Table 4.3 shows that for each of the six statements, absolute majorities in three categories endorse the same direction. But three differences stand out.

First, state-centrists are least opposed to the Commission focusing more on management (statement 1). This fits the expectation that state-centrists are more willing to ‘normalize’ the Commission in the mould of a standard bureaucracy. Second, state-centrists are most sceptical and supranationalists least sceptical (statement 3). This is surprising. The Commission’s monopoly of initiative is essential to its special role in the European Union’s system of

**Table 4.3.** Attitudes by EU governance type

	Percentage who agree strongly or tend to agree		
	Supranationalists	Institutional pragmatists	State centrists
<i>Commission as Manager vs Commission as Initiator</i>			
1. The Commission should primarily focus on managing existing policies rather than developing new ones.	10.0	12.0	24.8
2. The more member states the EU has, the more important is the Commission’s role as policy initiator.	65.6	69.0	63.1
3. The Commission should share its sole right of initiative with the European Parliament.	37.6	32.1	29.8
<i>Accommodate national interests vs Independent of national interest</i>			
4. Some argue that posts in the Commission should be distributed on the basis of geographical balance.	34.2	37.1	41.3
5. It is more important to have one Commissioner per member state than to have a smaller and more efficient College.	20.2	32.0	36.8
<i>Loyalty to DG vs Loyalty to Commission</i>			
6. Commission officials work for their DG first, then for the Commission.	29.2	29.8	42.0

*Note:* Percentage of respondents agreeing strongly or tending to agree with the statement (as opposed to disagreeing strongly or tending to disagree or neither agreeing nor disagreeing).

multilevel governance, and one would expect supranationalists to be keen to defend it. Perhaps the reason is that supranationalists desire the Commission to be the sole government, accountable to a democratic parliament, while state-centrists (and institutional pragmatists) are content with the Commission's status as a bureaucracy—albeit with special powers. Third, state-centrists and institutional pragmatists are much less concerned about accommodating national interests, be this through 'geographical balancing' or by tolerating one Commissioner per member state, than supranationalists, who are strongly opposed (statements 4 and 5).

### Explaining beliefs on EU governance

What makes someone a supranationalist, state-centrist, or institutional pragmatist? Past research suggests that territorial and functional (or professional) loyalties and interests shape EU governance views among European elites (Egeberg 2001; Hooghe 2001, 2005; Beyers 2005; Bauer 2008; Hooghe 2012). Our analysis provides strong support for these conjectures, but we also find that other factors, in particular the reason for joining the Commission (motivation) and gender, help explain EU governance views.

Figure 4.2 suggests there are considerable differences among nationalities in the distribution of supranationalists, institutional pragmatists and state-centrists. Belgians and Italians are heavily over-represented among supranationalists; state-centrists come disproportionately from Britain, Slovakia and Sweden; and institutional pragmatists from Portugal, Slovenia and the Netherlands. Four national characteristics in particular predispose nationalities to state-centrism, supranationalism, or institutional pragmatism:

- *Multilevel governance.* Supranationalists and institutional pragmatists come disproportionately from countries with extensive decentralization, and state-centrists come disproportionately from unitary countries.<sup>1</sup>
- *Religion and state building.* State-centrists come disproportionately from protestant countries; supranationalists and institutional pragmatists from Catholic countries.<sup>2</sup> There is congruence here with the finding in

<sup>1</sup> Operationalized as the average score on the regional authority index for each member state over ten years (1995–2006), a measure of the extent of self rule and shared rule for each intermediate tier of regional government. *Source:* RAI dataset by Hooghe et al. (2010), accessible at <<http://www.unc.edu/~hooghe>>. The difference is significant at the 0.001 level between state-centrists and supranationalists; institutional pragmatists rank in between.

<sup>2</sup> Operationalized as the percentage of Protestant population for each member state in 2008, standardized around the mean. *Source:* US State Department's *International Religious Freedom Report 2008* (accessible at <<http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/irf/>>). Difference of means between state-centrists on the one hand and institutional pragmatists and supranationalists on the other is significant at the 0.001 level.

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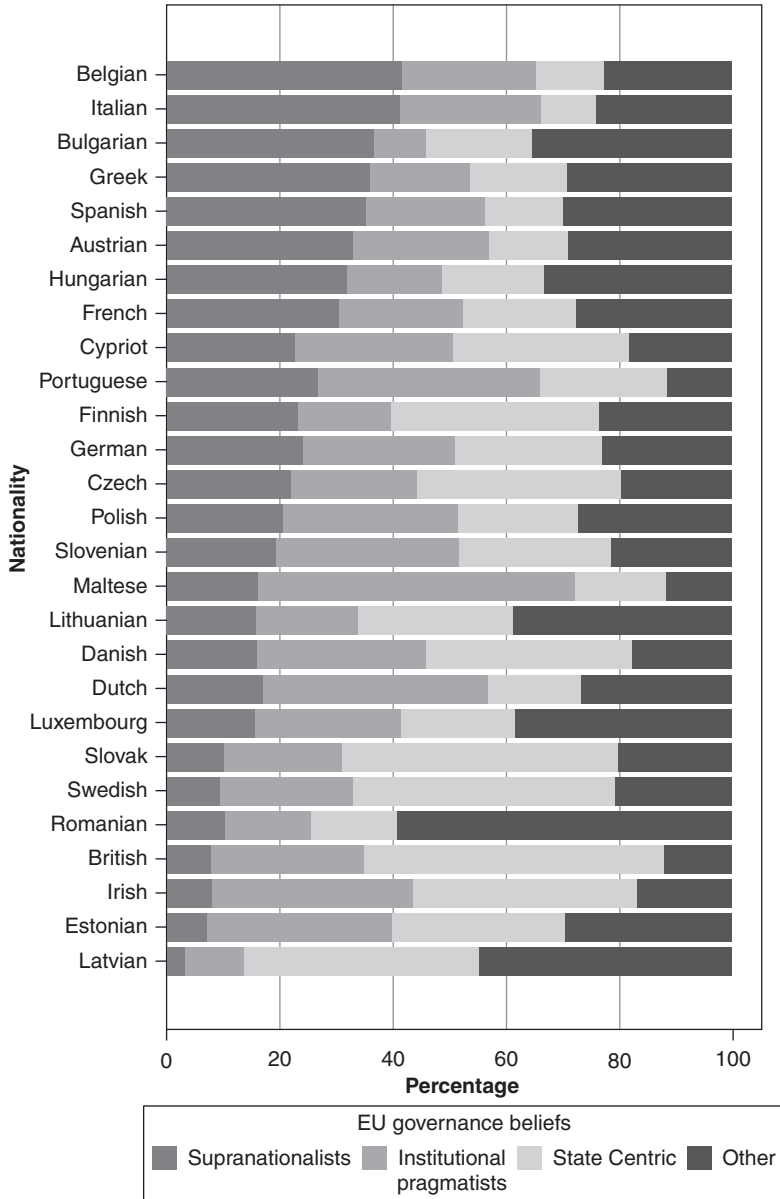


Fig. 4.2. EU governance types and nationality

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European public opinion research that support for supranationalism tends to be strongest in Catholic societies (Nelsen et al. 2001; Madeley 2008; Boomgaarden and Freire 2009). Stein Rokkan emphasized how religious strife split Europe into territories that rejected Rome and those that embraced it. Protestant state churches became central instruments for nation builders in Northern and Central Europe, whereas the Catholic Church remained supranational (Rokkan and Urwin 1983).

- *Country size.* State-centrists come disproportionately from large countries; supranationalists from smaller countries. This is consistent with the expectation that the smaller the country, the greater the benefits of large-scale European government.
- *Governance efficacy.* State-centrists and institutional pragmatists come disproportionately from countries with effective governance; supranationalists from less effective governance countries. Substituting a federal European government for national government is attractive if the latter cannot produce the public goods.<sup>3</sup>

Attitudes differ also systematically across Directorates-General (DGs), but the differences are not as pronounced as for nationality. One finding and one non-finding deserve highlighting:

- *Technical expertise DGs.* Institutional pragmatists work disproportionately in DGs with technical content; state-centrists and supranationalists in DGs with political content. Where shared technical know-how is a basis for effective policy-making, institutional power battles are irrelevant. Institutional pragmatists are over-represented in DGs such as Fisheries, Environment, Development, or Information Society. Our data do not enable us to tease out whether this is because institutional pragmatists self-select (or are recruited) for technical DGs, or because the policy environment socializes and incentivizes people who work there.
- *DGs with strong legal competence.* DGs that exercise the Commission's monopoly on initiating legislation are *not* home to a disproportionately large number of supranationalists, and DGs with extensive routinized member state involvement do *not* harbour more state-centrists. We tested these propositions in terms of socialization as well as utility. To the extent

<sup>3</sup> Government effectiveness is a measure developed by the Worldwide Governance Indicators project of the World Bank. These aggregate indicators are based on hundreds of variables measuring various dimensions of governance, taken from 35 data sources provided by 33 different organizations. The data reflect the views on governance of public sector, private sector and NGO experts, public opinion and firm surveys. Source: <<http://info.worldbank.org/governance/wgi/index.asp>>. Differences between state-centrists and institutional pragmatists on the one hand and supranationalists on the other are significant at the 0.001 level.



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that DG experience shapes attitudes, one would have expected otherwise. However, the data do not bear this out.

Territorial loyalty and DG experience explain the bulk of the variance in EU governance views, but three additional factors merit mention.

- *National administration.* Commission officials who worked in a national administration or as a diplomat prior to joining the Commission are significantly more likely to be state-centrist and less likely to be supranationalist. This is consistent with earlier work (Hooghe 2001), and it conforms to the expectation that former national bureaucrats export state-centred views acquired at home to their new job.
- *Motivation for joining the Commission.* Respondents who joined because of a commitment to Europe are more likely to be supranationalists or institutional pragmatists, and less likely to be state-centrists. Commitment to Europe is the most common motivation—72 per cent mention it, but only 57 per cent of state-centrists do so against 80 per cent of supranationalists and 69 per cent of institutional pragmatists. Twenty-three per cent mention commitment to a policy supranationalists are under-represented, while and institutional pragmatists over-represented among them. Interestingly, institutional pragmatists are also over-represented among those who were asked to apply, and among those who say they joined because they like to work in an international environment, or because of personal or family reasons—reasons noticeable for being non-committal on the institutional power balance between Commission and member states.<sup>4</sup>
- *Gender.* As indicated above, women are significantly more likely to be institutional pragmatists or state-centrists, and less likely to be supranationalists. The EU governance gender gap is most pronounced in the EU-15.

These patterns are robust in multivariate analysis.<sup>5</sup> National background is powerful in distinguishing state-centrists from supranationalists, while DG location helps explain who are the institutional pragmatists. State-centrists are most likely to come from countries with limited multilevel governance, countries with larger populations, and from Protestant countries. Supranationalists come from countries with multilevel governance, smaller countries, countries with less governance effectiveness, and non-Protestant countries. State-centrists and supranationalists are thus mirror images. Institutional pragmatists stand apart from both groups—not so much in terms of where they come from, but on account of their professional profile: they tend to work in policy

<sup>4</sup> These last three differences are not statistically significant because of the small number of officials involved.

<sup>5</sup> See Hooghe (2012) for a detailed analysis.

DGs with high technical content where shared technical knowledge reduces institutional power struggles.<sup>6</sup> Their motivational core is consistent. They came to Brussels for primarily apolitical reasons: to work on a policy problem they care about, to be in an international environment, or because family or circumstance brought them there.

### Beliefs about the future

In separate interviews with senior managers and heads of unit, we presented respondents with three conceptions of the European Commission's role in EU governance:

- the Commission as policy initiator and guardian of the treaties;
- the Commission as an administration serving the Council and the Parliament;
- the Commission as the government of Europe.

These conceptions are not directly comparable to the governance types outlined above, but there are affinities. The first option describes the Community method, the second option is consistent with state-centrism or intergovernmentalism, and the third comes closest to Hallstein's federal conception.

We asked which of these three conceptions of the Commission do respondents prefer, and which of these will the Commission be closest to ten years from now. Figure 4.3 reveals a sharp distinction between desires and expectations. Eighty-one per cent prefer the Community method, but only 43 per cent believe it will survive beyond ten years. Eight per cent support the federal conception, but only 2.5 per cent see it as the Commission's future. The sharpest contrast is on the Commission as administration: just 1 per cent support this, but 21 per cent expect it to be the Commission's future.<sup>7</sup> There is a grim realization among senior officials that the role of the Commission is changing in an undesirable direction and one over which they have little control.

<sup>6</sup> Dichotomous variable taking on the value of 1 if a respondent works in a policy DG that demands above average technical expertise, i.e. Agriculture, Development, Environment, EuropeAid, Fisheries, Information Society and Media, Internal Market, Joint Research Centre, Taxation and Customs Union. Differences between institutional pragmatists and state-centrists are significant at the 0.05 level and at the 0.10 level with supranationalists.

<sup>7</sup> A large number of interviewees did not respond to the second question. When these missing values are excluded the numbers change to 56 per cent (Community method), 27.5 per cent (administration), and 3.3 per cent (government).

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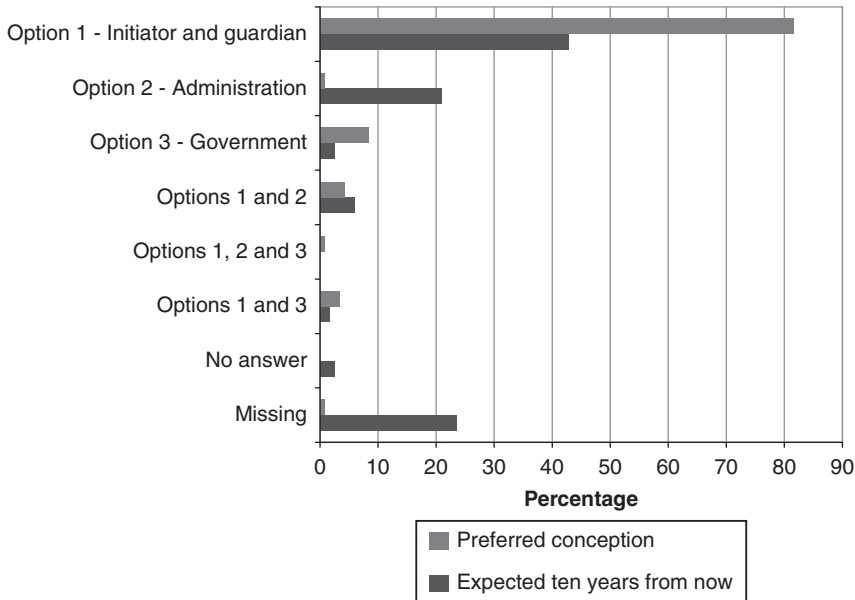


Fig. 4.3. Preferences and expectations about the Commission’s role

Source: Face-to-face interviews with heads of unit and senior managers (n = 119).

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Scholars, politicians, and media commentators attribute ideological bias to Commission bureaucrats, although there is little agreement on the direction of this bias. A strand of the political economy literature understands the European Union as an agent of big capital (van Apeldoorn et al. 2009). This is consistent with the purported bias of the Rome Treaty in favour of market integration. Ironically, many politicians and political pundits blame the European Commission for exactly the reverse. In 1988, British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher famously accused the Delors Commission of plotting socialism through the back door. Vaclav Klaus, the Czech president, contemptuously describes the Commission as socialist. We therefore venture into highly charged political terrain when we poll Commission officials on their economic and social-cultural philosophy:

- ‘People often think of themselves in terms of their personal philosophical stance on economic issues. Some favour an active role for government on economic policy questions. Others look primarily to markets. Where would you place yourself in terms of economic philosophy?’ ranging from 0 (a greater role for government) over 5 (centrist) to 10 (greater role for markets).

**Table 4.4.** Ideology by seniority, gender, and enlargement

	Commission (all)	Top officials	Rank and file	Men	Women	EU-15	EU-12	Political Parties EU-15	Political Parties EU-12
<i>Economic left/right dimension</i>									
<i>Mean</i>	5.47	5.45	5.47	5.48	5.44	5.19**	6.27**	5.10	4.99
<i>Median</i>	5.00	6.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	7.00	5.00	4.70
<i>St.Dev.</i>	1.98	2.13	1.97	2.02	1.92	1.93	1.91	2.07	2.10
<i>N</i>	1,676	122	1,555	1,060	616	1,248	428	114	73
<i>Social-cultural dimension</i>									
<i>Mean</i>	3.68	3.51	3.69	3.72	3.61	3.53**	4.13**	5.66	5.08
<i>Median</i>	3.00	3.00	3.00	3.00	3.00	3.00	3.00	5.75	5.00
<i>St.Dev.</i>	2.49	2.45	2.50	2.45	2.57	2.37	2.77	2.00	2.15
<i>N</i>	1,676	122	1,555	1,060	610	1,248	428	114	73

*Note:* \*\* indicates that differences of means are significant between subgroups at  $p < .01$ . EU-12 political parties are to the economic left of EU-12 Commission officials and the difference is statistically significant; officials of either part of Europe are significantly more socially liberal than are political parties.

Top officials = senior managers.

Rank and file includes administrators other than senior managers.

- ‘People often think of themselves in terms of their personal philosophical stance on social and cultural issues. Many people who consider themselves to be liberal tend to favour expanded personal freedoms on (for example) abortion, same-sex marriage, and so on. People on the conservative side tend to favour more traditional notions of family, morality, and order. Where would you place yourself in terms of social-cultural philosophy?’ ranging from 0 (more liberal) to 10 (more conservative).

Table 4.4 presents these dimensions on 0 (left) to 10 (right) scales. On the economic spectrum, European Commission officials are centrist, leaning slightly to the right (mean = 5.47). On the social liberal/conservative dimension, Commission officials are left of centre (mean = 3.68). Variation on social values is greater than on economic values.

One of the most striking findings in the survey is evident from the last four columns in Table 4.4. EU-12 officials are considerably more right wing in economic terms and less social-liberal than their EU-15 colleagues.<sup>8</sup> Both differences are highly significant. Moreover, EU-12 officials are quite a bit more pro-market than political parties in their home countries. They are also more socially liberal. EU-12 officials are *not* representative of their societies. They are mobile,

<sup>8</sup> It is well documented that the ideological profile of parties in the older member states of Western Europe differs considerably from most recent member states (Marks et al. 2006). That is why we compare officials from the EU-15 with EU-15 political parties and officials from the EU-12 with EU-12 political parties. The political party positioning for a country is the average of political parties weighted for party vote in the national election in or prior to 2006. *Source:* 2006 Chapel Hill Expert survey on political parties (Hooghe et al. 2010).

Western-educated, have tenuous ties to communist networks, tend to be outspoken critics of the former regimes, and are usually successfully integrated in the 'Western' world. As a result, they are motivated to embrace market values and cosmopolitanism, often with the zeal of recent converts. One might have expected differently. A compelling line of argument, developed by Kitschelt et al. (1999) and Vachudova (2005), is that the revolutions left a communist legacy—radical economic egalitarianism and anti-democratic authoritarianism—that continues to shape values and political preferences. EU-12 officials might have been to the economic left and more socially conservative than their EU-15 counterparts. We find signs of somewhat greater conservatism, but quite a bit more market liberalism than among their Western colleagues.

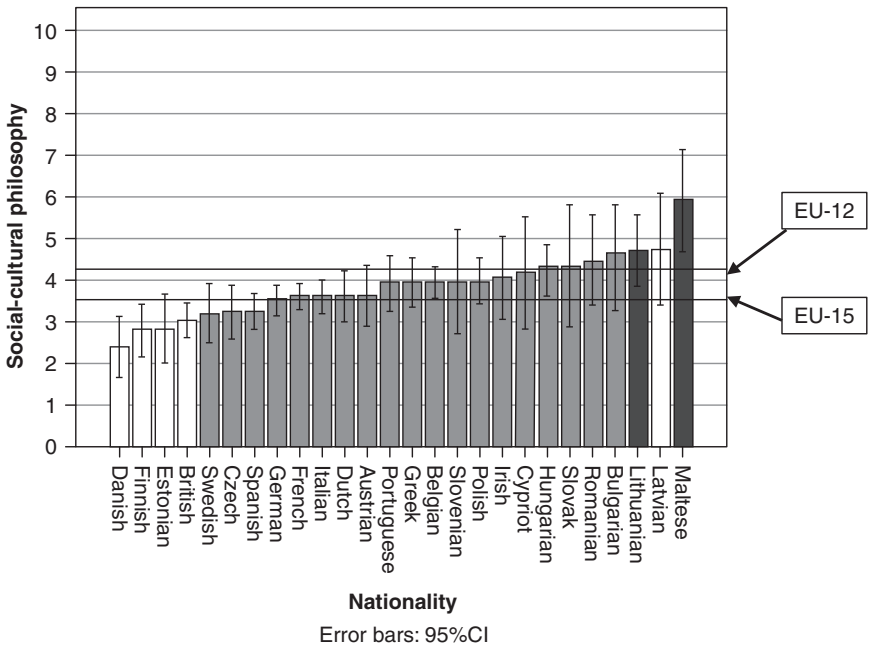
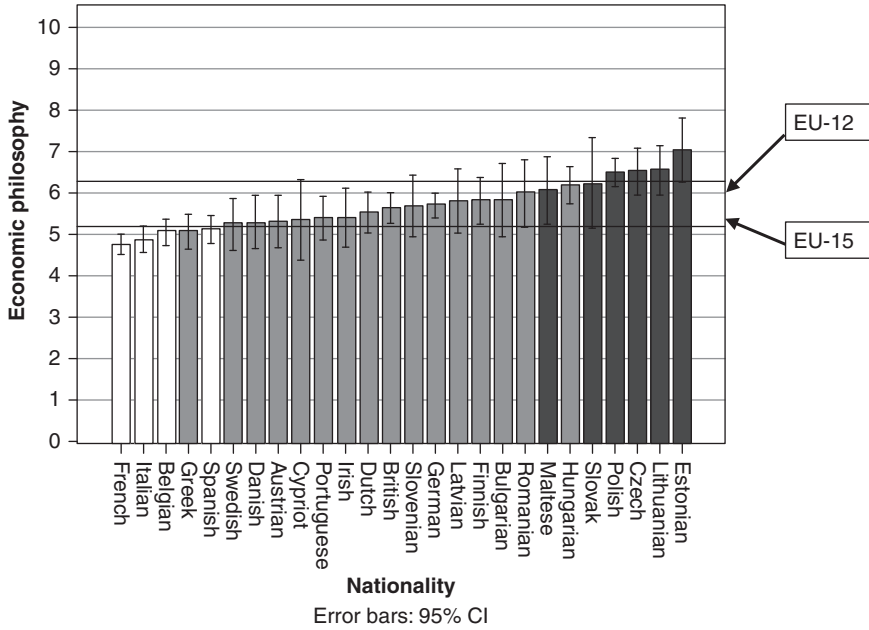
### Understanding ideological variation in the Commission

Ideology is prior to Commission employment. Whether a person is a market liberal rather than a social democrat or liberal rather than conservative is determined earlier in life.<sup>9</sup> Explaining the origins of Commission officials' ideological beliefs is therefore beyond the scope of this study, but perhaps the data can shed light on ideological variation in the Commission. Let us examine three sources of variation: territory, DG location, and EU governance views.

*National political economy and economic ideology.* Figure 4.4 illustrates average positioning on the economic spectrum by nationality. There is a left-oriented southern cluster and an economically liberal Central and Eastern European cluster. However, there is no Scandinavian cluster and, interestingly, officials from 'market-liberal' Britain stand shoulder to shoulder with 'Rhine-capitalist' Germans and Dutch. Hence our findings only partly confirm the expectation that nationalities upload their country's political-economic model: that the British make the case for market liberalism, Germans and French for Rhine capitalism, Scandinavians for social democracy, and Southerners for a Mediterranean model oriented around the family (Brinegar and Jolly 2005; Callaghan 2010). As noted above, the difference between EU-12 officials and EU-15 officials trumps that between any smaller country groupings, but that difference cannot be attributed to divergent national socialization. The reasons why EU-12 officials are more market-liberal than their EU-15 colleagues appear to be personal rather than national, as we elaborate in chapter 9.

*Policy families and economic ideology.* Officials in market-correcting DGs, such as Regional Policy, Social Policy, or Environment, are less pro-market than those in market-enhancing DGs, such as Trade or Competition (Table 4.5).

<sup>9</sup> Though it is possible that ideological priors could be affected by experiences in the Commission. About potential genetic bases for ideological proclivities, see Alford et al. (2005).



**Fig. 4.4. Ideology by nationality**

*Note:* n = 1,676, with n ≥ 18 or higher for each nationality (Luxembourg excluded). The bars represent the mean value by nationality, and the whiskers the 95 per cent confidence intervals. Darker- and lighter-coloured bars at either end highlight which nationalities have ideologies that differ significantly from the overall average (one-tailed t-tests at p < 0.05).

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**Table 4.5.** DG location and ideology

	Economic left/right		Social liberal/conservative	
		Mean = 5.47		Mean = 3.68
All DGs				
Market-enhancing DGs	Strongly more to the right	6.02 (.000)	—	3.76 (.411)
Market-correcting DGs	Strongly more to the left	5.02 (.000)	—	3.55 (.215)
Spending DGs	Strongly more to the left	5.08 (.000)	—	3.62 (.789)
Regulatory DGs	Strongly more to the right	5.83 (.000)	Strongly more conservative	3.96 (.005)
Legislative DGs	—	5.35 (.404)	—	3.55 (.586)
Internal DGs	—	5.35 (.221)	More liberal	3.40 (.049)
External DGs	—	5.44 (.786)	More liberal	3.28 (.041)

*Note:* Figures in brackets report p-values of t-tests on whether the mean for officials in a DG group is significantly different from the mean for officials outside the DG group.

This corresponds with scholarly accounts that highlight how key Commission services are dominated by particular ideological factions. Wilks (1996, 2005) has argued that neoliberalism among DG Competition officials provided a major impetus for enhanced EU authority in competition policy. Ross (1995), Hooghe (1996), and Falkner (1998) have documented how particular Commission services have been motivated by social-democratic ideas regarding EU cohesion and social policy. Students of EU gender and anti-discrimination policy describe how the Commission services have pushed a progressive agenda (Chicowski 2007; Caporaso and Tarrow 2009).

*DG core activity and ideology.* A more general pattern of ideological sorting emerges when one coalesces DGs according to their core activity.<sup>10</sup> Economically left officials are over-represented in spending DGs, while economically right-wing officials are found disproportionately in regulatory DGs. Regulatory DGs are also distinctly more conservative, while officials in external relations—and surprisingly, also internal DGs such as the Secretariat-General, Administration or the Legal Services—are more socially liberal.

*EU governance views.* State-centrists are to the economic right of supranationalists and institutional pragmatists.<sup>11</sup> This is consistent with the notion that the right favours intergovernmentalism to create regime competition, while the left favours supranationalism to increase the EU’s capacity to regulate

<sup>10</sup> This operationalization simplifies the 7-category variable ‘DG core activity’ described in chapter 1 into five categories. A DG is allocated to one of five categories (regulatory, legislative, spending, internal, external) if it is primarily or secondarily involved in this activity. DG activity is assessed on the basis of the Commission’s Annual Management Reports, in which each DG explains its functions and activities and sets out its budget.

<sup>11</sup> Difference of means tests for economic philosophy between state-centrists on the one hand and institutional pragmatists and supranationalists on the other hand are significant at the 0.001 level; on socio-cultural philosophy means are different at the 0.05 level. Institutional pragmatists and supranationalists are not significantly different in their ideology.

markets (Hooghe and Marks 1999). One might also expect officials with socially liberal views to be more supportive of European authority and conservative individuals to be less supportive (Inglehart 1970; Marks et al. 2006; Risse 2010). But tests show that the difference is not statistically significant (see footnote 11).

Policy-making concerns the allocation of values. The values that the Commission allocates vary from policy to policy, and—strikingly—the values that the employees in those policy fields hold vary in tandem. Market-correcting DGs attract officials sympathetic to an active, equilibrating role for government on economic questions, and market-enhancing DGs appeal to market liberals. Services that disburse money appeal more to social-democrats, and regulatory services are more economically conservative. On economic ideology, DG location is a surer predictor than nationality. There is only one exception: the ideological difference between EU-12 and EU-15 officials.

Interpersonal variation on the socio-cultural dimension—though greater—is less easily understood. This study confirms that officials are considerably more socially liberal than citizens, but that is to be expected given their advanced education, public sector profession, person-oriented work with a high degree of control over pace and content, international lifestyle, and high income (Kitschelt 1994; Oesch 2006). Social-cultural values cluster only in a very minor way by DG group: external DGs draw more social liberals, and regulatory DGs attract more conservatives. Nor do they differ significantly between top and rank, between individuals with a lot of or a little multinational experience, or by EU governance type. Variation in socio-cultural values appears to be explained by the same set of factors at work in the general population: social conservatives are over-represented among EU-12 officials, older officials, officials from non-Protestant countries, and among right-of-centre officials. There are very few indications that the European Commission or the EU political context influence ideological positioning on socio-cultural values.

### The meaning of ‘political’

Commission officials did not feel constrained in conveying their ideological beliefs. Thirty-four officials preferred not to answer the questions on their ideological leanings. This was not more than the number that withheld their year of birth ( $n = 34$ ) or gender ( $n = 17$ ). It is possible that we helped respondents along by describing the ideological dimensions as ‘philosophical views or stances’. A more plausible explanation is that Commission officials are quite capable of distinguishing between philosophical core values and party politics. The former are accepted and valued as input in the job; the latter’s influence is much rarer and much more contested.

We received a taste of the former in face-to-face interviews with senior managers. We asked forty Directors and Directors-General how much they



enjoy the political side of their work. Twenty-eight (70 per cent) say they like it very much, six 'like it but have some reservations', and one person accepts it as 'part of the job', against just two people who do 'not like it that much' and three people for whom 'there is no political side'. Moreover, despite being reluctant to share the monopoly of legislative initiative with the European Parliament (68 per cent disagree, 24 per cent agree),<sup>12</sup> middle and senior managers are generally respectful of the role played by Council and European Parliament. Of 116 individuals in face-to-face interviews, 86 per cent disagree with the statement that the 'European Parliament and/or the Council of Ministers too often interfere with the work of the European Commission' while 11 per cent agree. As Bauer and Ege (2011: 25) observe, 'Commission officials perfectly fall into the conceptual category of "image II" bureaucrats, i.e. demonstrating a clear ability to distinguish between a power-based and a policy-based understanding of political work' (see also Aberbach et al. 1981).

Engagement in party politics is a different matter. While we did not ask officials which party they voted for in the last elections or whether they are members of a party, we asked them whether party affiliation was an important basis of informal networking in the Commission. Party affiliation was flagged in fourth place among six options (see chapter 3). Eighteen per cent ticked it as first or second most important base; it was preceded by personal connections in the workplace (83 per cent), same nationality (49 per cent), and same language group (20 per cent), but beat shared educational background (13 per cent) and shared regional identity such as Nordic or Mediterranean (10 per cent).<sup>13</sup>

The minor role of partisanship was corroborated in face-to-face interviews with 116 senior and middle managers (see also chapters 2 and 10). When asked directly about party membership, 85 per cent said they were never a member of a party and only 9 per cent claimed to be active or passive members.<sup>14</sup> This appears to be much lower than in many national administrations (Bauer and Ege 2011).<sup>15</sup> Table 4.6 reports on two questions about the relative role of party affiliation in Commission work. Party politics is

<sup>12</sup> Middle management and senior officials from the online survey. Among junior officials, there is a somewhat greater willingness to share initiative power with the European Parliament (52 per cent disagree, and 37 per cent agree).

<sup>13</sup> Middle and senior managers in the online survey (n = 228).

<sup>14</sup> The question reads: 'If you don't mind us asking, do you belong to a political party?' with the following response options: No, never; In the past, not anymore; Yes, but I am not active; Yes, and I am still active. Our team argued long about the wisdom of including a question that was perceived to be very sensitive, but of randomly selected interviewees only two people (1.7 per cent) chose not to respond. Perhaps the perceived sensitivity of partisanship for bureaucrats is more in the minds of political scientists than of the bureaucrats.

<sup>15</sup> Hard comparative evidence is sketchy. Bauer and Ege refer to a 2005 study of German top officials, where 48.5 per cent of interviewed German top officials reported that they were a member of a political party.

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Table 4.6. The role of partisanship

	How important is the party affiliation or party sympathy of officials in the Commission?	How important is party affiliation for cabinet members?
Party affiliation is very important	0.9	4.3
It is important	3.4	15.5
Sometimes it plays a role, sometimes not	20.7	38.8
It is not very important	46.6	20.7
It does not play any role at all	25.0	8.6
Don't know/prefer not to say	3.5	20.2

*Note:* Percentages from face-to-face interviews. Respondents are middle and senior managers (n = 119; 92 per cent are from EU-15).

presumed to be more important for *cabinet* members than for other officials, but the overall perception is that party affiliation does not matter a great deal.

Since responses to the two questions are quite highly associated,<sup>16</sup> they can be combined in a factor 'perception of party politicization'. Four factors are significant predictors of perceived party politicization (Appendix 6). First, heads of unit are more likely than directors or directors-general to believe party affiliation is important. Second, people on the economic right are more likely to report politicization. This is consistent with the view that the pro-market bias in the treaties requires centre-left partisan mobilization to push through a market-correcting agenda; market liberals enjoy the structural advantage of having their preferences built into the rules (Scharpf 2010). Third, officials from countries with a tradition of politicized administrations are more likely to find politicization in the Commission.<sup>17</sup> Our evidence does not enable us to settle whether they simply project experience from their home country on the Commission, or whether officials from countries with

<sup>16</sup> The Pearson correlation is 0.34 (n = 100).

<sup>17</sup> Politicization scores developed by Balint et al. (2008) for fifteen EU countries. The additive index uses existing formal organizational rules, adding up seven dichotomous items. Each item is coded as '1' (i.e. politicized) if the condition in the brackets is satisfied. 1. Senior staff is usually recruited from the administration itself (no); 2. Senior staff is recruited through formal procedures prior to the appointment (no); 3. Senior staff can be dismissed by the minister without cause (yes); 4. Senior staff can be replaced when the government changes (yes); 5. The incumbent minister can appoint senior staff (yes); 6. A formalized *cabinet* system exists (yes); 7. The appointment of *cabinet* staff is formalized (no). Greece is most politicized and Britain least (Bauer and Ege 2011.)

politicized civil services are more exposed to politicization in the Commission. The first would suggest that perceptions rule experience, and the second that experience in the Commission could be nationally specific.

Fourth, the longer ago officials joined the Commission the more likely they perceive party politicization. Disaggregating our sample into three groups—officials recruited during or before the Delors presidency (before 1995); officials recruited in the period between Delors and Barroso (1995–2004); and officials who entered during the Barroso presidency (2005 onwards)—sheds sharp light on this: the first group is three times more likely to perceive politicization than the third group, with the second group in the middle. This may reflect a tension between rapidly declining politicization in the Commission and people’s capacity to update their views. Delors recruits entered a highly politicized institution, but this context was altered by subsequent reforms. The current Commission bureaucracy is not free of party (and national) politics, but its daily operation and personnel policy are much less affected by it than before (Bauer and Ege 2011). However, updating political beliefs with new experiences happens slowly.

## COMMISSION OFFICIALS AND POLICY SCOPE

The theory of bureaucratic politics predicts that bureaucrats prefer to expand policy competences or budgets to enhance their status and power, and support expansion of their particular policy field more than others (Calvert et al. 1989; Niskanen 1994; Pollack 2003; Franchino 2007). We examine this argument in two steps: first by asking whether there is a general tendency to shift policy authority to the European Union; and second by investigating whether there is a specific tendency for officials to fight for their policy corner. The evidence supporting these two bureaucratic arguments is weak. Commission officials’ attitudes on policy scope in general, and on the kind of policies that should be centralized, are guided by ideology and EU governance views rather than by career interests.

Commission officials were asked to evaluate both the actual and desirable distribution of authority between member states and the EU on eleven policies:

We are interested in your views on the distribution of authority between member states and the EU on a range of policies.

- Please start by giving us your assessment of the *actual* distribution in 2008. Where is each policy decided?
- Where *should* this policy be decided?

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Respondents were prompted to select a position on an eleven-point scale from 0 (exclusively national/subnational) to 10 (exclusively EU). By subtracting actual from desirable policy we get a read on Commission officials' attitudes towards the *status quo*. Positive values indicate a desire for decentralization, and negative values for centralization. Foreign and security policy and asylum and immigration policies lead the list. The smallest shifts are desired for competition, trade, and regional policy. Interestingly, officials want to roll back centralization in agriculture.

### Centralization across the board?

European Commission officials want more EU authority by an average of 1.58 on an eleven-point scale, which is a shift of 14 per cent. That is consistent with the most basic prediction of bureaucratic politics.

However, there is no universal desire for more Europe. Desired change appears highest for policies that are least centralized, though this is not a consistent trend. Social policy—perceived to be the most decentralized—is not on the Commission officials' top centralization list, and the three most centralized policies (competition, trade, agriculture) are assessed very differently. At the individual level, there is even greater variation. Individual correlations between actual and desired scope range between  $-0.36$  and  $-0.51$  (depending on the subcategory). These are negative, suggesting that officials generally want more centralization for the most decentralized policies, but they are also moderate, suggesting that officials have divergent views and use more discriminating criteria than an across-board 'power-maximization' frame.

Men are not more inclined to shift authority to the EU than women, and junior not more than senior officials. However, junior officials are keener on centralizing environment, foreign and security, or social policy, and men are more inclined to roll back EU agricultural policy and are more enthusiastic about centralizing foreign and security policy. In bivariate analysis, EU-12 officials appear no more nor less inclined to shift EU authority than their EU-15 colleagues. However, they are less likely to want to centralize asylum and immigration policy or foreign and security policy, the top two policies in demand for centralization. This is balanced by the fact that they are more in favour of EU regional policy than their EU-15 colleagues. What emerges is a qualified picture that suggests that the utilitarian argument—that bureaucrats support bureau-maximizing strategies—needs more scrutiny.

In a multivariate analysis of variation in overall desired policy scope, beliefs and ideology are more powerful than nationality and DG location (see Appendix 7).

**Table 4.7. Desired shifts in EU authority in eleven policy fields**

	Actual policy scope	Desired policy scope	Desired shift in centralization	Desired ranking of policies	Desired policy scope by subgroup					
					Senior officials	Other	Men	Women	EU-15	EU-12
EU Authority Mean	5.42	7.00			6.8	7.0	7.01	7.00	7.0	6.9
St.Dev.	(1.22)	(1.30)			(1.37)	(1.30)	(1.27)	(1.38)	(1.30)	(1.34)
1. Competition	8.0	8.3	+ 0.3	2						
2. Trade	8.0	8.4	+ 0.4	1						
3. Agriculture	7.7	6.9	-0.8	7			6.8*	7.1*		
4. Environment	6.2	7.7	+ 1.5	3	7.4*	7.8*				
5. Regional development	5.2	5.7	+ 0.5	10					5.6**	6.0**
6. Development	5.1	6.7	+ 1.6	8						
7. Energy	4.9	7.6	+ 2.7	4						
8. Asylum and immigration	4.1	7.1	+ 3.0	5					7.1*	6.8*
9. Police and judicial cooperation	4.0	6.5	+ 2.5	9						
10. Foreign and security	3.4	7.0	+ 3.6	6	6.4**	7.1**	7.1*	6.8*	7.1**	6.7**
11. Social policy	3.2	5.0	+ 1.8	11	4.6*	5.1*				

Note: Means are reported where differences are significant whereby \*significant at 0.05 level; \*\* significant at 0.01 level.

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- *EU governance views.* By far the most powerful predictor of how much centralization officials want is whether they are state-centrist or supranationalist. All other things being equal, a state-centrist's optimal level of centralization is 0.69 points lower than that of an institutional pragmatist and 1.24 points lower than a supranationalist's ideal point on a scale of 11.
- *Ideology.* Socially liberal officials are more in favour of centralization than conservatives, and left-wing officials also tend to be more in favour than those on the economic right. These effects are robust even when we control for EU governance type. In other words, the fact that state-centrists tend to be market-liberal and supranationalists tend to be on the left does not swallow the *independent* effect of economic philosophy on desired policy centralization.<sup>18</sup>
- *Religion and state building.* Officials from Protestant countries are less likely to support centralization. This echoes a deeply engrained suspicion against supranational authority, anchored in the intertwined history of Protestantism and state building in Northern and Central Europe (Rokkan and Urwin 1983).
- *Country size.* Officials from smaller countries are more in favour of centralizing authority, which is consistent with a public good argument. More targeted national utility factors are weak: officials are not more in favour of centralization if they are from trading nations, from member states that are net beneficiaries of the EU budget or its structural funds, or from countries with lower governance efficacy.
- *East vs West.* EU-12 officials are less likely to support centralization—an effect that cannot be reduced to ideology, EU governance, gender, or country characteristics.
- *Core activity.* Officials from external DGs (Trade, RELEX, Development, Enlargement) are more likely to support centralization than the average official. They are the only functional group standing out.

In explaining variation on the general desire for EU policy scope, DG location is weak. However, disaggregating policy scope into meaningful policy families reveals a more differentiated picture. Table 4.8 compares average desired

<sup>18</sup> The differences between men and women and between senior and junior officials wash out once we take into account EU governance beliefs and ideology. Indeed, as observed earlier, men are more likely to be supranationalist and women state-centrist; senior officials are more market-liberal than junior officials. However, the EU12/EU15 difference strengthens under controls.

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Table 4.8. Desired policy scope disaggregated by policy family

	All policies	Market-enhancing policies	Market-correcting policies	Security policies
Commission [ST.Dev]	7.00 [1.30]	8.39 [1.48]	6.30 [1.53]	6.83 [1.94]
Market-enhancing DGs	↔ 6.9	↑ 8.5	↓↓ 6.0	↔ 6.8
Market-correcting DGs	↔ 7.0	↔ 8.3	↔ 6.3	↔ 6.8
Spending DGs	↔ 7.0	↓ 8.3	↔ 6.3	↔ 6.9
Regulatory DGs	↔ 6.9	↔ 8.4	↓↓↓ 6.1	↔ 6.8
Legislative DGs	↔ 7.0	↔ 8.3	↔ 6.3	↓↓ 6.6
Internal DGs	↔ 7.1	↔ 8.4	↔ 6.4	↔ 6.9
External DGs	↑↑↑ 7.4	↑↑↑ 8.9	↑↑ 6.6	↑↑↑ 7.3
State-centrists	↓↓↓ 6.2	↓↓↓ 7.9	↓↓↓ 5.5	↓↓↓ 5.8
Institutional pragmatists	↓↓ 6.9	↔ 8.3	↓ 6.2	↓↓ 6.6
Supranationalists	↑↑↑ 7.4	↑↑↑ 8.7	↑↑↑ 6.7	↑↑↑ 7.4

Note: Averages for each subgroup. ↑↑↑ or ↓↓↓ indicate significance levels of t-tests on whether the mean for officials in a group is significantly different from the average for officials outside that group. ↑↑↑ or ↓↓↓ = <.001; ↑↑ or ↓↓ = <.01; ↑ or ↓ = <.05; and ↔ = no significant difference. All policies = all eleven policies (scope); Market-Enhancing policies = competition, trade; Market-correcting policies = environment, regional development, development, social policy; Security policies = asylum and immigration, police and justice cooperation, foreign and security policy.

scope for market-enhancing policies (competition, trade), market-correcting policies (environment, development, regional development, social policy) and security policies (asylum and immigration, police and justice, foreign and security) across types of DGs.

Commission officials' wish for EU authority is selective and explicable in terms of DG location. Grouping DGs by their policy principles produces intelligible differences: officials in market-enhancing DGs want to bolster EU authority in competition and trade much more than their colleagues in other DGs, and are less keen on EU authority in market-correcting policies. Officials in market-correcting DGs lean in the other direction, though they are less distinctive as a group than their colleagues in market-enhancing DGs. Selective centralization (or decentralization) is also apparent when DGs are grouped by core activity, with regulatory DGs harbouring the most reluctant supporters of EU authority in market-correcting policies and spending DGs the most reluctant supporters of market-enhancing EU policies. As expected, officials in internal and legislative DGs do not have distinctive preferences.

There is one exception to the measured and selective preferences of Commission officials: those from external DGs favour EU centralization across the board and, as we have seen above, this preference cannot be explained away in terms of their EU governance views, ideology, or nationality.

### Bureau-maximization?

The evidence above casts doubt on the assumption that Commission officials have a general desire for greater EU authority. Their preferences are measured and explicable. However, is it not possible that officials promote their policy corner rather than Commission authority in general? Do they? The short answer is: partly. Table 4.9 reports independent means t-tests comparing desired EU authority between the DG ‘owning’ the policy and all others. One-tailed tests are reported here because the expectation is that officials from the DG that owns the policy should be more enthusiastic about EU authority than officials from other DGs.

We test nine policies that are commonly identified with one DG and for which we have statistically meaningful samples: competition, trade, agriculture, social policy, regional policy, environment, justice and police cooperation, asylum policy, and foreign and security policy.<sup>19</sup> Three of the nine policies conform to the expectation (trade, agriculture, foreign and security). No other reaches significance at the 0.05 level.<sup>20</sup> One policy goes in the

**Table 4.9.** Do ‘bureaucratic politics,’ work?

Policy	EUCIQ sample size	Desired EU authority in policy field		
		Owner-DG	Others	Significance (one-tailed)
Trade	47	9.5	8.4	<b>0.000</b>
Competition*	53	8.1	8.3	0.279
Agriculture	93	7.7	6.9	<b>0.000</b>
Social policy	70	5.3	5.0	0.158
Regional development	59	6.0	5.7	0.064
Environment	81	7.8	7.7	0.414
Foreign and security policy	65	7.6	6.9	<b>0.000</b>
Asylum and immigration	50	7.5	7.0	0.057
Police and judicial cooperation	50	6.5	6.5	0.426

*Note:* Desired EU authority on a 0–10 scale with 0 (exclusively national/subnational) to 10 (exclusively EU). Differences of means significant at 0.001 level are bolded.

<sup>19</sup> Testing is constrained by the limited sample size of DGs, by the fact that policies may be fragmented across several DGs (or parts of DGs), or because policies are diverse with respect to the appropriate balance of national/EU authority.

<sup>20</sup> On 1 July 2010, the former DG for Justice, Freedom and Security was partitioned into two DGs, one for home affairs (DG Home), which deals with immigration and asylum, and one for justice and fundamental rights (DG Justice), which deals with citizenship and judicial cooperation. Our survey was conducted before the split and so we use the same DG for asylum and immigration policy and for police and judicial cooperation.



opposite direction: officials in DG Competition lean towards *less* EU authority for their policy field than officials outside their DG. The difference is not significant, but it lends added credence to the conclusion that our evidence provides hardly a ringing endorsement of bureaucratic politics!

## CONCLUSION

This chapter surveys core beliefs of Commission officials: their basic conceptions of EU governance, and their political ideology. It then examines how these shape their views on politics and EU policy-making. We find considerable variation and substantial structure, and we relate these to controversies regarding the institution.

The European Commission has sometimes been portrayed as hungry for a supranational Europe with the Commission in the driver's seat. We do find much evidence for this view. The 'party of the willing' is a minority of 36 per cent. They want the College of Commissioners to be the government of Europe and do not want member states to be the central pillars. They cohabit with 13.3 per cent state-centrists, who want the opposite, and with nearly 30 per cent institutional pragmatists who believe that *neither* the College of Commissioners *nor* the member states should be the kernel of EU government. Some 20 per cent avoid taking a position.

National background is powerful in distinguishing state-centrists from supranationalists, while DG location helps explain who are the institutional pragmatists. State-centrists are most likely to hail from countries with limited multilevel governance, larger populations, and Protestant state churches, and they are more likely to be former national civil servants. Supranationalists come from countries with multilevel governance, smaller countries, countries with less governance effectiveness, and non-Protestant countries. The types are not distinctive in age, seniority, length of service, or transnational experience, but they are different in gender (supranationalism is disproportionately male) and ideology (supranationalists are more left-wing and more socially liberal than state-centrists). State-centrists and supranationalists are in many ways each other's alter egos. Institutional pragmatists stand apart from both groups—not so much in terms of national background, but on account of their professional profile: they work in policy DGs where shared technical knowledge reduces institutional power struggles. Their motivational core is consistent with this. They came to Brussels for primarily apolitical reasons: to work on a policy problem, to be in an international environment, or for family reasons.

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While these three types have their differences on the future balance among Commission, member states and Parliament, their disagreement is bounded. Europe is desirable and a source of motivation for all. They tend to agree that a) the Commission should have power of initiative; b) Commission officials should be watchful of national influence; and c) officials should be loyal to the political positions of the College. However, state-centrists are pro-management and others are much less so; institutional pragmatists do not want to choose between Commission and member states as sources of authority; supranationalists are much more worried about geographical balancing. Supranationalists may be followers of Monnet, Hallstein, or Delors, and institutional pragmatists may appreciate Haas's hybrid form of governance, but state-centrists in the Commission are not disciples of de Gaulle, Thatcher, or Klaus.

The European Commission has been accused of being neoliberal, and it has been charged with plotting socialism. Neither is true. European Commission officials are distinctly centrist on the economic left–right spectrum, albeit leaning slightly to the right. They are a fair echo of European societies, at least in the EU-15. Officials from the EU-12 are more market-liberal than their societies, but that does not make them *neo*-liberal. The Commission is more distinctive on the social liberal/conservative dimension, where officials display the liberal bent to be expected of highly educated, internationally inclined, mobile, and prosperous public sector professionals.

The distribution of ideology is far from random across services. Policy-making is about the allocation of values, and the values that the Commission allocates vary from policy to policy. It is striking that the values of the employees vary in tandem. Market-correcting DGs attract officials sympathetic to an active role for government, and market-enhancing DGs appeal to market liberals. Services that disburse money appeal more to social-democrats, and regulatory services are economically conservative. On economic ideology, DG location is a surer predictor than nationality. There is only one exception: EU-12 officials are more market-liberal than EU-15 officials. On social ideology, the differences are more a matter of personal demographics and less of institutional context. There is again one exception: EU-12 officials are more conservative than EU-15 officials.

The European Commission is a test case for bureaucratic politics theory, which predicts that bureaucrats seek to maximize power. The evidence supporting the thesis is mixed. European Commission officials do want, in the aggregate, more EU authority in the eleven policy areas that we asked them to evaluate. The desired shift is significant but hardly radical: an average of 1.6 on an 11-point scale (from 5.4 to 7). There is significant variation both across officials and across policies. EU governance views and ideology provide strong

cues for Commission officials in steering their *general* preference on whether policy authority should be centralized at EU level or decentralized to national and subnational governments. National interest (small countries want more EU authority) and national socialization (Protestant countries want less) help too, but only secondarily. DG location explains *which* policies Commission officials would like to centralize, and which ones not. The desire to centralize is selective and measured; it seems to be driven by reason and values rather than some instinctive reaction to maximize Commission power. But if DG location explains variation on particular policies, does this conceal a tendency for officials to defend their policy corner—over and above that of their colleagues? The answer is: only partially. On the basis of our data, we conclude that the pertinence of the bureaucratic politics argument has been overrated.

## APPENDIX: MULTIVARIATE ANALYSES

**Table 4.A.** Explaining perceptions of politicization in the Commission

	B	std.error	p-value
Party membership	0.274	0.297	0.358
Left/right ideology	0.110	0.050	0.030
Current position	-0.367	0.204	0.076
Delors recruit	0.567	0.310	0.071
Intermezzo recruit	0.237	0.365	0.517
National politicization	0.099	0.055	0.077
<i>Constant</i>	-1.000	0.589	0.093
$R^2$	0.164		
<i>Adj. R<sup>2</sup></i>	0.107		

*Note:* n = 100; party membership: a value of 1 when the official has been a member of a political party (self-reporting); current position: 1 if a Director or Director-General, and 0 if a Head of Unit; national politicization: see note 17 for details on operationalization.

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**Table 4.B.** Explaining variation in general desire for EU policy scope

	B	std.error	p-value
Current position	-0.209	0.127	0.101
Gender	0.003	0.072	0.972
EU-12	-0.279	0.128	0.030
Supranationalists	1.157	0.109	0.000
Institutional pragmatists	0.674	0.111	0.000
Others (fence-sitters)	0.819	0.118	0.000
Left/right ideology	-0.033	0.018	0.058
Liberal/conservative ideology	-0.031	0.014	0.025
Country size	-0.003	0.000	0.007
Protestantism	-0.435	0.175	0.013
Governance efficacy	-0.153	0.103	0.137
Multilevel governance	0.001	0.005	0.809
Spending DGs	0.039	0.086	0.648
Regulatory DGs	-0.038	0.098	0.701
Legislative DGs	-0.108	0.104	0.296
Internal DGs	0.041	0.129	0.750
External DGs	0.300	0.122	0.014
<i>Constant</i>	6.955	0.237	0.000
<i>R</i> <sup>2</sup>	0.137		
<i>Adj. R</i> <sup>2</sup>	0.126		

*Note:* n = 1678; current position: same operationalization as in table A; gender, EU-12, supranationalist, institutional pragmatist, others, left/right, liberal/conservative, country size, governance efficacy, multilevel governance: see ch 1 for operationalization; Protestantism: see note 2 for detailed operationalization. DGs: see note 10 for details on operationalization.