

Images of Europe: How Commission Officials Conceive Their Institution's Role*

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Abstract

How do Commission officials conceive the Commission's role in the European Union? Should the Commission be the government of Europe or the servant of Member States? Is there a third possibility – that of institutional pragmatism, whereby Commission and Member States share authority? This article lays out jurisdictional options and role conceptions adopted by Commission officials, and estimates their relative incidence using a 2008 large-scale survey among Commission officials ($N = 1,901$). There is a plurality of views, though within relatively narrow parameters. In explaining variation, national background shapes views more than professional background.

The role of the European Commission in Europe's institutional architecture is uncertain. Politicization, enlargement and management failures have shaken an elitist, technocratic European Union polity. A functionalist system for inter-state collaboration has evolved in a polity in which decision rules and objectives are contested (Bauer, 2008; Hooghe and Marks, 2009a; Peterson, 2008). The transformation of European governance affects Commission officials directly. As strategic actors in European decision-making – equipped with expertise, located at the heart of the EU's policy networks and entrusted with authority over several policies – Commission officials have become involved in contentious political decisions. However, as non-elected professionals with unclear lines of accountability, they have a weak claim to political legitimacy. How do Commission officials reconcile decision power with political vulnerability?

This study draws on a large online survey among a representative sample of Commission officials ($N = 1,901$) to examine how these people conceive Europe's future jurisdictional architecture and their role in a changing EU. EU jurisdictional options are often boiled down to a choice between a supranational/federal Europe and an intergovernmental/state-centric Europe, and European Commission officials are usually

* This article draws on data collected as part of 'The European Commission in Question', funded by the United Kingdom Economic and Social Research Council (grant RES-062-23-1188) and conducted by Michael Bauer, Renaud Dehoussse, Liesbet Hooghe, Hussein Kassim (PI), John Peterson and Andrew Thompson. For further information, visit <<http://www.uea.ac.uk/psi/research/EUCIQ>>. The online survey was administered by YouGov in September and October 2008. A sample of 4,621 policy administrators was drawn from a population of over 14,000. The sample was stratified to ensure proportionality by gender, age and nationality; officials from the ten new Member States were oversampled. The response rate was 41 per cent (1,901 responses). Iterative proportional fitting was used to create a weighted sample that reflects the population distributions by gender, age, nationality and DG location. Liesbet Hooghe is grateful for additional support from the VU Amsterdam and the EU Center for Excellence, University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill. Earlier versions of this article were presented at the Council for Europeanists (Montreal), VU Amsterdam, Arena at the University of Oslo, Geneva University, the British Academy and the KFG-Transformative Power of Europe at the Free University of Berlin. I thank participants at these events for their comments and suggestions, and especially Ben Crum, Renaud Dehoussse, Morten Egeberg, Julia Langbein, Nicolas Levrat, Gary Marks, Douglas Page, Jérôme Schäfer, Gijs Schumacher, Jarle Trondal, my long-time collaborators in the project, and two anonymous reviewers. Any errors or inconsistencies remain entirely my own responsibility.

assumed to be partisans of the former. This article formulates a third possibility – institutional pragmatism – and finds that it captures the views of a large minority of Commission officials.

The first section discusses the sources of cohesion and differentiation among Commission officials. The second section lays out jurisdictional options for the EU and corresponding role conceptions for Commission officials, and the third section estimates their relative incidence. The final section hypothesizes sources of variation for role definition and tests these expectations against survey data.

I. Cohesion and Context

Bureaucracies are never a cross-section of their society. However, the extent to which they constitute a separate ‘caste’ – a relatively distinct social system of class, beliefs and attitudes, and power – varies from society to society.¹ British and French civil servants, particularly the higher echelons, were, until recently, almost exclusively drawn from the traditional upper classes and attended elite institutions: Oxford, Cambridge, the Ecole Nationale d’Administration, the Polytechnique. The extent to which a civil service forms a caste matters because an internally united body has greater capacity to shape decision-making, and it can more easily lock out third parties (Page, 1995; Suleiman, 1984).

There are reasons to expect Commission officials to be relatively distinct in class, beliefs and power, but there are also serious impediments to caste formation. Commission officials work in the world’s most powerful international executive. The majority of Commission officials have lived or worked abroad before, are polyglot, have at least one postgraduate degree, are interested in European integration and are committed to Europe or the EU (Shore, 2000; Georgakakis and De Lasalle, 2007; Georgakakis and Weisbein, 2010). This constellation is quite uncommon among national civil servants, national politicians or Europe’s citizens.

However, Commission officials come from 27 national societies, have diverse educational backgrounds and professional experiences, and they are recruited through multiple channels. Moreover, the EU’s institutional open-endedness is a severe impediment to caste formation. Since the early days of European integration, leaders (and recently political parties and citizens) have disagreed on whether the EU should be supranational or intergovernmental. There are competing jurisdictional options with different roles for the Commission, Member States and European Parliament. These options matter to Commission officials because each implies different expectations on how they should define their role. The EU institutional environment is far more ambiguous than that in most EU Member States, where professional bureaucracies approach more closely the Weberian ideal-type. It is also more ambiguous than that in most international governmental organizations, where the role of international officials is heavily circumscribed.

Several contextual challenges amplify these differences. First, the Commission serves multiple principals, including regional and local governments, and societal stakeholders, as well as European institutions and national governments. Commission officials are sometimes compelled to choose between incompatible demands and directorates-general (DGs) may deal with different principals, thus nurturing diverse governance views within

¹ ‘Caste’ is derived from the Latin word *castus*: pure, segregated, cut off.

the Commission. Second, public scepticism in state institutions has made bureaucrats targets of public discontent. The European Commission also has to contend with national politicians (and national bureaucrats!) who shift blame for unpopular policies to the European level. Commission officials are cross-pressured between incentives to retreat in an apolitical administrative role and incentives to justify their role in political terms (Kassim and Dimitrakopoulos, 2007). Third, new public management reform in the Commission has sought to align organizational methods in the public sector with those of the private sector. The reform weakens work principles in the Commission such as specialist expertise, seniority and tenure, political initiative and hierarchy. It promotes generalist skills, performance-related criteria, loyalty to political masters and network-type organization (Bauer & Knill, 2007; Bouckaert, 2008; Cini, 2007; Suleiman, 2003). The objective is to ‘normalize’ the Commission into a bureaucracy where career officials prepare and implement political decisions that are taken elsewhere. Finally, the addition of 12 countries since 2004, including ten former post-communist regimes, has changed the make-up of the European Commission by accelerating replacement of ‘western’ officials with those from central and eastern Europe. As of 1 November 2010, 23 per cent of Commission policy-makers (AD grades) came from the 12 most recent Member States (EU-12).² This personnel change dilutes the dominance of ‘western European’ beliefs and attitudes, and it weakens institutional memory and habit.

These influences spawn tension with long-standing institutional rules, written in the treaties, reinforced in the Commission’s internal staff regulations, and embedded in practice, which permit, and indeed instruct, Commission officials to lead legislative initiative on behalf of and for Europe (Cini, 1996; Hooghe, 2005; Ross, 1995). In conjunction with the College of Commissioners, the officials of the European Commission have a constitutional obligation to set the legislative agenda, based on the Commission’s near-exclusive competence to draft EU legislation and its competence to bring infringement proceedings against Member States. This is known as the ‘Community method’, the official doctrine which the Commission hierarchy systematically promotes in documents and speeches (Dehousse and Thompson, 2010).

Rules and practices lead Commission officials to defend a jurisdictional vision with a powerful European Commission, but the environmental context blurs the message. What then are the jurisdictional options that Commission officials support, and how do these options inform their role as European bureaucrats?

II. Jurisdictional Options and Role Conceptions

Debate on Europe has a tendency to boil down complex choices into stark dichotomies. Parties and public opinion pit those who want ‘more Europe’ against those who want ‘less Europe’, occasionally sharpened to mean ‘in’ or ‘out’ of the EU. Elites and public officeholders battle for a strong Commission or strong Member States. EU academic research reflects this by placing the array of jurisdictional options on a federal/supranational versus intergovernmental/state-centric dimension (for example, Fischer, 2000; Jörges *et al.*, 2000; Tsebelis and Garrett, 2000). The end-points are defined by a

² Commission DG for personnel website: «http://ec.europa.eu/civil_service/docs/bs_sexe_nat_grade_en.pdf».

proto-federal EU with the Commission as primary holder of authority, and a state-centric or intergovernmental Union where that role is reserved for the Member States.

In *The Uniting of Europe*, Ernst Haas (1958) describes a third option, in which Commission and Member States are interlocking and complementary institutions. The Commission has the monopoly of initiative, and the Member States legislate and implement EU policy. This institutional arrangement constitutes a fundamental departure from conventional jurisdictional architecture: 'A hybrid in which neither the federal nor the intergovernmental tendency has clearly triumphed' (Haas, 1958, pp. 526–7). Haas chose not to name this hybrid, but one could call it multi-level governance because it disperses authority across distinct and interdependent territorial levels. One might also describe it as a pragmatic institutional partnership around concrete problems so that the institutional destination recedes to the background.

Legal scholars and politicians labelled the combination of Commission initiative and Member State legislative power the 'Community method' (Dehousse, forthcoming; Devuyst, 1999, 2008; Wallace, 2000; Weiler, 1991). Commission President Walter Hallstein, who appears to have coined the term, believed that the Community method required federalism: '[T]his method [...] is an attempt to build on a federal pattern a democratically constituted Europe. Essentially, the Community may be described as a federation in the making' (Hallstein, 1963, p. 168; see also Taylor, 1968).³ In the following years, proponents of the Community method seemed also proponents of a federal EU. Haas' hybrid option was discarded. Europe's future was simplified to a conflict between federalism/supranationalism and intergovernmentalism/state-centrism.

Enlargement, politicization and management failures in the Commission have shifted the ground. The Commission hierarchy no longer connects the Community method with federalism, inadvertently reviving Haas' conception:

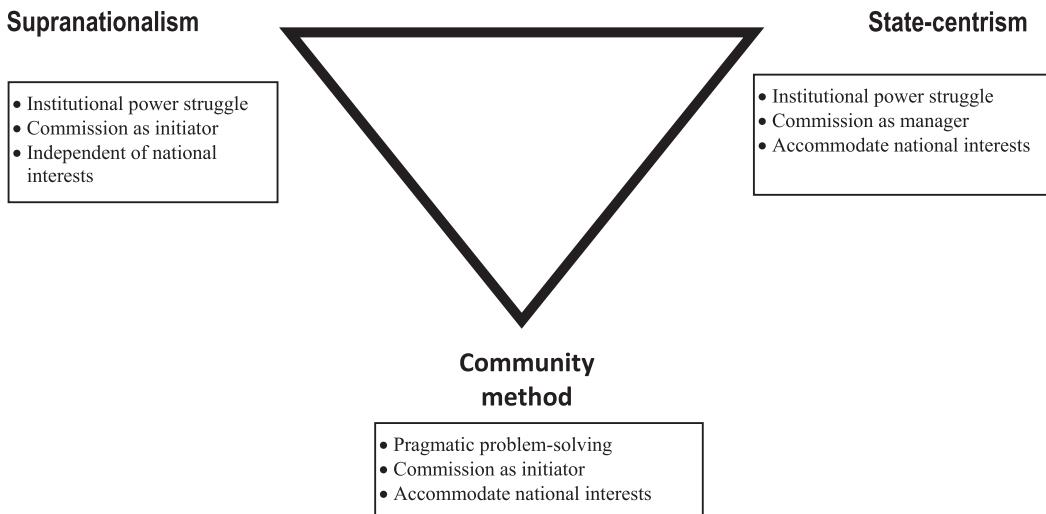
The Community method [...] provides a means to arbitrate between different interests by passing them through two successive filters: the general interest at the level of the Commission; and democratic representation, European and national, at the level of the Council and European Parliament, together the Union's legislature. (Commission, 2001, p. 8)

The implications for Europe's jurisdictional architecture are open-ended. Defenders of the Community method may support Hallstein's democratic federal Union or they may not; they may support Ernst Haas' option of institutional pragmatism or they may not.

The bottom line is that there are now three viable institutional options for Europe. A proto-federal or supranational EU which conceives of the Commission as the primary authority; an intergovernmental or state-centric Union which reserves that role for the

³ Some observers distinguish the 'Community' method from the 'functional' or 'Monnet' method. Dehousse (2000) defines the functional method as a political strategy that makes use of the legal framework to set up ad hoc co-operation schemes and consciously avoids discussion of the ultimate (political) objectives of European integration. Similarly, Majone (2007, p. 12) distinguishes the Community method, a legal concept, from the functional method, a political concept, which he baptizes Monnet's method of 'integration by stealth', executed by a meritocratic-scientific elite behind the backs of the national publics. He cites contemporaries of Monnet to give support to his claim that Monnet masterminded this strategy. Interestingly, Haas (1958) thought that Monnet was not at all devious, but openly federalist. The 'emphasis throughout his tenure in Luxembourg was on the federal nature of ECSC institutions, as being superior in actual power to those of the member governments. He [Monnet] barely acknowledged the existence of the Council of Ministers, never tired of stressing the need for the immediate creation of additional federal institutions, fought publicly for EDC and EPS, and held that Britain's joining the federal movement was only a question of time' (Haas, 1958, pp. 455–6).

Figure 1: Conceptualizing EU Jurisdictional Options



Source: Author's calculations from the EU CIQ survey.

Member States; and a multi-level polity which conceives the Commission and Member States as interlocking and complementary institutions. All three – including intergovernmentalism – are alive in the Commission.

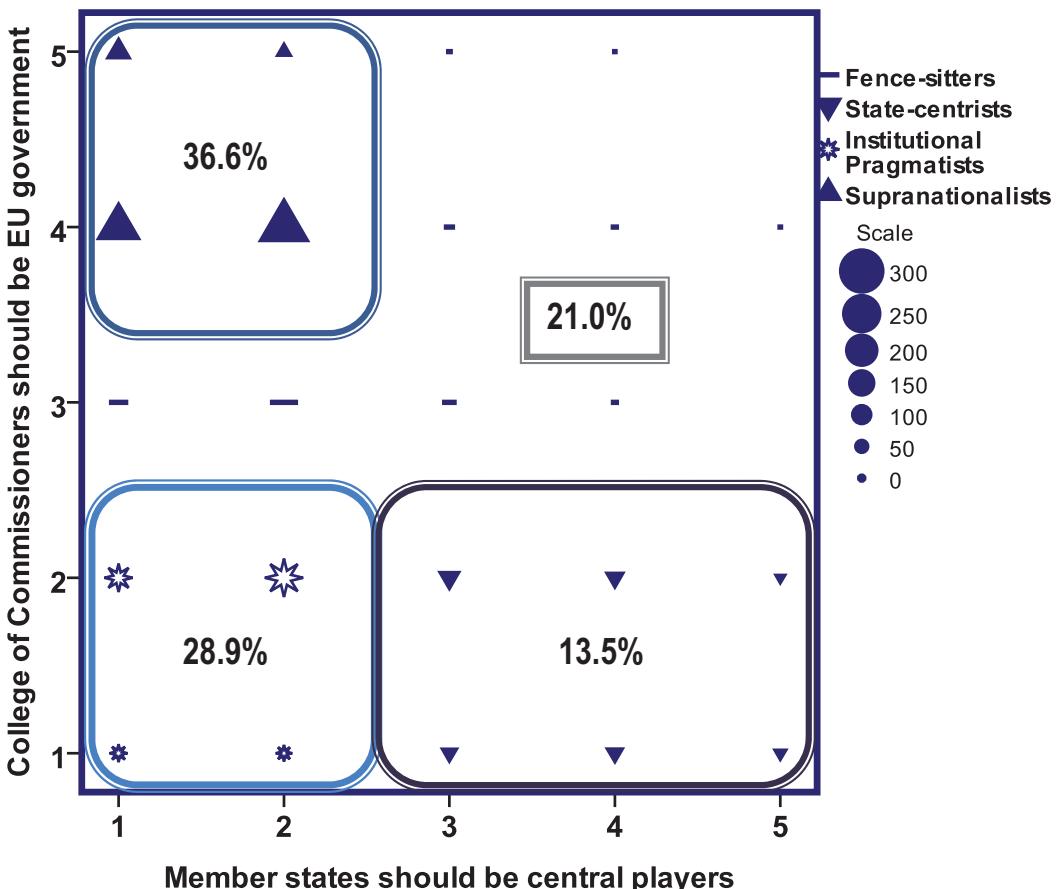
Figure 1 depicts these jurisdictional options. Is European integration a power struggle between state-centrism and supranationalism, or is it pragmatic problem solving? Is the Commission's primary role that of policy initiator or manager? Should EU institutions accommodate national interests or strive to be independent? These options imply distinct role conceptions for Commission officials:

- *Supranationalism:* Authority is vested in the College of Commissioners, which provides political guidance. Commission officials should defend the Commission's role as Europe's executive and help usher in a federal Europe.
- *State-centrism:* Member States provide political guidance through the Council. Commission officials should be sensitive to national differences as expressed in the Council. Member States should remain in the driver's seat.
- *Institutional pragmatism:* Commission and Member States jointly provide political guidance; institutional power battles divert attention from problem solving. Commission officials should identify shared needs and propose European solutions, but they should also be sensitive to national diversity.

III. Operationalizing Role Conceptions

These conceptions of EU governance can be identified by combining answers to the following two items in the Commission survey. The first item taps Hallstein's notion of supranationalism, and the second echoes de Gaulle's famous call for intergovernmentalism:

Figure 2: Conceptions of EU Governance and Types of Commission Officials



Source: Author's calculations from the EUCIQ survey.

Notes: N = 1,648. Five-point scales ranging from 1 = strongly disagree; 2 = disagree; 3 = neither disagree nor agree; 4 = agree; 5 = strongly agree.

- ‘Some people want the College of Commissioners to become the government of the European Union. What do you think?’
- ‘Some argue that Member States – not the Commission or European Parliament – should be the central players in the European Union. What is your position?’

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.⁴ Figure 2 shows the distribution of

⁴ Answers range from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). Supranationalists are respondents who agree strongly or agree with the first statement and disagree strongly or disagree with the second statement. State-centrists are respondents who disagree strongly or disagree with the first statement and agree strongly, agree or neither agree nor disagree with the second statement. We draw the boundaries around the state-centric type more liberally to account for the fact that the

role types in today's Commission: 13.5 per cent state-centrists, 36.6 per cent supranationalists and, surprisingly in light of the conventional literature, 28.9 per cent institutional pragmatists.

These types are consistent with attitudes and beliefs presented in Figures 3a-d (exact wording can be found in Appendix Table B). The dots represent for each type average attitudes/beliefs and the whiskers mark a 95 per cent confidence interval. Values are standardized around the mean to enhance comparability. Supranationalists and state-centrists tend to be antithetical, but the position of institutional pragmatists is distinct from both types in meaningful ways.

Supranationalists value the Commission's role in policy initiative, while state-centrists emphasize managerial responsibility (Figure 3a); supranationalists are suspicious of national quotas in services or the College, while state-centrists accept them (Figure 3b); supranationalists are ardent Commission loyalists, while state-centrists are much more circumspect (Figure 3c). Interestingly, views concerning EU governance colour beliefs about how the world *is*, as well as attitudes about how the world *should* be. Supranationalists are significantly more likely to say that the Commission is less powerful than it used to be, has lost power to national capitals and to the European Parliament. State-centrists hold markedly different beliefs (Figure 3d).

Where do institutional pragmatists fit in? One might mistake them for moderate supranationalists since they value policy initiative over management. But there is a basic difference: unlike supranationalists, they are deeply reluctant to share the Commission's power of initiative with the European Parliament (bottom of Figure 3a). The Commission's monopoly of initiative is the alpha and omega of the Commission's separate-but-equal role in the EU's system of interlocking governance. It is *less* critical to a supranationalist or federalist who sets his eyes on who should govern Europe. In the power struggle between Commission and Council for executive primacy, the European Parliament is more ally than competitor.

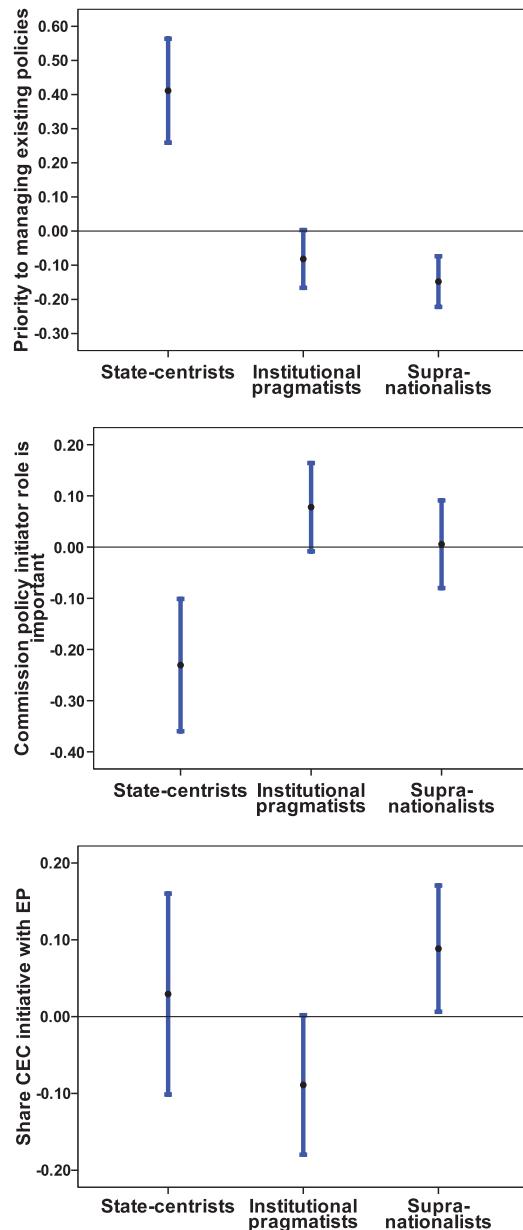
Institutional pragmatists are willing to accommodate nationality in the Commission. They tolerate national quotas and find it desirable to maintain one Commissioner per Member State even if this means a less efficient Commission. One might be tempted to call them 'moderate state-centrists'. However, unlike state-centrists, they identify with the institution of the Commission – not the unit within, or the national (or Council) conglomerate outside. They do so with greater conviction than supranationalists. Their willingness to consider national sensitivities is limited to what appears useful in crafting solutions for common problems.⁵

Who are these supranationalists, state-centrists and institutional pragmatists? What makes someone more likely to be one or the other?

meaningful divide is between those rejecting intergovernmentalism and those who do *not*. Indeed, the deck is stacked against state-centrists: Treaty language, official Commission views, public debate, and perhaps above all, the assumption in the academic literature that bureaucrats 'stand where they sit', lead one to expect Commission officials to be sceptical of state-centrism.

⁵ We cannot be sure where the primary locus of loyalty lies for state-centrists. We know they reject the Commission as a whole, but do they really identify with their unit or is this a proxy for the Member State or the community of national experts? One would need a question that probes the precise locus of Commission officials' loyalty beyond as well as within the organization, which the survey unfortunately did not include.

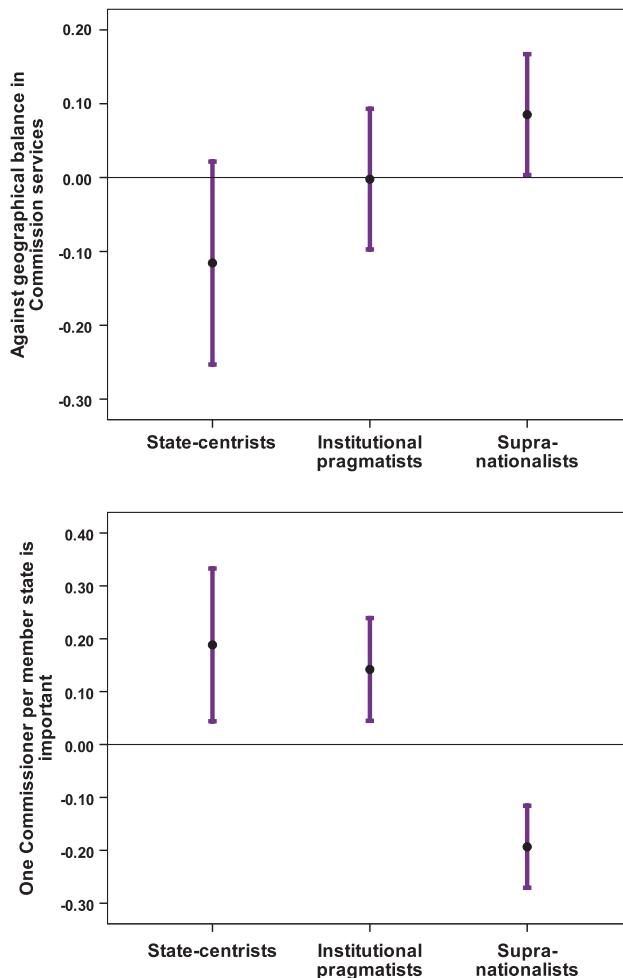
Figure 3a: Attitudes on Commission Role: Policy Initiator or Manager?



Source: Author's calculations from the EUCIQ survey.

Notes: Standardized variables. Mean values and 95 per cent confidence interval, whereby averages higher than zero indicate that a type supports the statement more than the average official. Full wording of the items can be found in the Appendix.

Figure 3b: Attitudes on Nationality: Accommodation or Independence?



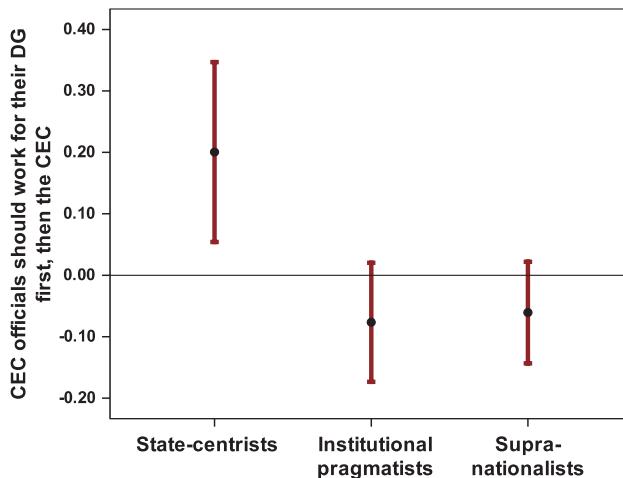
Source: Author's calculations from the EUCIQ survey.

IV. Explaining Variation in Type

Attitudes of elite actors are more consistent than those of ordinary people and yet more difficult to explain as a function of structural or demographic characteristics (Putnam, 1973; Searing, 1994). Elites tend to be both coherent and idiosyncratic. Years of education, mobility and leadership mould and meld background features into a singular capacity to think coherently, critically and autonomously. One should not expect to find a lot of (statistical) structure in the attitudes of such an elitist group, though the structure detected here appears robust and explicable.

Past research has posed the question whether European officials bring their views from their home context to Brussels or instead acquire them on the job in Brussels (or Luxembourg) (Beyers, 2005; Egeberg, 2001; Hooghe, 2002, 2005). Is national

Figure 3c: Attitudes on Loyalty: DG or Commission?



Source: Author's calculations from the EUCIQ survey.

Notes: Standardized variables. Mean values and 95 per cent confidence interval, whereby averages higher than zero indicate that a type supports the statement more than the average official. Full wording of the items can be found in the Appendix.

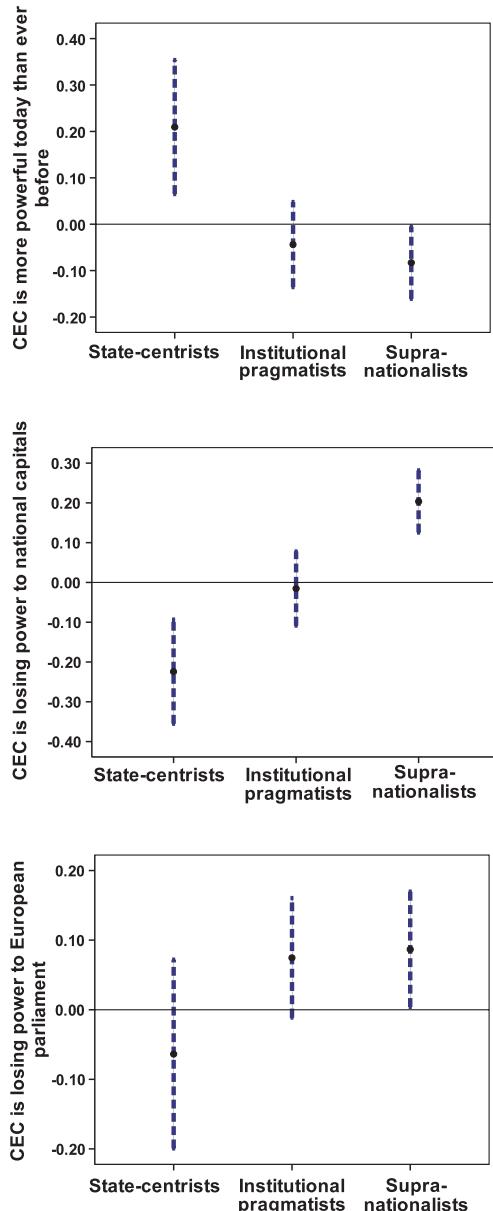
background or professional European background shaping attitudes and beliefs on Europe? Consistent with prior work, this study finds that Commission officials' attitudes on EU jurisdictional options are more strongly influenced by where the official comes from than by his or her current experiences in the Commission. Even in the world's most authoritative international organization with its relatively unconstrained pick of multinational, highly schooled and cosmopolitan personnel, views on jurisdictional architecture are shaped more by where officials come from than where they work in the organization.

The strongest expectation is that an official's nationality shapes the way a person thinks about EU governance. Figure 4 displays the proportion of supranationalists, state-centrists and institutional pragmatists in each nationality. One can easily read off that Britons are predisposed to state-centrism and Belgians to supranationalism. The challenge is to theorize what it is about a particular nationality that explains why some nationalities tend to include more supranationalists, others more state-centrists, and yet others more institutional pragmatists. Four lines of theorizing appear fruitful.

First, the structure of EU government can be conceived as an extension of how the national government functions. Individuals from federal or regionalized countries are more familiar with sharing authority. Extending shared rule to the European level should encounter fewer habitual barriers in a multi-level system (Risse, 2005), and should be less costly to implement since it builds upon, rather than challenges, the status quo. Supranationalists who favour a federal Union are most likely to hail from multi-level systems. Officials who support a state-centric Union should come disproportionately from state-centric systems. Institutional pragmatists should hail from decentralized countries with some practice of sharing authority.

A second line of theorizing conceives EU government as an instrument for the production of public goods by internalizing externalities and reaping economies of scale by

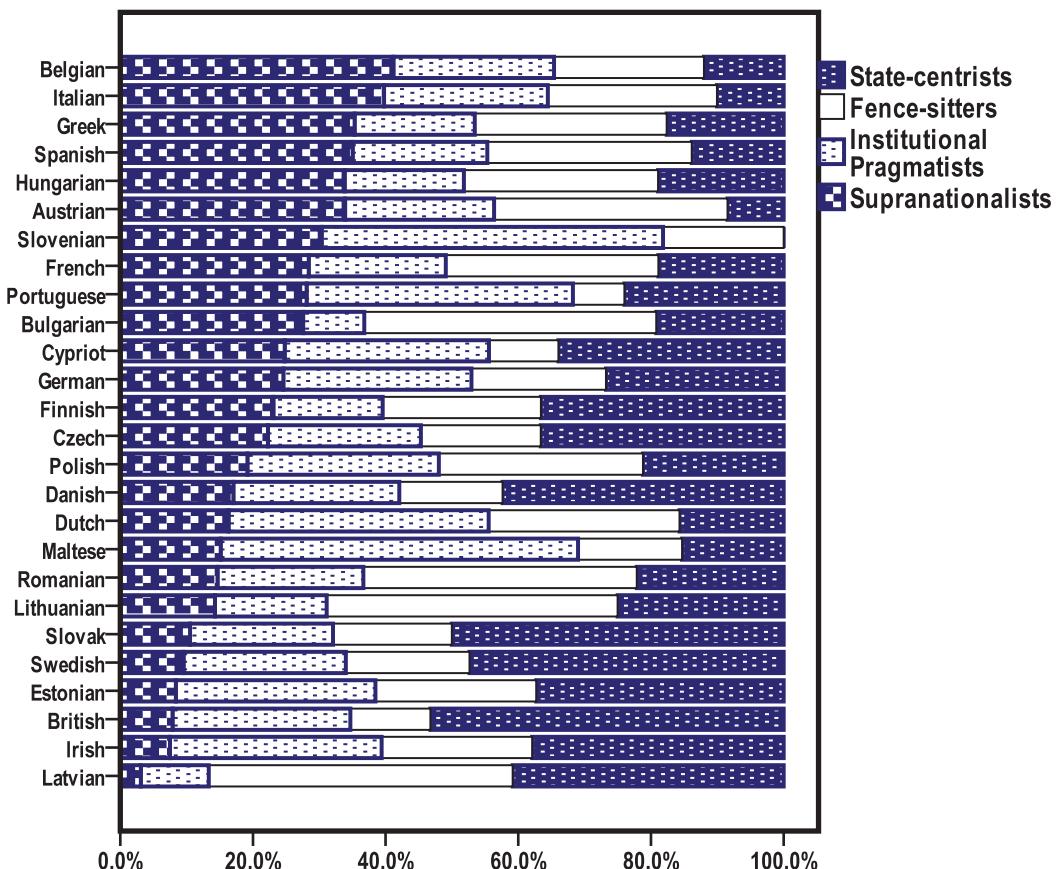
Figure 3d: Beliefs on Institutional Power



Source: Author's calculations from the EUCIQ survey.

Notes: Standardized variables. Mean values and 95 per cent confidence interval, whereby averages higher than zero indicate that a type supports the statement more than the average official. Full wording of the items can be found in the Appendix.

Figure 4: Distribution by Nationality



Source: Author's calculations from the EUCIQ survey.

Note: There is a minimum of 15 officials per nationality; Luxembourg is excluded because only six Luxembourgers responded. Non-responses excluded.

virtue of its size (Alesina and Spolaore, 2003; Hooghe and Marks, 2009b). Countries vary in their need for EU government. The smaller the country, the greater the benefits. Providing European solutions for shared problems is the core rationale of the Community method, and so one would expect institutional pragmatists and supranationalists to come disproportionately from smaller countries.

European government can also substitute for national government if the latter is ineffective in delivering public goods (Sanchez-Cuenca, 2000). Member States differ widely in their governing capacity, and the expectation is that officials from countries where government is less effective should put more faith in a supranational European government. A state-centric EU demands effective national policy institutions, and so institutional pragmatists and state-centrists should come disproportionately from countries with more effective governance.

A final line of argument builds on the work of Stein Rokkan (Rokkan and Urwin, 1983), who examines how religious strife split Europe centuries ago into territories

that rejected the supranational power of Rome and those that embraced it. Scholars have picked up on this to theorize that the Community method has a natural habitat in Catholic societies and state-centrism in non-Catholic and protestant societies (Boomgaarden and Freire, 2009; Madeley, 2008; Minkenberg, 2009; Nelsen *et al.*, 2001).

A compelling counter-hypothesis is that officials' career experiences affect attitudes and beliefs on EU governance. After all, Commission officials run Europe on a daily basis (Page, 1997). The simplest expectation is that the longer an official has worked in the Commission, the more likely he or she supports the Community method (Hooghe, 2005; Lewis, 2005; Trondal, 2007; Trondal *et al.*, 2008). Utility and socialization point in the same direction. Bureaucrats may have an interest in expanding positional power (Franchino, 2007; Niskanen, 1994; Pollack, 2003; Tallberg, 2002). This is reinforced by the fact that Commission work is organized along sectoral or functional lines, which induces Commission officials to de-emphasize territorial or national principles (Egeberg, 2001). Commission officials may also be socialized into the norms laid down in the Treaties which prescribe them to put the general interest of the Union first (Article 17.1, TEU),⁶ use the power of initiative to be the engine of Europe (Article 17.2, TEU) and be independent from national pressures (Article 17.3, TEU).

A more refined line of theorizing predicts systematic differences across DGs, policy field or policy network on the grounds that officials self-select for areas that reinforce their views or that DG practices shape the views of those who work within. Hence one should find a systematic association between DG location and type of official. Officials in competition or trade, areas with decades-long powerful Commission initiative, should be supranationalist. Officials in areas with extensive routinized Member State involvement, such as justice, foreign affairs, defence, education, agriculture or labour market policy, should be state-centrist. Officials in areas where the demand for technical expertise is high and where inter-institutional conflict is detrimental to European co-operation, like fisheries, environment, development and information society, should support institutional pragmatism.

There are at least two ways in which prior career experience could interfere. Commission officials who worked in a national administration or as diplomats prior to joining the Commission should be primed towards state-centric governance (Egeberg, 2001; Hooghe, 2002). National bureaucrats often develop a sense of national public service, adopt particular national administrative styles, and are keyed into national networks (Page, 1995; Suleiman, 1984). Those who wish to keep their national career options open may defend national prerogatives. Conversely, individuals who previously worked in an international organization should be primed to endorse the Community method (Beyers, 2005; Trondal, 2007). Life abroad tends to attenuate links with one's home country while it can forge a community of fate with other expatriates and reinforce preferences for international governance (Fligstein, 2008; for a sceptical view, see Favell, 2008).

Several other factors could have a bearing on Commission officials' views on EU governance. Those mentioned below serve as controls.

Left-of-centre officials should favour supranationalism to correct the EU institutional bias in favour of market-making (Hooghe and Marks, 1999; Streeck and Schmitter, 1991). Right-of-centre officials should favour state-centrism to preserve the separation

⁶ Treaty of the European Union.

between EU market-making and national social regimes. Institutional pragmatists are problem-solvers and should eschew ideology. One should also expect officials with cosmopolitan-libertarian views to be more comfortable with European authority than are conservative individuals (Inglehart, 1970; Marks *et al.*, 2006; Risse, 2010).⁷

Individuals who select the Commission because of a pre-existing commitment to Europe are more likely to be supranationalist or institutional pragmatist and less likely to be state-centrist; individuals with a commitment to a particular policy area should support institutional pragmatism.

Furthermore, public opinion studies suggest that women are more reluctant to embrace European integration. Women tend to occupy positions in the labour market that make them more vulnerable to economic competition, tend to be less interested in foreign policy, and have more compassionate and less competitive values (Gelleny and Anderson, 2000; Nelsen and Guth, 2000), but it is not known whether this holds among elite actors. To the extent that women are more circumspect about power battles they might also be more inclined to support institutional pragmatism. Finally, people with dual or multiple nationality (just under 7 per cent of respondents) should be less inclined to support state-centrism.⁸

Table 1 summarizes these theoretical expectations. The Appendix details operationalization.⁹ Table 2 displays binary logistic regressions for state-centrists and supranationalists *vis-à-vis* their counterparts.

State-centrists and supranationalists are nearly exact mirror images. State-centrists are most likely to come from countries with limited multi-level governance, countries with larger populations, and from Protestant countries. Supranationalists come from countries with multi-level governance, smaller countries, non-Protestant countries and from polities with less effective governance. National background is the bedrock of the state-centric/supranational contrast.

What does professional experience add? The most robust influence is whether, and how long, officials worked in a national administration. State-centrists are likely to have done so; supranationalists unlikely to have done so. There is also some indication that views over EU governance vary across DGs. State-centrists are less likely to work in DGs that require technical expertise, but the effect is not significant for supranationalists.

There are also some interesting non-findings. DGs with strong Commission initiative (for example, competition or trade) neither attract supranationalists nor deter state-centrics.

⁷ A competing anti-postmodern European project has been taking shape. It emphasizes Europe's Christianity, Europe's national traditions and a selective interpretation of Enlightenment values that motivates an exclusionary rhetoric hostile to non-EU foreigners and immigrants. Radical right parties are most vocal, but this vision is also present on the conservative right and in populist hard-left parties (Buruma, 2006; De Vries and Edwards, 2009; Holmes, 2009).

⁸ Seniority, age and EU-12/EU-15 have been touted as possible discriminators of attitudes, but none finds support in the data.

⁹ Since the dependent variables are dichotomous, binary logistic regression or logit is the simplest and most appropriate technique to explore causality (Agresti, 2002; Hilbe, 2009). Logistic regression is useful for situations in which one seeks to predict the presence or absence of a characteristic or outcome. Logistic regression has many analogies to OLS regression: the standardized logit coefficients correspond to beta weights, and a pseudo R^2 statistic summarizes the strength of the relationship. Unlike OLS regression, logistic regression does not assume a linear relationship between dependent and independent variables, does not require normally distributed variables, does not assume homoskedasticity, and in general has less stringent requirements. It does, however, require that observations be independent and that independent variables be linearly related to the logit of the dependent variable. All statistical analyses are restricted to administrators (AD officials) from DGs with a minimum of five respondents. Respondents who answered 'not sure' on one or both key questions were excluded (5.9 per cent), which brings the sample size to 1,648.

Table 1: Expectations

	<i>State-centrist</i>	<i>Institutional pragmatist</i>	<i>Supranationalist</i>
<i>National background</i>			
Multi-level governance	–	0	+
Country size	+	–	–
Government effectiveness	+	+	–
Protestantism	+	–	–
<i>Professional background</i>			
Length in Commission	–	+	+
Policy DG with strong Commission initiative	–	+	+
Policy DG with technical content	0	+	0
Length in national administration	+	–	–
International career	–	+	+
<i>Ideological background</i>			
Left/right ideology	+	0	–
Gal/tan ideology	+	0	–
<i>Motivation</i>			
Commitment to Europe	–	+	+
Commitment to a policy area	–	+	–
<i>Personal characteristics</i>			
Gender	+	+	–
Dual or multiple nationality	–	+	+

Source: Author's calculations from the EUCIQ survey.

Note: ‘–’ stands for an expectation that the relationship is significant and negative, ‘+’ stands for the expectation that the relationship is significant and positive, and ‘0’ stands for a weak and/or indeterminate relationship.

There is no evidence of a power struggle between different DGs. Nor is there evidence that an international career in the Commission, or beyond, breeds supranationalism.

The strongest control variable is motivation to join the Commission. Some 72 per cent of respondents claim commitment to Europe, but only 55 per cent of state-centrists do as against 79 per cent of supranationalists and 72 per cent of institutional pragmatists. Supranationalists are less likely than others to mention a policy commitment – for instance, to help developing countries, or combat climate change. Ideology matters for state-centrists: they are to the right of the average Commission official on both economic left/right ideology and non-economic gal/tan (liberal/conservative) ideology. Finally, women are less supranational and more state-centric: 29.3 per cent of supranationalists are female and 42.2 per cent of state-centrists, compared to 36.1 per cent in the whole sample.

State-centrists and supranationalists in the Commission have distinctive national, professional, ideological, motivational and even demographic profiles. To see the distinctiveness of the institutional pragmatists one needs to conduct two-way comparisons, as in Table 3. One way to describe institutional pragmatists is to say that their national and demographic background is similar to that of state-centrists, and their ideological and motivational outlook is similar to that of supranationalists. Like state-centrists, institutional pragmatists come from less decentralized, more effectively run polities, are often former

Table 2: Who is State-Centrist? Who is Supranationalist?

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Source: Author's calculations from the EUICQ survey.

Notes: N = 1,258 (three types). B is standardized since all nondichotomous variables are standardized around the mean. The Wald's Chi² is a conservative parametric statistic to test the significance of the true value of the parameter based on the sample estimate. Associations significant at the 0.05 level are bolded, significant at the 0.10 level are italicized. H & L X² stands for the Hosmer and Lemeshow Chi² statistic which is a measure of the overall goodness of fit of the model, as is the -2 log likelihood statistic. Cox & Snell and Nagelkerke are conservative and liberal measures of pseudo-R². Results are similar when correcting for standard errors clustered by nationality.

Table 3: Institutional Pragmatists and Their Counterparts

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Source: Author's calculations from the EUCLIQ survey.
Notes: N = 662 (state-centric + institutional pragmatists) and 1,050 (supranationalists + institutional pragmatists). B is standardized since all nondichotomous variables are standardized around the mean. The Wald's Chi² is a conservative parametric statistic to test the significance of the true value of the parameter based on the sample estimate. Associations significant at the 0.05 level are bolded, and significant at the 0.10 level bolded italicized H & L X² is the Hosmer and Lemeshow Chi² statistic which is a measure of the overall goodness of fit of the model, as is the -2 log likelihood statistic. Cox & Snell and Nagelkerke are conservative and liberal measures of pseudo-R². Results are similar when correcting for standard errors clustered by nationality.

national civil servants, and women are over-represented (40.2 per cent). Like supranationalists, institutional pragmatists are left-of-centre ideologically and strongly committed to Europe. However, their professional background differentiates them strongly from both state-centrists and supranationalists: they work in policy DGs with high technical content rather than in ‘high-politics’ DGs. Institutional pragmatists differ also from supranationalists in their strong commitment to a particular policy area over and above their commitment to Europe. This is consistent with the view that the Commission should elide institutional power battles to get the (technical) job done. The contemporary official Commission line, which defends a Community method without federal ambition, finds support in the ranks, but not across the board.

One out of five officials sits ‘on the fence’. As Figure 2 illustrates, most fence-sitters are part-time neutrals: they steer towards the middle on whether the College of Commissioners should become the government (14.1 per cent) or on Member States as central pillars (2.6 per cent). Some 3.3 per cent are neutral on both.¹⁰ Fence-sitters fit on most indicators between institutional pragmatists and supranationalists with one major exception: they are much less likely to work in technical DGs. They are distinctive from state-centrists on practically all indicators: they hail from multi-level, smaller, less effective, non-Protestant countries, are less likely to be former national civil servants, more left and liberal, more committed to Europe, and somewhat more likely to be male.

Conclusions

The founding treaties and rules of procedure give the European Commission the power to set the agenda for Europe and hence anchor the Community method. However, there is more than one way to hammer this prescription into jurisdictional architecture. Haas envisaged that the Commission’s role would give rise to a hybrid between federalism and intergovernmentalism, but Hallstein thought the Community method required a federal Union. Of course, the agenda-setting role of the Commission has always had its detractors, but state-centric voices are now louder than ever. One consequence is that the Commission’s jurisdictional vision has weakened. New public management reforms, which prioritize management over initiative, and EU enlargement, which triggered unprecedented personnel turnover and multiplied policy challenges, have further eroded the Commission’s sense of purpose. The upshot is a plurality of jurisdictional views in the Commission. Some proponents of European integration support the Community method; others do not. Some supporters of the Community method want a federal Union; others do not.

Our survey detects considerable variation. No more than half of Commission officials take sides in the partisan battle between supranationalism and state-centrism. Supranationalists outnumber state-centrists more than two to one. The former are the programmatic descendants of Monnet, Hallstein and perhaps Delors. They support the Community method as a stepping-stone to a federal Europe. State-centrists stand closer to the modal national politician: European integration is desirable, but so is intergovernmentalism.

¹⁰ Included in this category are also a small number of officials who support both statements (1.2 per cent). One might argue that these are institutional pragmatists. It does not affect the results whether they are included among the institutional pragmatists or the fence-sitters. Appendix Table C presents the logistic analyses comparing fence-sitters with state-centrists, supranationalists and institutional pragmatists.

Sociologically, supranationalists and state-centrists are each other's mirror image. Supranationalists are moderately left-libertarian, male, and tend to come from small, decentralized, non-Protestant countries or polities with less effective government. State-centrists tend to come from large, centralized, Protestant countries, are former national civil servants, work in policy areas with low technical content, and are right of centre. The types are not distinctively different in age, seniority, length of service or transnational experience. And while they champion different jurisdictional options, their disagreement is bounded: Europe, and in particular the EU, is desirable and a source of motivation for both. Some 79 per cent of supranationalists joined the Commission because of their commitment to Europe, but so did 55 per cent of state-centrists. The modal state-centrist is far from a programmatic descendant of de Gaulle, Thatcher or Klaus.

Nearly three out of ten Commission officials reject primacy for either the Commission or the Member States. We have labelled them 'institutional pragmatists' because they side-step institutional battles with the Member States. They are tolerant of national quotas, but critical of reducing the Commission to a manager. They are loyal to the Commission, but somewhat detached from the College's *political* stances. However, there is one institutional fight they are willing to take on: that with the European Parliament over the Commission's monopoly of legislative initiative. Institutional pragmatists come mostly from less decentralized, non-Protestant countries, or polities with more effective governance; they work in policy areas with high technical content; they lean to the left on gal/tan issues; and they are disproportionately female. The institutional pragmatist is strongly committed to Europe, and even more so to a particular policy.

Institutional pragmatists are defenders of the Community method, restored to its original form and stripped of its federal ambitions. This is the oldest conception of EU governance, as described by Haas, in which European integration becomes a unique experiment in overcoming national sovereignty through 'engrenage' rather than weakening national institutions, and through epistemic communities rather than electoral competition. The method was designed in an era where European integration was an elite-driven, consensual, project. However, the EU has become a contentious polity, where ideological conflict and populist politics could at any time disrupt engrenage and epistemic decision-making. Hence the institutional pragmatist view does not sit comfortably with Europe's political parties, citizens or media, and is only dimly understood by contemporary national elites. It is a view from the inside, and it is a vulnerable view.

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Appendix Table A: Operationalization

<i>Dependent variables</i>	
State-centrist	Dichotomous variable, whereby value = 1 when respondent disagrees strongly or tends to disagree with item A <i>and</i> agrees strongly, tends to agree or neither agrees nor disagrees with item B.
Institutional pragmatist	Dichotomous variable, whereby value = 1 when respondent disagrees strongly or tends to disagree with both item A and item B.
Supranationalist	Dichotomous variable, whereby value = 1 when respondent agrees strongly or tends to agree with item A <i>and</i> disagrees strongly or tends to disagree with item B.
Item A	'Some people want the College of Commissioners to become the government of the European Union. What do you think?' (5-point scale)
Item B	'Some argue that Member States – not the Commission or European Parliament – should be the central players in the European Union. What is your position?' (5-point scale)
<i>Independent variables</i>	
Multi-level governance	Regional authority index for each Member State for 1996–2006, a measure of the extent of self-rule and shared rule for each intermediate tier of regional government. Standardized around the mean. <i>Source:</i> RAI data set by Hooghe <i>et al.</i> (2010), available at: < http://www.unc.edu/~hooghe >.
Country size	Country's population in 2008 (in 000s). Standardized around the mean.
Government effectiveness	Country average for 1996–2006; standardized around the mean. Government effectiveness is one of six measures developed by the Worldwide Governance Indicators Program by 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 non-governmental organization experts, public opinion and firm surveys. <i>Source:</i> Kaufmann <i>et al.</i> (2009), available at: < http://info.worldbank.org/governance/wgi/index.aspx >.
Protestantism	Percentage of Protestant population for each Member State in 2008; standardized around the mean. <i>Source:</i> United States State Department, <i>International Religious Freedom Report 2008</i> , available at: < http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/irf/ >.
Length in Commission Policy DG with strong Commission initiative	Years of service in the Commission; standardized around the mean. <i>Source:</i> Survey. Dichotomous variable taking on the value of '1' if a respondent works in a policy area that meets certain criteria on level <i>and</i> scope of EU authority, whereby level and scope are derived by Börzel from formal Treaty rules. Policies score 3 or higher on a 5-point scale on level of authority (whereby 3 = shared EU and national competences) and 3.75 or higher on a 5-point scale (whereby 3.75 = exclusive right of Commission initiative + full judicial review + co-decision) on scope of authority. Policy scores are averaged across the Amsterdam, Nice and Constitutional Treaties and then allocated to the most closely corresponding DG. Non-policy DGs (for example, legal service, Secretary General) are scored '0'. <i>Source:</i> Own calculations derived from Börzel (2005).
Policy DG with technical content	Dichotomous variable taking on the value of '1' if a respondent works in a policy DG that demands above-average technical expertise – that is, agriculture, development, environment, EuropeAid, fisheries, information society and media, internal market, joint research centre, taxation and customs union. <i>Source:</i> Own coding.
National administrative career	Years of prior service in national/regional/local administration; standardized around the mean. <i>Source:</i> Survey.
International career	Years of prior service in an international organization (non-EU) or other EU institution; standardized around the mean. <i>Source:</i> Survey.

Appendix Table A: (*Continued*)

Left/right ideology	Individual responses on an 11-point scale tapping personal philosophy; standardized around the mean. ‘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?’ <i>Source:</i> Survey.
Gal/tan ideology	Individual responses on an 11-point scale tapping personal philosophy; standardized around the mean. ‘People often think of themselves in terms of their personal philosophical stance on social and cultural issues. Many people who consider themselves 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?’ <i>Source:</i> Survey.
Motivation:	‘Why did you choose to follow a career in the European Commission? (Please choose as many as are relevant). Options: 1. Job stability; 2. Promising career prospects; 3. Competitive remuneration; 4. Commitment to Europe; 5. Commitment to a particular policy area; 6. Quality of the work; 7. I was asked to apply.’ Options 4 and 5 were used to construct dichotomous variables. <i>Source:</i> Survey.
Gender	Dichotomous variable whereby 0 = male and 1 = female. <i>Source:</i> Survey.
Dual nationality	Dichotomous variable where 0 = if respondent has one nationality and 1 = if respondent has dual or multiple nationality. <i>Source:</i> Survey.

Appendix Table B: Items in Figure 3 (5-point Scales)

Commission initiative

- 1a The Commission should primarily focus on managing existing policies rather than developing new ones.
- 1b The more Member States the EU has, the more important is the Commission’s role as policy initiator.
- 1c The Commission should share its sole right of initiative with the European Parliament.

Accommodating national interests

- 2a Some argue that posts in the Commission should be distributed on the basis of geographical balance.
- 2b It is more important to have one Commissioner per Member State than to have a smaller and more efficient College.

Loyalty to Commission or to DG

- 3a Commission officials work for their DG first, then for the Commission.

Beliefs about the role of the Commission in EU governance

- 4a The Commission is more powerful today than ever before.
- 4b The Commission is losing power to national capitals.
- 4c The Commission is losing power to the European Parliament.

Appendix Table C: Fence-Sitters and Their Counterparts

Fence-sitters compared to	Institutional pragmatists			Supranationalists			State-centrists	
	B-value	Wald's χ^2	B-value	Wald's χ^2	B-value	Wald's χ^2	B-value	Wald's χ^2
<i>National background</i>								
Multi-level governance								
Country size	0.21	3.63	-0.28	6.87	0.51	11.41		
Government effectiveness	-0.10	1.27	0.16	3.13	-0.31	6.55		
Protestantism	-0.29	6.38	0.06	0.56	-0.31	4.52		
<i>Professional background</i>								
Length in Commission								
Policy DG with Commission initiative	-0.09	0.97	-0.10	1.31	-0.07	0.42		
Policy DG with technical content	0.12	0.37	0.06	0.09	-0.04	0.03		
Prior national administrative career	-0.59	12.39	-0.29	3.07	0.27	1.23		
Prior international career	-0.03	0.20	0.12	2.33	-0.17	3.59		
<i>Controls</i>								
Left/right ideology								
Gallfan ideology	-0.08	1.01	0.03	0.19	-0.19	3.71		
Commitment to Europe	-0.02	0.06	0.08	1.17	-26	6.79		
Commitment to a policy	0.04	0.06	-0.27	2.54	0.79	14.92		
Gender (woman)	-0.29	2.68	0.12	0.43	-0.16	0.49		
Dual nationality	-0.13	0.70	0.40	6.69	-0.35	2.82		
$-\log \text{likelihood} = 1042.6;$								
$H & L X^2 = 6.02$, with 8 df and								
$p = 0.65$; Cox & Snell $R^2 = 0.04$;								
Nagelkerke $R^2 = 0.06$								
$-\log \text{likelihood} = 1168.6;$								
$H & L X^2 = 19.22$, with 8 df and								
$p = 0.01$; Cox & Snell $R^2 = 0.04$;								
Nagelkerke $R^2 = 0.06$								

Source: Author's calculations from the EUCIQ survey.

Notes: N = 822 (institutional pragmatists + fence-sitters) and 570 (state-centrists + fence-sitters). B is standardized since all nondichotomous variables are standardized around the mean. The Wald's Chi² is a conservative parametric statistic to test the significance of the parameter based on the sample estimate. Associations significant at the 0.05 level are bolded, and significant at the 0.10 level bolded italicized. H & L X² is the Hosmer and Lemeshow Chi² statistic which is a measure of the overall goodness of fit of the model, as is the -2 log likelihood statistic. Cox & Snell and Nagelkerke are conservative and liberal measures of pseudo-R². Results are similar when correcting for standard errors clustered by nationality.

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