

Since the inception of the European Community (EC)/European Union (EU), the European Commission has been the engine of European integration, but studies have failed to account for how office holders in the commission conceive authority in the EU. The author explains variation in supranationalist and intergovernmentalist views among top commission officials using 140 interviews and 106 mail questionnaires undertaken between July 1995 and May 1997. Officials' views are greatly influenced by prior state career and previous political socialization, with former state employees and nationals of large, unitary states leaning to intergovernmentalism and those without former state experience and from federal systems to supranationalism. Partial confirmation of a principal-agent logic is found in that officials in powerful commission services favor supranationalism only if prior socialization predisposes them to such views. Thus, the results support socialization theory, but they are inconclusive for principal-agent arguments.

SUPRANATIONAL ACTIVISTS OR INTERGOVERNMENTAL AGENTS? Explaining the Orientations of Senior Commission Officials Toward European Integration

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T*his study examines the views* on European integration of a strategic subset of Europe's political elite, the senior career officials of the European Commission. Since the inception of the European Union (EU), then

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known as the European Community (EC), the European Commission has been the engine of European integration.¹ Yet, we know very little about how the people who hold positions in this institution conceive of authority in the EU. Should political authority be vested in the member states and the Council of Ministers or should supranational institutions such as the European Commission and the European Parliament (EP) be strengthened? To the extent that the question has been posed, scholars have usually assumed that the commission is a unitary actor and that the office holders within this organization defend the institutional interest of the commission as a whole. This simplifying assumption certainly helps to develop parsimonious explanations. However, our understanding of European integration remains poor at best, and possibly mistaken, if we fail to account for the motivations and opinions of key position holders in the European institutions. This article seeks to explain variation in orientations about European integration among commission players. In the language of European integration scholars, what makes some commission officials advocate intergovernmentalist views while others support supranational governance?

Most studies on the commission to date have concentrated on the College of Commissioners (Landfried, 1996; MacMullen, 1997; Page & Wouters, 1994; Schneider, 1997). These 20 high-profile politicians are appointed for 5 years by member-state governments and the EP to give direction to the executive-administrative engine of the EU. This study focuses instead on the 200 career civil servants of A1 and A2 grade who occupy positions as director-generals, directors, and senior advisors. They give leadership to about 4,000 commission administrators, report to the College of Commissioners, and direct negotiations with the other institutional players.

There are good reasons to explore the political orientations of commission officials. These officials, in conjunction with the College of Commissioners, have a constitutional obligation to play a prominent political role in the EU. In contrast to their national counterparts, they have the unique competence to initiate and draft legislation; they have the formal responsibility to be the engine of integration (Article 155, EC); and they have extensive powers of execution, implementation, and in some policy areas, control and adjudication. Of course, the role played by senior civil servants is usually a hybrid of bureaucratic routine and politics (Aberbach, Rockman, & Putnam, 1981; Page, 1992). But for top administrators in the commission, the balance is heavily tilted toward politics. As a recent recruit and former national politician remarked,

1. Until the Maastricht Treaty of 1993, the official name was European Community (EC), but I use the current label European Union (EU) throughout.

Here, everyone is taking part in [politics], so it is difficult to see where politics ends and where administration starts. . . . I thought when I came here that I left the political road and went back in public administration. Then I found that there is as much politics here as in the [national] cabinet. (senior official, 014)²

Nearly all senior officials would risk a battle to get things done; 67% are prepared to bend rules to achieve results and 58% believe that officials should express their ideological convictions even at the risk of conflict with colleagues.³ Senior commission officials interpret, live, and help reshape the political architecture of the EU day by day. What image of Europe do they promote, how do their views differ, and why do they hold such divergent views? My aim is to address these questions using information from extensive interviews with 140 senior commission officials and 106 mail questionnaires that I gathered between July 1995 and May 1997.

In the next section, I describe how a supranationalist and an intergovernmentalist official typically conceive of authority in the EU.⁴ The following sections hypothesize about the sources of variation in commission officials' views, develop indicators, and test the hypotheses against the data.

SUPRANATIONALISTS AND INTERGOVERNMENTALISTS

Virtually all senior commission officials rule out a Europe of sovereign nation-states (Hooghe, 1997). The following response is typical: "The problem is to find an efficient institutional construct—I am not only thinking of economic efficiency but also of political efficacy. We know very well that, politically, we need to go beyond the nation-state" (senior official, 027). They wish to create a common structure for authoritative decision making in Europe. But they disagree on the desirable balance between intergovernmental and supranational principles. So how does the Europe of a supranationalist differ from that of an intergovernmentalist state?

Europe as goal or instrument. For a supranationalist, the dominant issue in EU politics is about the future of European integration.

2. The numbers following each interviewees' title are part of my internal identification system, which ensures anonymity.

3. Data are from the mail questionnaires ($n = 106$).

4. The reader will note that I use masculine pronouns. Using feminine pronouns would create a false impression of gender balance. Of the 140 interviewed officials, only 9 are women, and 6 of them gained A1-A2 level status after 1995.

I am not in the business of right-wing or left-wing policies. . . . Whether we promote European integration . . . *that* is what counts. . . . [Ideology] is the wrong axis. We are most divided on another axis: pro-integration or anti-integration. (senior official, 058)

An intergovernmentalist does not share this zest to build Europe: "For me, it is something realistic, concrete, and inevitable" (senior official, 120).

Democratic or technocratic. For supranationalists, building Europe means making Europe democratic. Technocratic efficiency and persuasion alone will not bring about an integrated Europe, politicization and increased participation will.

You need a technocratic plan and a democratic plan. We have the technocratic plan, which is [centered on] the commission. And we have now democratic progress, with increased powers for the Parliament—not enough, but it is getting better. . . . We have made tremendous progress, but we need real democratic control. (senior official, 058)

The commission should encourage Europeans to become citizens: "I believe *that* is our task—to make of subjects active members of the European Union. . . . My role is to introduce the citizen in Europe" (senior official, 070). This is not so of an intergovernmentalist, for whom the European Commission should be an instrument to help produce better policies and the political objectives should be set elsewhere.

I am an official servant of the European construction. I have tried to make Europe as relevant as I could in the various policy areas I have been responsible for. But I am convinced that this construction must remain very attentive to national sensitivities. . . . We know very well that the national states must retain a very important place in the [European] construction. (senior official, 027)

Activism or mediation. A supranationalist usually loves a good institutional fight, in which he comes down on the side of the commission. "I love everything having to do with defending the prerogatives of the commission vis-à-vis council and parliament" (senior official, 070). Intergovernmentalists find this institutional bickering a waste of time and energy: "I am interested in better policies . . . this is important. The part played by the commission: minor problem. . . . Fighting for the commission's prerogatives is counterproductive and ridiculous" (senior official, 120).

Intergovernmentalists are policy makers, not politicians, with a realist(ic) view of Europe. Europe is there, and it is useful to the extent that it achieves better solutions to common problems. It is essentially made; it has happened.

“We are within the European Union with various partners: the council, the commission, the parliament . . . and what really counts is that we have a successful policy” (senior official, 120). Supranationalists are political animals with a radical view of Europe. For them, Europe is in the making: “We are building *Europe*, we are building a new society, we are building a better continent” (senior official, 058). For both, the bottom line is that the EU should be a political enterprise, not purely a facilitator of economic transactions.

TWO THEORETICAL TRACKS

I conceptualize the political beliefs of senior commission officials on European integration along two theoretical tracks. On one hand, individuals are socialized in particular institutional environments, and I draw insights from a rich literature on socialization and institutional learning to specify which experiences influence commission officials. On the other hand, individuals often seek to shape institutions consciously and purposively, and I use a principal-agent reasoning to explore this political logic.

The socialization logic emphasizes institutional learning as a mechanism that shapes political orientations (Rohrschneider, 1994, 1996). This reasoning builds on the notion that people are social beings who are influenced by the experiences and views that they encounter in different walks of life. Institutions help shape individuals' orientations, and the challenge is to identify which settings and under what circumstances. Many socialization studies have emphasized the importance of childhood or young adult experiences for the formation of belief systems. That may be even more so for elites than for ordinary citizens. Most elite members grow up in highly educated, politically conscious families where they are likely to pick up views around the dinner table (Putnam, 1976). But other studies claim that the views of an elite member are much more influenced by his current roles and affiliations than by prior experiences (Putnam, 1976; Searing, 1969, 1994; Suleiman, 1974). There is also much debate about whether social sources, such as education, social background, work experiences, or political institutions such as regime characteristics, political culture, and individual political activity are likely to be sources of learning. Although there is no general theory of socialization explaining how institutional settings shape elite views about politics and society, the arguments elaborated by socialization theorists provide a useful guide.

A second line of theorizing entails a political logic. Beliefs about political life are not only inculcated through learning and socialization; actors also come to hold views in the context of purposeful political action. Fundamental political orientations are constantly put to the test by political struggle among

a variety of political actors. This happens also in the context of European integration. When commission officials take positions on the supranational-intergovernmental continuum, they make a political statement having to do with the degree of autonomy that they want vis-à-vis national governments. As an ardent supranationalist commission official put it, "I have 15 enemies" (senior commission official, 175).

One would expect commission officials to defend their institution against national governments seeking to control the commission. A useful angle to hypothesize about this political logic is provided by the principal-agent model (Bawn, 1995; McCubbins, Noll, & Weingast, 1987; Ringquist, 1995). In the EU, national governments may be conceived of as the principals who want the commission to be their agent, that is, to perform functions according to the preferences of national governments (Pollack, 1997). However, without political control from the principal, the agent will pursue his own agenda (Bawn, 1995). Such control is never perfect, and current principal-agent literature concentrates on how control instruments can constrain agency discretion (Bawn, 1995; Ringquist, 1995; Wood & Waterman, 1993). Applied to the EU, the starting point is that without political controls, European Commission officials should be supranationalist because supranational governance gives them maximum discretion over policy making. If commission officials deviate from their base position, one may expect this to be the result of control by national governments.

HYPOTHESES

These two lines of theorizing lead to a number of hypotheses. First, I argue that commission officials may be influenced by experiences in three distinct but complementary walks of life: prior experience of living abroad, socialization in the workplace, and learning in the political system of their country of origin. Second, I argue that national governments are in a position to influence whether supranationalist or intergovernmentalist officials occupy top positions in the commission, mainly through their role in determining decision rules and their input in recruitment.

TRANSNATIONAL SOCIALIZATION

The multilinguistic, cosmopolitan, and somewhat insular environment of the commission places high demands on individuals. Most people are extraordinarily adept at mustering resources from a heterogeneous and fluid environment. I hypothesize that commission officials with previous

transnational experience feel more comfortable playing a more independent and political role in a multinational commission than those without prior experience outside of national institutions. International education is a critical element of transnational experience. Students abroad are exposed to different ways of thinking and living in a formative period of their life—young adulthood. What is more, they come to realize that expatriates have limited citizenship rights compared to nationals at home and encounter barriers to participation in the host society. In a world of mutually exclusive national citizenships, transnationals are out of place. So the transnational socialization hypothesis predicts that commission officials who studied abroad are more likely to be supranationalist than those who were educated in their home country.

CAREER SOCIALIZATION

Experiences in the workplace influence belief systems. That is all the more likely for senior commission officials, who are career oriented. Many work 12-hour days. Recent work on elites argues that career analysis is a powerful venue to assess which institutions shape individuals' motivations (Ross Schneider, 1993; Searing, 1994). Which features of their career may lead commission officials to be more or less supranationalist?

Commission career socialization. A first hypothesis is that the longer officials have been in the commission, the more they have internalized the institutional self-interest of the commission. This refines an assumption underlying many studies of the EU that the institutional self-interest of the commission is to pursue a federal Europe and expand European competencies and that commission officials can be expected to live by Myles' law of "you stand where you sit." A socialization argument adds time to the equation: It takes time for institutions to shape orientations, and officials learn over time to stand where they sit (Rohrschneider, 1994; Ross Schneider, 1993; Searing, 1994).

Prior career socialization. Few commission officials join the commission straight from university. On average, they previously worked 11 years in a variety of other settings. I hypothesize that former state administrators are most likely to be in favor of a governance structure with a predominant role for national governments. They have often retained career prospects in their home administration, have been trained to develop a sense of national public service in more (French, British) or less (Italian) structured settings, are socialized into national administrative styles, and are keyed into national

networks. Hence, officials without prior professional ties to state institutions (universities, nongovernmental organizations, international organizations, business, or in European institutions) should be more supranationalist.

POLITICAL SOCIALIZATION

“What an individual believes about the political process is learned from observation of that process” (Verba, 1965). The political system—particularly that of the formative years—helps shape how an individual thinks about politics, and even when he moves to a different political setting, he will only gradually take on new values (Rohrschneider, 1994, 1996). In Europe, democratic politics is still mainly national politics. One must, therefore, examine the national political systems in which commission officials learned to participate as citizens.

I hypothesize that the size of political units is crucial for orientations toward European integration for two reasons. First, smaller units have greater need for supranational governance to control an uncertain external environment. Second, they have less to lose than larger units when they give up national sovereignty because, even without a formal transfer of sovereignty, their policy choices are severely constrained. For political units that are most sensitive to interdependence, a supranational authority should make rules more efficiently and impartially than an intergovernmental authority dependent on the consent of interested governments. Variations of this functional argument dominated the early European integration studies, most prominently in the functionalist theory of David Mitrany and with important qualifications in Karl Deutsch’s transactional approach and neofunctionalist models (Haas, 1958; Schmitter, 1969). The theory has recently been elaborated by Wayne Sandholtz and Alec Stone (1996; Stone & Caporaso, 1997). I hypothesize that officials from small countries and federal systems are more supranationalist than those from less interdependence-sensitive political systems.

Small countries. National boundaries constrain life most patently in small countries. To produce wealth, quality of life, and stability, they need many resources from outside their national boundaries. Sovereignty has limited value for citizens of small countries. As Peter Katzenstein (1985) has shown, the elites of Europe’s smaller democracies have learned that it is better to adjust their societies to the external environment than to shield them from the outside; in contrast, larger states search more readily for national solutions. Elites in small societies want to domesticate external influences, that is, make resources outside their boundaries readily accessible for their population.

European supranational governance promises to domesticate a wide range of resources long term. I hypothesize, therefore, that senior commission officials from small member states are more likely to favor supranationalism.

Federal systems. Small countries need rule making at the supranational level; federal countries are used to rule making at multiple levels. Federalism structures relations among a number of smaller, relatively autonomous and open political systems. It does for subnational political units what EU governance—on a larger scale and in a looser arrangement—does for small and open national states. From a federal perspective, EU governance merely adds another protective layer of structuring, which pushes back the uncertain external environment. Rather than a break with past national politics, European integration extends multilevel governance beyond national boundaries. I hypothesize that officials from federal and semifederal political systems are more likely to favor supranationalism to bring European institutional arrangements in line with national experiences; people from unitary states should feel more comfortable with intergovernmentalist positions.

The central tenet of these hypotheses is that learning is a key mechanism through which political orientations are shaped. However, whether European governance should be supranationalist or intergovernmentalist is also contested among political actors. Commission officials are an interested party in an intense struggle for control over EU authoritative resources. One might expect them to defend the power of the commission unless national governments find ways to control them. I use insights from current principal-agent literature to hypothesize about how national governments may constrain the agent's views.

CONTROL OVER PROCEDURES

Bureaucratic insulation or vulnerability to principal control is a function of rules. Students of American politics claim that Congress uses its power to regulate principal-agency relations strategically. From this perspective, agent preferences are endogenous, a function of procedural choices made by Congress. Others state that Congress is far less strategic or cannot foresee how particular rules affect agents (for a discussion, see Bawn, 1995). The extent to which national governments are able to regulate commission discretion and check unintended consequences is debated in EU studies (Marks, Hooghe, & Blank, 1996; Moravcsik, 1993; Pierson, 1996).

Procedural controls vary considerably across policy areas, and this creates different opportunity structures for commission officials. Officials in areas of strong EU competencies are less dependent on national governments'

consent to get things done than officials in areas of mainly national competencies. In fact, the former are often expected to challenge national interests. So I hypothesize that commission officials will be more supranationalist to the extent that national governments have less control over decision making.

CONTROL OVER RECRUITMENT

It is very difficult to alter the values of bureaucrats. It is much easier to get the right people in place and to keep them there, but this requires the power to hire and fire (Ringquist, 1995). In American politics, the spoils system combined with mandatory approval by the Senate of top federal administrators provides the key principal—the Senate—with significant leverage over appointments in the federal bureaucracy. National governments in the EU do not have such formal control powers. Top officials are selected by the College of Commissioners, which is appointed every 5 years by the European Council and the EP. Nevertheless, indirect control may give national governments leverage over bureaucratic recruitment. The question is which orientations these national principals want to promote.

Parachutage. A simple version of this principal-agent argument is suggested by the state-centric model, which argues that national governments' overriding preference is to maximize the benefits of European cooperation while minimizing sovereignty loss (Hoffmann, 1982; Moravcsik, 1991, 1993). National governments should therefore be keen to recruit intergovernmentalist candidates. That is particularly so for officials parachuted into A1 or A2 positions from outside of the commission administration. Nearly half of the top officials are recruited through parachutage; the other half are career commission officials promoted from in-house middle management. I expect parachuted top commission officials to be more intergovernmentalist than career officials.

Consociational control. State-centric models claim that national governments—by virtue of their institutional position—want to maintain maximum control over EU policy making, which is best guaranteed under intergovernmental decision rules. Yet, a recent elite survey shows that national elites from the 15 member states hold divergent views on the desirable balance between supranational and intergovernmental principles of governance (Eurobarometer, 1996). The commission has multiple principals with divergent preferences. In theory, multiple principals should make it easier for an

agent to shirk principals' preferences (Wood & Waterman, 1993). But what happens if each principal has control over its faction in the agency? For the EU, this argument is made most cogently by Paul Taylor, who characterizes the EU as a consociational regime in which EU policy areas and commission personnel are divided among member states (Taylor, 1991). Taylor finds support for his argument in commission personnel policy, which assures a balance between nationalities for top positions so that national proportions roughly reflect the distribution of votes in the Council of Ministers. If Taylor's argument holds, variation in the orientations of senior commission officials to EU governance should largely reflect national elite preferences.

DATA

ORIENTATIONS TO EU GOVERNANCE

Should political authority be vested predominantly in the member states and the council or primarily in supranational institutions such as the European Commission and/or the EP? The index variable of supranationalism is composed of three items, which refer to complementary aspects of political authority relations in the EU.⁵ Item 1 asks whether ultimate authority should rest with the components (member states) or with the whole (Europe). However, even if one is in favor of greater authority at the European level, the question arises whether such authority should be concentrated in a non-elected technocratic body (commission) or, in analogy with national political systems, shared with directly elected representatives (EP). Items 2 and 3 tap these choices (see Table 1). On a scale of 1 (intergovernmental) to 10 (supranational), the mean is 5.44 and the median is 5, which means that top officials are very slightly bent to the intergovernmentalist pole.⁶

5. Principal components factor analysis identifies a single dimension, with an eigenvalue of 1.48 and 49.4% of variance explained. The factor loadings are -0.74 for member states, 0.71 for the commission, and 0.66 for the parliament. Supranationalism draws equally strongly from the three items, which is why the correlation between the factor and the index is $.99$. These results support my contention that the items tap into complementary but distinct aspects of political authority relations. A straightforward additive index conveys this conceptual message more powerfully than a factor (Cronbach's alpha for this index is 0.49).

6. The neutral value would be 5.5 . The standard deviation is 1.99 . The distribution is somewhat skewed toward intergovernmentalism (skewness = 0.224) and is flatter than a normal distribution (kurtosis = -0.386). Almost 7% are radical intergovernmentalists and 30% moderate intergovernmentalists versus 9% radical and 23% moderate supranationalists; the remaining 31% balance the two principles (calculated by dividing the index into five categories).

Table 1
Orientations Toward European Integration (%)

Item (<i>N</i> = 106)	Yes,		Neutral	No,		Average ^a
	Yes	But		But	No	
1. The member states, not the European Commission or the European Parliament, ought to remain the central pillars of the European Union.	7.5	24.5	4.7	34.9	28.3	2.14
2. It is imperative that the European Commission become the true government of the European Union.	13.2	35.8	3.8	24.5	22.6	2.42
3. The European Commission should support the European Parliament's bid for full legislative powers, even if the price would be to lose its monopoly of initiative.	7.5	28.3	3.8	32.1	28.3	2.17

Note: A high value on Item 1 suggests intergovernmentalism, whereas high values on Items 2 and 3 indicate supranationalism.

a. Values range between 1 (*No*) to 4 (*Yes*); Neutral = 2.5.

Transnational Socialization

I use a dummy variable for transnational education, where commission officials who studied abroad are assigned a value of 1 and others a 0. More than one third (36%) had international education.

Prior Career Socialization

My measure for state career is the sum of (a) years spent in the national state sector and (b) years serving their national government in EU affairs. Values range from 0 to 30 years, with an average between 7 and 8 and a median of 4 years. A high value means that a person spent most of his career in the state sector.⁷ A low value indicates one of two possibilities: either that

7. The category of national state sector consists of positions in the executive branch of the state that are hierarchically subordinate to the national government: civil servants in line ministries, diplomats (excluding EU postings), and government ministers. For public servants in positions of autonomy vis-à-vis the national government (courts, central bank, parliament, public companies, corporatist structures, local and regional government), I allocate 50% to state and 50% to nonstate. The core of the state in EU category consists of postings in Brussels or Strasbourg serving national interests near or in European institutions: permanent representation, accession negotiations, embassies with EU institutions, and council secretariat. Some postings

person worked outside of the state sector before coming to the commission or he joined the commission at the start of his career.

Commission Socialization

I use commission career, which I calculate as the number of years served in the commission until the interview. A top official has spent an average of 18 years in the commission, ranging from a few months to 37 years.

Federalism

Federalism in country of origin is a composite index of three variables, which take into account formal constitutional provisions as well as informal practices. Values range from 0 (*no federal experience*) to 8 (*full-fledged federalism*). I calculate scores for each country, which I then allocate to commission officials by nationality. The scoring refers to the situation at the time of the interview (1995-1997).⁸

Country Size

I use population size of the country of origin of each senior commission official. Values are expressed in millions.

Procedural Control

I combine formal and reputational measures of commission autonomy. For formal attributes of autonomy, I use figures compiled by Edward Page (1997, p. 105) on three authoritative outputs from the commission: regulations, directives, and decisions that require council approval; regulations, directives, and decisions that do not require council approval; and initiation of European Court of Justice cases by the commission. The latter two indicate

in the national capitals have a strong European component, mainly in the ministry for foreign affairs or coordination positions near the head of government: I allocate half of the years to the state and half to the state in EU.

8. The index is an update of the Regional Autonomy index developed by Marks, Nielsen, Ray, and Salk (1996). The first component, federalism, refers to the constitutional scope for regional governance in the state, from negligible in a unitary state (value = 0) to extensive in a federal state (value = 4). A second measure takes into account special arrangements for home rule (0-2). Finally, the role of regions in central government is evaluated (0-2). This produces the following, in descending order: 7 (Belgium), 6 (Germany), 5 (Austria, Spain), 2 (Denmark, France, Italy, Portugal), 1 (United Kingdom), and 0 (Finland, Greece, Ireland, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Sweden).

the extent to which the commission has discretion to make rules or make others comply with EU rules.⁹ In addition, I use a reputational question posed to 140 top officials in the commission between 1995 and 1997, in which they name the three or four most powerful directorate-generals (DGs) or services in the commission at the time of the interview.¹⁰ Capturing commission autonomy vis-à-vis its principal, the council, in a single indicator is a tall order, but this composite index should do a better job than most standard indicators. I calculate scores for each DG. Values for procedural discretion range between 1 and 8.

Parachutage

A dummy variable has a value equal to 1 if an official was appointed from outside into a top position (parachutage) and a value of 0 if an official was promoted from inside the commission.

Consociational Control

To measure the preferences of each national principal, I use data from an elite survey conducted by Eurobarometer in 1996. I calculate relative national support for the EU on the basis of three items involving the interinstitutional balance between member states and European institutions and between the council and the EP. I use these specific items rather than the more general items about affective and instrumental EU support, which are often employed in EU opinion analyses. The reason is that the three institutional items take us further in measuring supranationalist versus intergovernmentalist orientations.¹¹ I calculate national elite's orientations by averaging

9. Regulatory commission output is measured in relative (percentage of total output: a value of 1 if below 30%, 2 for 30% to 59%, 3 for 60% or more) and absolute terms (a value of 0 if fewer than 500 pieces and 1 if 500 pieces or more). Autonomy in adjudication is based on the absolute number of court cases initiated by a directorate-general (DG), with a value of 0 when no cases, 1 if fewer than 50 cases, and 2 if 50 or more cases. I add the values on these three indicators.

10. DGs with a high reputation (mentioned by 50% or more) obtain a value of 2, those with medium reputation (mentioned by 5% to 49%) obtain a value of 1, and the remainder obtain a value of 0.

11. The three questions are: European Parliament (EP) support for commission: "The president and members of the EC should have the support of a majority in the EP or they should resign"; Equal rights for EP: "In matters of EU legislation, taxation, and expenditure, the EP should have equal rights with the Council of Ministers, which represents the national governments"; European government: "The EU should have a European government responsible to the EP" (Eurobarometer, 1996, p. 9).

support percentages for the three items and then normalizing scores. Each commission official is given the elite score for his nationality.¹²

EXAMINING THE EVIDENCE

TRANSNATIONAL SOCIALIZATION

The transnational socialization hypothesis predicts that officials with greater transnational experience are likely to be more supranationalist. This hypothesis finds some support in the univariate analysis (see Table 2: $R^2 = .03$), but the effect is rather weak (significant at level .1). When one controls for other, far more powerful factors, this variable drops out. The reason for this is that study abroad varies decisively by nationality, and this effect is picked up by the three country-level variables.

CAREER SOCIALIZATION

Work experiences strongly influence the orientations of senior commission officials. Measures for state career and for commission career are significantly associated with political views (see Table 2). Former national civil servants, diplomats, or government ministers are most likely to be intergovernmentalist—all the more so when they spend a considerable period serving their country. Conversely, working in and for the commission makes individuals more supranationalist. However, state institutions appear a more effective socialization context than the commission: A prior stint in the state sector leaves a greater imprint on an official's orientations than his current experience in the service.

Both effects are strongly significant in the univariate analysis. However, commission career does not survive my controls (see Table 3, Model 1). The reason is collinearity: The two variables largely duplicate one another. A large proportion of variance in commission socialization is accounted for by state career. Collinearity may produce unstable regression coefficients, and this is apparent in models containing both variables (see Table 3, Model 1).¹³

12. The z scores are in descending order: 1.74 (Belgium), 1.25 (Italy), 0.95 (Greece), 0.71 (Germany), 0.52 (Spain), 0.34 (the Netherlands), 0.08 (Austria, France), -0.17 (Luxembourg), -0.34 (United Kingdom), -0.52 (Ireland), -0.71 (Portugal), -0.95 (Sweden), -1.25 (Finland), and -1.74 (Denmark). Detailed data are available from the author.

13. Regressing each variable against all other dependent variables confirms collinearity. The overall fit improves slightly if one excludes parachute, which has no explanatory power but aggravates problems of collinearity.

Table 2
Correlation Matrix

	Supranationalism	Transnational Education	State Career	Commission Career	Federalism in Country of Origin	Population Size of Country of Origin	Procedural Discretion	Elite Orientations of Country of Origin
Supranationalism	1.000							
Transnational education	.172* (.030)	1.000						
State career	-.288*** (.083)	-.095	1.000					
Commission career	.192** (.037)	-.038	-.635***	1.000				
Federalism in country of origin	.330*** (.109)	.174*	-.195**	.202**	1.000			
Population size of country of origin	-.068 (.005)	-.072	-.240**	.464***	.211**	1.000		
Procedural discretion	.180* (.032)	-.118	.158	-.089	.027	.013	1.000	
Elite orientations of country of origin	.297*** (.088)	.209**	-.271***	.398***	.485***	.314***	.018	1.000
Parachutage	-.078 (.006)	.043	.605***	-.733***	-.031	-.310***	.097	-.226**

Note: R^2 of bivariate regression are in parentheses.

* $p < .10$. ** $p < .05$. *** $p < .01$.

Table 3
Multivariate Linear Regression Results

Model	1	2	3	4	5
Transnational education	.088 (.378)	.082 (.373)	.114 (.381)	.134 (.382)	.107 (.370)
State career	-.284** (.028)	-.285*** (.021)		-.260*** (.022)	-.307*** (.021)
Commission career	.159 (.028)		.233** (.020)		
Federalism in country of origin	.208** (.097)	.223** (.093)	.245** (.097)		.287*** (.088)
Population size of country of origin	-.252** (.008)	-.232** (.007)	-.267*** (.008)		-.198** (.007)
Procedural discretion	.230** (.094)	.228** (.093)	.208** (.094)	.233** (.097)	.236*** (.094)
Elite orientations of country of origin	.146 (.252)	.163 (.243)	.142 (.255)	.194** (.221)	
Parachutage	.146 (.542)				
R^2	.286	.275	.243	.198	.257
Adjusted R^2	.226	.230	.197	.165	.219

Note: Entries are standardized regression coefficients (β) (ordinary least squares), with standard errors in parentheses. There is pairwise deletion of missing values. Results with listwise deletion or replacement of missing values by the mean produce very similar results. Results obtainable from the author.

* $p < .10$. ** $p < .05$. *** $p < .01$.

The main way of dealing with collinearity is to exclude the most affected variable, as is shown in the twin Models 2 and 3. If one leaves out commission career, state career immediately jumps to be the foremost predictor of officials' orientations (see Table 3, Model 2). The estimates appear robust across models. When I exclude state career and keep commission career in the equation (see Table 3, Model 3), service in the commission is positively and significantly associated (at the .05 level) with supranationalist orientations. Models 2 and 3 suggest alternative, equally plausible rationales for understanding how commission officials' orientations are shaped.

The theoretical implications are far-reaching. Neither advocates of the resilience of the state nor those who claim that the national state has been eroded can be proved wrong. Both are right—up to a certain point. States have not been hollowed out by subnational and supranational influences; they are still capable of inducing individuals within their boundaries to take national interests seriously. Former state officials in the commission appear less supranationalist ($M = 5.18$) than the average top official ($M = 5.44$), less than former businesspeople or ex-professors ($M = 5.24$), and significantly

less than people who started their professional career in the commission ($M = 6.23$). But such influence is not linear. Its impact is absent on officials with less than 10 years of state service; as a result, they are on average equally supranational as their colleagues without state experience ($M = 5.85$ vs. 5.82 for nonstate officials). The association becomes only powerful and negative for officials with a decade or more of state experience, which induces this group to adopt much more intergovernmentalist views ($M = 4.69$). State socialization—to the extent that it exists—works slowly.¹⁴

Supporters of the erosion thesis overestimate the capacity of the commission to be a greenhouse for supranationalism. Although commission officials generally become more supranationalist over time, the effect is surprisingly weak. A closer look at the data suggests that the trend is nonlinear. The relationship is shaped by a cohort effect and the effect of enlargement on recruitment. First, stronger or weaker supranationalism among commission officials appears to coincide with the arrival of new recruits. Cohort effects indicate that commission officials start their job with preformed views that reflect the political climate to European integration at the time of recruitment. One would need longitudinal data to disentangle the respective impact of cohort and commission socialization, but Table 4 strongly suggests that cohort effects only partly account for the nonlinear pattern in commission orientations. I divide 40 years of EU history into six historical periods: supranational founding (1958-1966), aftermath of de Gaulle crisis (1967-1972), first enlargement (1973-1979), Eurosclerosis (1980-1985), Delorsian Euro-optimism (1986-1991), and post-Maastricht Euro-malaise (1992-1997). Commission recruits are out of sync with the political climate for three of the six periods. They are supranationalist in the late 1960s, when the Commission was in retreat after French president Charles de Gaulle's rejection of supranationalism. They are only marginally supranationalist in the late 1980s to early 1990s at the peak of Euro-phoria. They are less intergovernmentalist than expected after 1992, when tensions increased due to the ratification of the Maastricht Treaty, Economic and Monetary Union (EMU) pressures, and enlargement.

EU observers have pointed out that enlargement alters political practices and priorities in the EU (Wallace & Wallace, 1996). There is good reason to

14. The most intergovernmentalist individuals among former state officials are, paradoxically, ex-diplomats with the European institutions ($M = 4.924$). This goes against the going native argument, which states that people who work in and around EU institutions become more sensitive to EU values and norms (Beyers & Dierickx, 1997; Christoph, 1993; Cram, 1997; Schneider, 1997). This paradox is simply a function of length of state service: ex-diplomats were in state service for 15 years on average versus $9\frac{1}{2}$ years for purely national civil servants.

Table 4
Supranationalism by Cohort of Recruitment and Accession Wave

	Original Six	First Enlargement	Second Enlargement	Third Enlargement	All
1958-1966	+0.82 (22)				+0.82 (22) <i>SD</i> = 1.91
1967-1972	+0.79 (7)				+0.79 (7) <i>SD</i> = 2.06
1973-1979	+0.29 (14)	-0.67 (18)			-0.25 (32) <i>SD</i> = 2.12
1980-1985	-1.75 (8)	-1.25 (4)	+0.50 (2)		-1.29 (14) <i>SD</i> = 1.52
1986-1991	-0.62 (4)	-0.50 (4)	+0.72 (9)		+0.12 (17) <i>SD</i> = 1.71
1992-1997	-0.87 (4)	-1.00 (1)	-2.50 (1)	+0.25 (8)	-0.36 (14) <i>SD</i> = 1.91
Total period	+0.13 (59) <i>SD</i> = 2.09	-0.74 (27) <i>SD</i> = 1.62	+0.42 (8) <i>SD</i> = 1.93	+0.25 (8) <i>SD</i> = 2.12	-0.05 (106) <i>SD</i> = 1.98

Note: Values on the supranationalism index range from 1 to 10, with 5.5 as a neutral score. Cell entries indicate how much a group leans in supranationalist (+) or intergovernmentalist (-) direction; maximum deviation = 4.5. Number of officials in parentheses; standard deviations for totals. Figures in bold refer to enlargement recruitments.

believe that it also affects the commission. With enlargement, some senior posts in the commission administration are set aside for recruits from the new countries. To fill these posts quickly, the commission brushes aside normal recruitment procedures and relies heavily on advice from national capitals. Therefore, recruits from new member states may reflect more directly the political climate in their particular country than recruits from established member states. Member states in the first enlargement wave (United Kingdom, Ireland, and Denmark) were reluctant to embrace supranationalism; therefore, original commission recruits from these countries should be more intergovernmentalist than concurrent recruits from the original six. The second wave of entrants (Greece, Spain, Portugal) were enthusiastic about EU membership; therefore, one expects to find supranationalism among Greek, Portuguese, and Spanish recruits of the late 1980s. Finally, the third enlargement (Austria, Finland, and Sweden) took place amid rising public criticism toward European integration; therefore, one would expect these recruits to be more intergovernmentalist. In other words, one should be able to link nonlinear patterns in commission orientations to these enlargement shocks. Table 4 provides partial support for this hypothesis. The original contingent from Denmark, the United Kingdom, and Ireland is more intergovernmentalist than most recruits for that period, and the first recruits from the southern

countries are more supranationalist than their colleagues. However, officials from the latest three members are less intergovernmentalist than expected; they even lean to supranationalism. In fact, Austrian, Swedish, and Finnish top officials are more supranationalist than recent recruits from the first 12 members and, even more surprising, than all commission officials recruited since 1973 (except for the second enlargement). Furthermore, the enlargement effect disappears for subsequent cohorts. Whereas the special enlargement appointments for the United Kingdom, Denmark, and Ireland up till 1978 lean to intergovernmentalism, the British, Danish, and Irish officials appointed after 1979 are less intergovernmentalist than their contemporaries from the original six countries. The general propensity to intergovernmentalism over the last 15 years is driven by officials from the original six countries, not by recruits from first, second, or third waves of enlargement.¹⁵ Enlargement shocks, together with ebbs and flows in the general climate to European integration, go some way in explaining why commission socialization does not follow a smooth linear trend.¹⁶

POLITICAL STRUCTURE: FEDERALISM AND COUNTRY SIZE

The political socialization hypothesis conceives the orientations of officials on EU governance as the product of what they learned in their domestic political environment. I hypothesize that officials from small countries or from federal countries (i.e., the two territorial entities most sensitive to external influences) are more likely to be supranationalist than those from large countries or from unitary systems. Both hypotheses find strong confirmation in the multivariate models.

15. In addition, enlargement distorts the commission socialization hypothesis indirectly. Two thirds of top officials in the sample are still the atypical recruits of the initial enlargement appointments. For example, of the 18 United Kingdom officials, 12 were appointed in the special recruitment wave after United Kingdom entry and only 3 over the last 10 years. So variation on the independent variable is limited. Controlling for nationality-specific variables creates many empty cells, which weakens measurements of association (Shalev, 1997; Western, 1995). This may induce one to underestimate commission socialization. A test for the original six member states, in which all top officials were recruited under normal procedures, shows that commission career becomes a stronger predictor ($R^2 = .118$, $\beta = 0.344$, $p < .01$, $SE = 0.025$) than state career ($R^2 = .076$, $\beta = -0.276$, $p < .05$, $SE = 0.034$).

16. Greater supranationalism among longer-serving cohorts may also result from self-selection. Over time, intergovernmentalist officials may leave the commission more readily than supranationalists. However, although the older generation as a group is more supranational than recent recruits, it is also more deeply divided. The standard deviations are greater for older cohorts (31 to 35 years service, $SD = 2.21$; 26 to 30 years, $SD = 2.07$) than for recent recruits (0 to 5 years, $SD = 1.74$; 6 to 10 years, $SD = 1.69$) and for the sample average ($SD = 1.98$).

Whether an official comes from a federal or federalizing country is the most powerful predictor of where he stands on European governance (see Table 2). Austrian, Belgian, German, and Spanish officials are appreciably more likely to support supranationalism than officials from unitary countries such as Denmark, France, Ireland, the Netherlands, or Portugal. This effect remains very strong when controlling for other variables. The exceptions are the Italian officials, who are more supranationalist than one would expect from citizens of a unitary country. However, the Italian national state is relatively weak and authority is fragmented over a variety of territorial units—north-south, regions, and towns (Hine, 1993). Just as officials from smaller countries support European governance as a means to structure an uncertain external environment, Italians want European government to substitute for ineffective national government.¹⁷

Country size becomes significant only in the presence of controls (see Tables 2 and 3). The main reason is that federalism crowds out the influence of country size. Federalism breaks up large countries into smaller pockets of social and political life. Only for unitary countries is the effect significant: $R = -.36$ (significant at .05 level) versus $R = -.13$ ($p = .51$) for nonunitary countries and $R = -.08$ ($p = .72$) for federal countries. The larger the basic unit of political and social life is in their home country, the more likely that officials are intergovernmentalist.

PROCEDURAL CONTROL

The procedural control hypothesis explains political orientations in terms of who controls decision making in particular policy areas: the commission or the Council of Ministers. It predicts that policy areas with greater decisional autonomy (discretion) for the commission induce officials to be supranationalist. Concretely, officials in competition policy, agriculture, external trade, or regional policy should be more supranationalist than those in education, culture, or tourism. The statistical analysis supports the thesis that you stand where you sit. Procedural discretion is associated with orientations in the expected way ($R = .18$), but only at .1 level (see Table 2). However, the parameter gains considerable significance with controls (see Table 3, Models 1 to 5).

There are two reasons why the variable becomes only powerful in the multivariate analysis. One has to do with imprecise measurements, which suppress

17. Officials from federal countries (Austria, Belgium, Germany, Spain) lean to supranationalism with an average of +1.36 above the neutral score; nonunitary systems (Denmark, France, Portugal) without Italy are inclined to intergovernmentalism with -0.83 and including Italy with -0.30; unitary systems bend to intergovernmentalism with -0.56.

the fit in the simple regression. The index automatically produces low values for more recently established DGs because the formal indicators use data covering a 15-year period. Although the reputational score, which is less time dependent, partly corrects the bias, some newer DGs may have artificially low values.

The main reason why procedural control becomes powerful in the presence of controls is that state career and federalism crowd out the influence of procedural discretion for certain officials. Commission officials with a background that predisposes them to intergovernmentalism are not influenced by whether they work in a commission-led or council-dominated policy area. For officials with state experience, the association between supranationalism and their DG's power is nonexistent ($R = .05, p = .720$). However, it is very strong for individuals without national state experience ($R = .46, p = .002$): The more autonomous the DG, the more likely they are supranationalist. Federalism interacts with procedural control in a similar way. Officials from unitary countries lean toward intergovernmentalism and are likely to stick to their views ($R = .05, p = .679$), but officials from federal countries are responsive to the opportunities in their DG ($R = .52, p = .013$).

A student of the commission in the early 1970s likened the institution to a collection of feudal fiefdoms (Coombes, 1970). Recent studies argue that functional divisions have hardened in the commission (Peterson, 1997; Richardson, 1996). In this context, one would expect top officials to be more influenced by the limited world of their DG than by the commission as a whole. Yet, the findings of this study indicate that Myles's simple theorem that you stand where you sit is a complicated matter in the commission. First, functional divisions and turf battles do not impede top officials from taking position on the big question of European integration: What form should the EU take? Senior officials look beyond the policy garden that they attend to. Second, officials harbor different views on EU governance depending on where they work in the commission: Commission strongholds espouse bolder supranationalist views than commission services that are more transparent agents of national governments. Finally, fiefdoms, functional divisions, or in more precise terms, the power and reputation of DGs help shape how office holders think about EU governance. However, it only makes a difference for officials who consider national sovereignty a priori a somewhat artificial concept.

PARACHUTAGE

I find no support for the hypothesis that people parachuted into top positions from outside of the commission bureaucracy should be more

intergovernmentalist than those who were recruited among middle-management commission officials. The variable does not come close to significance (see Table 2) and has the wrong sign in most multivariate analyses.

Why do national governments not take advantage of their apparent power to appoint commission officials? Contrary to popular wisdom (including among some commission officials!), the way in which top appointments come about makes it unlikely that parachuted officials are more intergovernmentalist than their nonparachuted colleagues. All appointments are highly politicized and all are potentially open to member state pressure—through the relevant national commissioner. National quotas for top positions mean that a vacancy is usually reserved for one or, at most, a few nationalities. Merit is always bounded by nationality. Top appointments are decided among the commissioner for personnel, the commissioner of the DG with a vacancy, and the commissioner(s) of the same nationality as the candidate. The fact that the national commissioner is consulted for appointments from inside as well as outside of the commission blurs the distinction between parachutage and nonparachutage. Finally, cabinet experience is the surest fast track to a top position in the commission. To get promoted, it helps to be noticed by one's political superior, and the best way is by working for the commissioner. More than one third of top officials in the sample served in a commissioner's cabinet, that is, nearly 30% of parachuted top officials and almost 40% of nonparachuted officials. So those few officials who penetrate from middle management into the top layer are selected on the basis of the same political criteria as that of their parachuted officials. They have more in common with their current parachuted colleagues than with their former collaborators.

CONSOCIATIONAL CONTROL

The hypothesis that top commission officials should reflect the views on EU governance of the elite in their country of origin finds support in the simple regression (see Table 2). Officials from countries where the elite is supranationalist are much more likely to be supranationalist than their colleagues from countries with intergovernmentalist elites. In this respect, commission officials constitute a cross-section of the elite in their country of origin.

There are two plausible interpretations of the strong association between the orientations of top officials and national elites. The result is consistent with the consociational argument, according to which the commission is divided in factions serving national principals. The consociational reading suggests that national elites—through national governments—purposefully

project their preferences into European institutions. However, the association may also reflect that shared experiences shape the orientations of top commission officials and the elites from their countries of origin in the same direction.

There is reason to believe that socialization carries more weight than consociationalism. The key lies in why the elite variable, strong in the univariate model, becomes insignificant in multivariate models (see Table 3, Models 1 to 3). The association between elite and commission official orientations dissolves when controlling for political structure. The best strategy for guessing whether an official is supranationalist or intergovernmentalist is to find out whether he is from a federal, nonunitary, or unitary system. For each type of political system, the orientations of elites and commission officials run parallel.¹⁸ Commission officials as well as the elite are more likely to be supranationalist when they come from a federal than a nonfederal country, with the exception of Italians. Knowledge of an official's nationality hardly increases predictive power: The association between the orientations of national elite and officials is insignificant within the federal, nonunitary, and unitary groupings. Officials do not in any direct sense reflect the views of their own national elite. This argument works also for country size: Officials as well as elites from small countries are more likely to be supranationalist than their counterparts from large countries. For a final test of the relative importance of political structure and elite orientations, compare the model with political structure (see Table 3, Model 5) and the one with elite orientations (see Table 3, Model 4). The fit is markedly higher in the political structure model than in the elite model ($R^2 = .26$ vs. $.20$, respectively).

Top commission officials reflect the orientations of the elite of their country of origin. They do so not because they have been sent by their national governments to defend national interests but because they share political experiences with elites in their home country. One experience stands out: the extent to which the political system of their country of origin is sensitive to external influences. Having grown up in an environment in which authority is diffused disposes one to favor a greater shift of authority to the EU.

18. z distributions help identify the relative location of an observed value in a data distribution. For elite and officials' orientations, I calculate average z scores in federal, nonunitary (excluding Italy), and unitary country groups. The scores are strikingly similar: in federal countries, scores are 0.871 for elites and 0.667 for officials; in nonunitary countries, scores are -0.403 for elites and -0.372 for officials; in unitary systems, scores are -0.207 for elites and -0.242 for officials.

CONCLUSION

The sources of variation in senior commission officials' views on European integration are to be found in socialization and institutional learning and less so in principal-agent dynamics between the commission and national governments.

When highfliers take up a senior post in the commission, they bring with them rich experiences of previous occupations and prior political settings, and these are powerful predictors of their views on European integration. Two experiences in particular predispose them to intergovernmentalism or supranationalism: whether they were ever a state employee and whether their country of origin is unitary or federal or a large rather than a small state. A person who once served his country as a state employee is likely to defend an EU with member states as key pillars—an intergovernmental Europe. For him, national state sovereignty is practical: It stands for effective, efficient, and legitimate government. The main task of the EU, and for him as position holder in the commission, is to facilitate cooperation, helping to formulate common interests and suggest courses of action.

There is another set of experiences that tilt orientations powerfully in the direction of intergovernmentalism. Individuals from a political system in which political authority is vested—not only in principle but also in practice—in national central institutions usually do not find much appeal in a supranational EU. They believe that national state institutions are capable of effective control over diverse policy areas. The political system that is most conducive to these beliefs is that of a large, unitary state. Political actors from such states risk losing real policy control to a supranational EU. Actors from small countries and federal systems have far less to lose and probably much to gain. Small countries need rule making at the supranational level to domesticate otherwise uncertain international relations; federal countries are used to rule making at multiple levels, and supranational European governance extends these rules one level higher. Ultimately, supranationalism is a means for actors from small or federal political systems to gain low-cost access to large, relatively self-governing pools of resources.

The common denominator has to do with one's experience of national sovereignty. The more an official has encountered practical implications of national sovereignty, the more likely he is to embrace intergovernmentalism; the more he has found national sovereignty void of real political control, the more he is willing to shift authority from national governments to the commission and to the EP.

That does not mean that an official's views are irrevocably fixed by the time that he arrives in a top position. Working in the commission may alter his

views. First, the longer he stays in the commission, the more likely he is to become supranationalist. Commission socialization is powerful, although it is seldom able to neutralize prior socialization in his country or work environment. Second, it matters where he works in the commission. An official in a commission stronghold usually has bolder supranationalist views than a manager of a policy area under council control. Greater procedural discretion makes a top official strive for even greater commission discretion, which is precisely what a principal-agent logic would predict—the agent continuously on the lookout to shirk the principal's wishes. But there are limits to this logic: It works only if the official has a priori a certain distance from the sovereign national state. Then, a Mattheus effect appears: He who is supranationalist, by virtue of his state career or his political experience, becomes even more supranationalist if he works with strong EU competencies. There is no such effect for intergovernmentalists: A former state employee or national of a large, unitary country is likely to remain intergovernmentalist whether or not he sits on powerful supranational competencies.

Although the socialization thesis finds strong support in the data, the results are inconclusive for the principal-agent argument. This reflects, in part, limitations of operationalization. However, the results enable us to question two prevalent arguments. Contrary to common wisdom, there is no evidence that parachuted officials are more intergovernmentalist than their non-parachuted colleagues. Parachutage, the appointment of candidates from outside the services in top positions, is not the instrument through which national governments are able to constrain supranational control. Instead, much depends on the influence of a national government over the national commissioner, who has a say in all top appointments of his nationality. But there is more: It is doubtful that national governments always want to minimize supranational control. Orientations to European integration differ profoundly among national elites, and some are supranationalist. Officials tend to reflect their national elite's views, but the data do not allow me to conclude, therefore, that the latter—through national governments—purposefully project their preferences into European institutions.

Top commission officials are embroiled in a fierce struggle among political actors for control over EU authoritative resources. One would expect them to actively defend the power of the commission. If not, one would think that national governments successfully control them as agents serving national interests. However, variation in views among top officials is not easily understood in terms of principal agency. Commission officials are not simply supranational activists or intergovernmental agents. Rather, when they enter their office in the morning, they bring with them views on Euro-

pean integration that have matured as a result of experiences from various institutional contexts.

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