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## When Quantity Matters Activity Levels and Re-Election Prospects of Members of the European Parliament

Emmanuel Sigalas



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## **Abstract**

After each European election nearly half of the outgoing Members of the European Parliament re-enter the EP for an additional legislative term. Despite this being a persistent phenomenon, the reasons behind it are still unclear. In this paper I test the hypothesis that the work of MEPs in the EP affects their chances for re-election. I argue that there are reasons both in favour and against the link between MEP activity and performance and re-election. On the one hand, European elections are second-order, which means that citizens' criteria largely concentrate on domestic issues, thus constraining incentives to maximise MEPs' performance in the EP. On the other, MEPs may wish to prove to their European political group, their national party and their constituents that they are hard-working parliamentarians who deserve to be re-elected and climb the EP hierarchy.

The paper focuses on the quantitative aspect of MEPs' work in the EP. As sensationalist evidence on MEPs' performance is more likely to resonate with the public, crude quantitative indicators cannot be dismissed light-heartedly. National media have often picked up how many reports, resolutions and questions MEPs have drafted in order to distinguish between 'top' and 'bottom' performers, and MEPs have proven particularly sensitive in this respect. Furthermore, increased activity in the EP implies expertise and political experience which may be valued by the national parties. The data analysis confirms that MEP output and re-election are associated.

## **Keywords**

European Elections — European Parliament — Members of European Parliament (MEPs) — MEP Monitoring — Performance Indicators — Re-Election



## Introduction

The main avenue through which citizens can influence polity and policy choices in representative democracies is the election of their parliamentary representatives and consequently of their government. At the national level the citizens can express their dissatisfaction or approval of the government's and opposition's performance, and their agreement, or lack thereof, with the programmatic proposals of the incumbent and of the other parties at the parliamentary elections, assuming free and fair elections. The responsible government party model implies that national citizens can assess the performance of their representatives and pass judgement through their vote (Sartori 2005). Despite the phenomena of low turnout, political apathy and disenchantment with party politics, parliamentary elections remain at the core of democratic politics in Europe and beyond.

The responsible party model, however, does not appear to apply at the European Union (EU) level (Marsh and Norris 1997). Even though the powers of the European Parliament (EP) have been increasing continuously over the years, the EP has been directly elected by all the European citizens since 1979 and the Members of the EP (MEPs) sit in transnational political groups in the EP, there is no EU government that can be held directly accountable to the citizens. Furthermore, the European elections are largely second-order which means that they are treated as an opportunity to punish the incumbent national party and that the focus is on national rather than European matters (Marsh and Mikhaylov 2010). Hence, scholars such as Hix and Lord (1996), Marsh and Norris (1997), Hix et al. (2007) and Judge and Earnshaw (2008) argue that there is no electoral connection between the European citizens and political decisions at the European level. It logically follows, that what happens inside the EP has a limited impact on the electoral fortunes of the MEPs and consequently the latter may have a reduced incentive to perform well in the EP. In other words, If citizens vote in the European elections not according to past performance and future perspectives but purely according to domestic priorities and concerns, then it should make little difference to their re-election prospects if MEPs are highly active or not. I call this the standard viewpoint - a term that serves to highlight that there is an alternative possibility which maintains that what and how much the MEPs do in the EP has more consequences than what is generally assumed.

The EP has striven for increased transparency in its operations and it has ensured that the activity records of all current and past MEPs from the third EP term (1989-1994) onwards are publicly available. As a result, any member of the public with internet access can easily find how many and what kind of reports, questions, speeches, motions for resolutions, written declarations, and opinions their MEP has produced. While probably only few individual voters will trouble themselves with retrieving this information to decide for which party and MEP candidate they will vote for, it is possible that this kind of information will be used, and misused, by the media and political opponents or supporters of the candidates.

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\* This paper is based on a previous version of a paper presented at the 12<sup>th</sup> biennial EUSA international conference in Boston, USA (3-5 March 2011). I would like to thank all panel participants for their feedback and especially Christine Arnold. I am also indebted to Christopher Lord, who not only offered valuable suggestions and comments, but also initiated my interest in this research area. Finally, my thanks also goes to Johannes Pollak, who read and commented an earlier version of my paper.

The MEPs need not only be concerned about positive publicity to have a rich activity record to display. As Scarrow (1997) showed, an increasing number of MEPs is interested to pursue their political careers in the EP. To ensure re-election, therefore, they need their party leaderships to re-nominate them as MEP candidates, and, holding other parameters equal, a rich activity record in the EP may give them an advantage over alternative candidates. From their side, national parties interested in maximising their influence in the EP and consequently in the EU policy making process have a good reason to send experienced candidates with a good activity record, because such candidates may be more likely to occupy positions of responsibility in the supranational chamber. Therefore, MEPs who aspire for a long-term career in the EP may wish to prove to their national parties and the European political groups (EPGs) they belong to that they have been active parliamentarians in the past.

This paper links the performance of the MEPs in the EP with their re-election chances. In particular, I examine if sixth term (2004-09) MEPs with a quantitatively rich record of European parliamentary activity were more likely to be re-elected in the seventh term. In the following section I develop my theoretical framework where I contrast the standard account with a number of reasons why MEP activity level may be linked to their re-election chances. Following that, I develop a series of testable hypotheses and I present the data I use in the quantitative analysis. The latter involves both descriptive and inductive statistics. I show that there is substantial variation in the activity level of MEPs, and that re-elected MEPs were in general more active than non-re-elected. Furthermore, I show that MEPs from smaller EPGs or from countries where some form of preferential voting is exercised pursue different activities than those from larger EPGs or closed party list countries, in order to increase their prospects of re-nomination and re-election.

## **Re-election as function of MEP performance**

### **Two different theoretical accounts**

The electoral disconnection between European citizens and political decisions at the EU level ultimately derives from there being no EU-level government for which citizens can vote. In policy areas where the Council of Ministers does not have the exclusive right of decision-making, the decisions are taken jointly with the EP. European citizens can influence the Council decisions only indirectly by voting in their countries' general elections for a national government. The EP, on the other hand, is directly elected by the citizens, but it is a process dominated by the national instead of the European level parties, and the European elections have the characteristics of national mid-term elections (Reif and Schmitt 1980; Marsh 1998; Hix and Marsh 2007, Marsh and Mikhaylov 2010). The second-order nature of the European elections is due to a combination of factors including the lack of a pan-European election campaign, a limited public understanding of the EP and a lack of interest in its affairs, the absence of transnational candidate lists and, perhaps most importantly, the national party prerogative to nominate MEP candidates.

The fact that the candidate selection process remains at the national level, whereas the role of the European level parties in the elections is confined to the drafting of transnational manifestos, which hardly reflect the national manifesto positions

(Sigalas and Pollak forthcoming), lead Judge and Earnshaw (2008) to talk of a 'division of labour' between national and European level parties.

One of the consequences of this division of labour [...] has been a fracturing of the normal liberal democratic linkage between the activity of representatives in Parliament and their electoral accountability. In the EU, what MEPs do, or what their party groups do in the EP, is not the primary determinant of reelection [...], or, for MEPs, of reselection.

(Judge and Earnshaw 2008: 117)

Despite the fracture of the 'liberal democratic linkage', it may be exaggerated, if not plainly wrong, to conclude, in the absence of empirical evidence, that what MEPs do in the EP does not influence their re-election.

Re-election in the EP depends on three essential and a number of facilitating conditions. The first essential condition is that the outgoing MEP should desire their re-election in the EP. The second essential condition is that their party should re-nominate them and place them on an electable position, a process which may be more or less open and democratic depending on the party's decision-making system (Hix and Lord 1997). The third essential condition is that the MEP candidate's national party has to perform sufficiently well in the elections. Although the candidate's own responsibility for re-election may be a bit more pronounced in countries where preferential voting is allowed (open list), the electoral fate of the candidate and their party coincide to a large degree. If meeting the first essential condition is a matter of personal choice, the other two conditions depend on factors beyond the candidate's direct control. The best they can do is to try to prove to their party that their re-nomination is commendable, and to the electorate that their re-election is worthwhile. Past performance in the EP may be important in this respect. MEPs with a rich portfolio of work in the EP may have an advantage over candidates who performed poorly during the last term. Since the EP legislates together with the Council of Ministers and it has far from negligible political powers, the national parties may wish to re-nominate candidates who already have sufficient experience with EU affairs and can achieve the most in the EP. As the literature has shown, EP rapporteurs play an important role in the EU legislative making process (e.g., Mamadouh and Raunio 2003, Benedetto 2005, Ringe 2010, Yoshinaka et al. 2010) and the asking of questions in the EP can be used as a means to exercise EU oversight (Proksch and Slapin 2010). Thus, internal party balances and developments aside, the party leadership should take into account, if a candidate has been a rapporteur before, if he or she has held any offices in the EP and, in general, if he or she has been or is likely to be active in the EP.

Taking into account that 'the European Parliament is beginning to attract delegates who serve long European careers' (Scarrow 1997), MEPs may wish to boost their parliamentary output, in order to prove their worth also to their peers and start or continue climbing the EP hierarchy ladder. But there is yet another reason why MEPs may be concerned about their parliamentary productivity. In an effort to boost its transparency credentials the EP has made public all the reports, questions, speeches, motions for resolutions, written declarations, opinions and reports amended of all the MEPs since the third EP term. In addition, the EP website names the committees each MEP is participating, gives a short biographical note and, since the beginning of the

seventh term, the plenary attendance rate of each MEP. In short, what MEPs do in the EP, and especially how much of it, is easily accessible to every citizen and can be used for a variety of purposes.

### **Performance indicators made public**

It is safe to assume that relatively few voters know what their MEPs vote or how, what kind of reports they produce, what they say in their speeches in the plenary, or what is the content of their questions to the EU institutions. In other words, the content of their work in the EP remains largely unknown to the wider public, despite the fact that this information is easily accessible. National media rarely report on the quality of the MEPs' output, and the majority of European citizens do not bother finding out themselves. In contrast, both voters and the national media may pay greater attention to sensationalist accounts related to the work, or lack thereof, of their representatives. As the recent turmoil in the UK House of Commons reminded us, financial (and other) scandals of members of parliaments attract easily the attention of the public, the media and of political opponents. It is not so surprising, therefore, that fraud allegations or the costs associated with the geographical dispersion of the EP in three countries (France, Belgium and Luxembourg) feature more often in the national media than the content or the quality of MEPs' parliamentary work (see, for instance, *Der Standard* 30.4.-1.5.2011, *BBC News* 21.2.2008). Similarly, it is not the quality, but the quantity of the MEPs' parliamentary output that has attracted (mostly negative) media attention.

In 2009 an Italian MEP assistant became overnight famous, because he designed a website ([Parlorama.eu](http://Parlorama.eu)) which used the EP's own raw numbers of MEP reports, questions, written declarations, opinions, motions for resolutions, speeches and the plenary attendance rates to rank MEPs according to their quantitative output. Some MEPs saw their name (and their photograph) to feature high or low in this list without any further clarifications. Realising that to be labelled as the 'worst' MEP in terms of parliamentary productivity was far from flattering, not all MEPs welcomed this unsolicited 'EP transparency' initiative. After only a few weeks the MEP assistant was forced to shut down this website following the complaints of a number of MEPs and the threat of legal action against him.

In spite of the almost immediate removal of the *Parlorama* website, the damage had been done. A number of newspapers across Europe picked up this opportunity and disseminated the unofficial MEP ranking list whether they saw its flaws or not. In the immediate weeks prior to the 2009 European election ballot one could find several MEP activity-related articles not only in the tabloids but also in broadsheet newspapers (Table 1). The reaction from the EP deputies was not uniform, and understandably so. Those on the bottom of the list had every reason to be concerned about a negative effect on their public image, whereas those with a rich record and a good rank saw the list as an opportunity to boost their image as hard-working and effective parliamentarians. Thus, whereas the German MEP Silvana Koch-Mehrin not only complained to the *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* but also brought legal charges against it (*Hamburger Abendblatt* 4.6.2009), the Greek MEP Dimitris Papadimoulis boasted that "with one MEP we achieved much. With more [MEPs] we can do more"<sup>1</sup> (Papadimoulis 18.5.2009).

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<sup>1</sup> Author's own translation.



**Table 1:** Selection of European Newspaper Articles Dealing with MEP Performance.

- FAZ (21.4.09) *Statistisch erfasste Europa-Parlamentier*
- Libération (23.4.09) *The MEP winners*
- Gazeta Wyborcza (11.5.09) *Hołowczyc the laziest Polish MEP*
- TA NEA (19.5.09) *Cutting MEPs' bonuses*
- The Guardian (27.5.09) *The real expenses scandal is in Brussels* (comments on openeurope.org.uk ranking)
- Daily Telegraph (2.6.09) *Britain's best-value MEPs revealed* (questions, issue voting, expenses info)
- Saarbrücker Zeitung (3.6.09) *Wer ist der faulste EU-Abgeordnete?*
- FAZ (4.6.09) *Wie fleißig ist Silvana Koch-Mehrin?*
- Hamburger Abendblatt (4.6.09) *Niederlage für Silvana Koch-Mehrin*
- Österreich (26.12.09) *EU-Politiker: Die Faulen & Die Fleißigen*
- News.at (20.1.10) *Grüne Lunacek faulste EU-Abgeordnete*
- Der Spiegel (7.6.10) *Gigi Becali "...er ist der faulste EU-Abgeordnete"*
- Kopp Online (13.1.11) *So faul sind unsere EU-Politiker*

Source: European Parliament (2010) and Votewatch (2011).

The interest of the national media in the quantitative output of the MEPs will in all likelihood recur in the next European elections. After the Parlorama website went offline a number of other websites monitoring MEP performance have sprung up: mepranking.eu, kohovolit.eu, openeurope.org.uk, and votewatch.eu (from which part of my own MEP performance data derive), and the list may grow further in the future. Journalists seeking to identify the 'laziest' or 'most hardworking' MEPs in the 2014 European elections will have no difficulty at all.

## Hypotheses

Contrary to the standard account, therefore, what MEPs do in the EP may matter after all. Perhaps more astonishingly, the quantity of their output may be as important as the quality. This leads me to my first and main testable hypothesis:

**H1:** Re-elected MEPs are more likely to have produced a higher number of reports (questions, speeches, motions for resolutions, written declarations and amended reports) in the previous EP term than MEPs who were not re-elected.

Attendance in the EP sessions, especially the plenary sessions, can also be viewed and treated as parliamentary output that relates to the possibility of re-election. Firstly because the media present low attendance rates as a form of truancy which reflects badly on the MEPs' public profile (Österreich, 26.12.09, Kopp Online, 13.1.2011), and

secondly because careerist MEPs may want to participate in as many plenary votes as possible. If this is correct, the following hypothesis should hold.

**H2:** Re-elected MEPs have a higher EP plenary session attendance rate than not re-elected MEPs.

Hypothesis 1 has to be refined further, in order to take into account the main constraint MEPs face in relation to their output level. The production of reports, questions, speeches etc. is not subject simply to the MEPs' personal preferences, but also to the rules of procedure the EP. In general, the EP rules aim for proportionality between the European political groups (EPGs). Reports, for instance, are distributed according to a points system which allocates points, and consequently reports, according to the size of the EPGs.<sup>3</sup> The two largest EPGs, the European People's Party (EPP) and the Party of European Socialists (PES), have more leeway to choose the number or the type of the reports they are interested in (Mamadouh and Raunio 2003), whereas the smaller EPGs have to take either what is left or to commit disproportionately many points to get a popular report (Corbett et al. 2007). This places the EPP and PES MEPs at an advantageous position compared to their colleagues from the smaller EPGs. In order to compensate for this, the latter may try to attract more attention through the other EP instruments at their disposal, in particular, through producing an increased number of questions, written declarations and speeches in the plenary. Hypothesis three, therefore, reads:

**H3:** Re-elected MEPs of the two larger EPGs (EPP and PES) are likely to have produced more reports compared to other MEPs. Re-elected MEPs of smaller EPGs are more likely to have produced more questions, speeches, written declarations, motions for resolutions, opinions and amended reports.

Another source of parliamentary output variation that may affect the chances for re-election is the electoral system. MEPs who are elected in countries where a closed party list is used are relatively more immune from public and media pressure. However, they are more dependent on their national parties and this may influence their choices in the EP. In particular, MEPs from closed party list systems may place more emphasis on the legislative role of the EP which even though does not attract public attention easily, is of political importance to national parties seeking to influence policy outcomes. In contrast, media attention-seeking MEPs may resort more easily to questions, speeches, written declarations and motions for resolutions. Assuming that attention-seeking is greater among closed rather than open party lists MEPs, hypothesis four should stand.

**H4:** MEPs re-elected under electoral systems where preferential voting is allowed, are more likely to concentrate on speeches in the plenary, written questions and declarations and motions for resolutions. Closed party list MEPs are more likely to concentrate on drafting reports.

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<sup>3</sup> The exact mechanics of the report allocation system are the subject of investigation of a number of scholars, including Bowler and Farrell (1995), Mamadouh and Raunio (2003), Benedetto (2005), Hoyland (2006) and Yoshinaka et al. (2010). Interestingly enough, Keading (2005) contends that in practice the EP report allocation system is highly disproportional.

The remaining two hypotheses are alternative hypotheses. They link MEP's re-election probability not with the parliamentary process output but with the input. Hypothesis five maintains that if national parties are interested in having experienced politicians in the EP to represent their interests (Gherghina and Chiru 2010), they may prefer candidates who have served as MEPs before without necessarily taking into account their productivity level. The age of the candidate can also be used as a proxy of political experience. Hence:

**H5:** Older and MEP candidates who have served before as deputies in the EP have better chances to be re-elected than younger MEPs and novices.<sup>4</sup>

A central EP-related activity that may overshadow the importance of MEPs' productivity levels is their voting loyalty to their national party and to a lesser extent to their EPG or their national group. National parties may be much more sensitive to the voting behaviour of their MEPs than to how productive the latter are. Breaking the party line undermines party cohesion and stability and is usually actively discouraged. EPG voting cohesion is also important, but the EPGs lack the means to enforce it. Nevertheless, MEPs who desire to stay long-term in the EP certainly have an interest not to contradict their EPG line repeatedly. Finally, breaking away from the national group majority vote may not have the same repercussions as the other two forms of defection, but standing out can be electorally detrimental, particularly if it is perceived by the electorate as going against the national priorities or interests. Thus, my last testable hypothesis states:

**H6:** Voting loyalty to the national party, EPG or the country majority is more important for re-election than MEPs' parliamentary output level.

## Research design and data

To test whether increased productivity in the EP is associated with a higher probability of re-election, I examine the parliamentary output level of the sixth term MEPs (2004-09) in terms of number of reports, questions, speeches in the plenary, written declarations, opinions, motions for resolutions and reports amended, and how these numbers correlate with re-election in the seventh term. This operationalisation of MEP activity does not cover all the dimensions of MEP's work, and it certainly does not assess the quality or the content of their parliamentary output. With regard to the former the study deliberately ignores how many and which committees or delegations MEPs participated in. It also remains silent on the question of holding any positions of responsibility in the EP. Similarly, the activities or functions of the MEPs outside the EP are beyond the scope of the present study.

It should be emphasised that the empirical analysis does not aim to pass any judgement regarding how well MEPs perform their role. It is by no means self-evident that the primary goal of the MEPs should be to produce as many reports or questions, for instance, as possible. However, and for the reasons I outlined in the previous section, the quantitative dimension of MEPs' work in the EP may have

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<sup>4</sup> The relationship between age and re-election is likely to be curvilinear instead of linear. From a certain age onwards political experience and re-election will be disassociated simply because politicians reach their retirement age. This aspect will be examined in future research.

important political implications and ought to be studied carefully. Furthermore, the data presented here are often raw figures which may not always do fully justice to the MEP. For example, low attendance rate in the plenary sessions does not necessarily mean the MEP shirked from their duties. He or she might have been on parental leave (as Silvana Koch-Mehrin argued), on sick leave or on official travel. Finally, other data measuring MEP performance such as attendance in the EP committees are not yet publicly available and researchers will have to make do without them. Even though their availability would have been welcome, the data gap does not so much undermine as highlight one of the main theoretical points of the study: voters judge their MEPs according to the publicly available information, however incomplete, imperfect or misleading they may be.

The data on the age and the number of years MEPs have served in the EP are taken directly from the EP's website (European Parliament 2010). The data on the output level of each MEP, their attendance rate in the plenary as well as their voting loyalty towards their national party delegation, their EPG and their country group overall are all taken from the Votewatch website (Votewatch 2011) which in turn draws on the EP's official website.

All MEPs who served in the EP for less than the full five year period have been excluded from the sample. This includes the Bulgarian and Romanian MEPs who joined officially the EP in 2007. Also excluded are the individuals who served as presidents or vice-presidents of the EP to avoid artificially inflated numbers of speeches and other activities. The remaining sample are 621 MEPs, of which nearly half (307) were re-elected in 2009 to serve another five year term.

## Results

The analysis of the EP data reveals that MEPs produce over a five year period more speeches and questions followed by amended reports, motions for resolutions, full reports and opinions on other reports. On average, the sixth term MEPs produced delivered nearly 80 speeches in the plenary, asked almost 60 questions to the EU institutions, amended 30 reports, tabled 20 motions for resolutions and drafted three reports (Table 2). These mean figures, however, conceal substantial variation in parliamentary output. On the one hand, there are MEPs who produced very little in terms of quantitative output; MEPs who, according to the former peer Luciana Castellina, may fall under the category of 'deputies [who] don't do anything at all. They arrive on a plane in the morning, sign for an allowance covering two days in a hotel, then take a plane straight home' (Castellina 2009: 52). On the other, some MEPs asked an astonishing number of 1921 questions, others never missed an opportunity to speak in the plenary, whereas someone drafted as many as 46 reports.

The distribution of the parliamentary output illustrated in Figures 1 to 6 in the appendix give a better picture of the central tendency than the mean. A look at the histogram in Figure 1 reveals that most MEPs did not draft more than two reports throughout the whole term, while only 126 deputies produced up to four reports and as many as 148 did not draft any reports at all. The uneven distribution of output extends to all forms of parliamentary work examined here. Thus, even though the mean figure for written declarations is 1.83 (Table 2), more than a third of MEPs issued no written declarations at all (Figure 2). Similarly, the mean number of

speeches in the plenary (78) derives from the fact that only 40 MEPs delivered more than 200 speeches, and a handful of them more than 400, while more than 350 deputies made 50 speeches or less (Figure 3). A similar story can be told for the motions for resolutions (Figure 4) and the opinions (Figure 5). Finally, 51 percent of MEPs in the sample asked no more than 20 questions (Figure 6), but with 15 percent of MEPs having asked more than 100 questions the mean figure reported in Table 2 is substantially inflated.

**Table 2:** Descriptive Statistics of MEP Performance.

	<b>N</b>	<b>Minimum</b>	<b>Maximum</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Std. Deviation</b>
Loyalty to EPG	600	0.06	0.99	0.91	0.09
Loyalty to National Group	497	0.71	1.00	0.96	0.04
Loyalty to Country Majority	621	0.03	0.97	0.77	0.15
Attendance	621	0.52	1	0.87	0.09
Reports Drafted	621	0	46	3.11	4.52
Written Declarations	621	0	24	1.83	2.88
Speeches in Plenary	621	0	787	78.26	89.13
Motions for Resolutions	621	0	384	19.35	39.75
Opinions	621	0	10	2.06	2.34
Parliamentary Questions	621	0	1921	57.12	125.86
Reports Amended	621	0	223	31.23	28.83
Age	621	31.00	84	55.52	9.62
Years in the EP	594	5.00	30	8.48	5.10

*Notes:* Part-term MEPs, EP presidents and vice-presidents, and Bulgarian and Romanian MEPs are not included. *Source:* European Parliament (2010) and Votewatch (2011).

Attendance in the plenary sessions of the EP is generally very high (87 percent). Even though the ‘worst performer’ in this respect attended only 52 percent of the sessions, the relatively low standard deviation in Table 2 suggests that variation between MEPs is not dramatic. Voting loyalty is also very high, except towards one’s own country majority where voting discipline is neither demanded nor necessarily expected. In contrast, average voting loyalty to one’s EPG is as high as 91 percent and to one’s own national party group it is even higher reaching 96 percent of the votes (Table 2). As expected, variation in voting loyalty is higher where the country majority and the EPG are concerned, whereas it is substantially lower in relation to MEPs’ national groups. The findings on the central tendency and dispersion offer a clear indication that MEPs are more likely to vote against their EPG and their country majority than against the dictates of their national party. Among the control variables (age and years in the EP) variation is again noticeable. The average MEP is 56 years old and has served eight and a half years in the EP. In other words, the average MEP is fairly experienced and has served more than one term in the EP. It is noteworthy that the oldest serving MEP in the sixth term was 84 years old, while the longest serving one had been continuously a deputy since 1979, the year of the first direct EP elections. Finally, it is worth mentioning that the sixth EP continued the tradition of male dominance. Of the 621 full-term MEPs in the sample only 190 of them are women, a mere 31 percent.

**Table 3:** Descriptive Statistics of MEP Performance per European Political Group.

<b>EPG</b>	<b>Activity</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>Minimum</b>	<b>Maximum</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Std. Deviation</b>
<i>EPP-ED</i>						
	Loyalty to EPG	227	0.67	0.99	0.91	0.08
	Loyalty to National Group	208	0.71	0.99	0.96	0.04
	Loyalty to Country					
	Majority	227	0.53	0.97	0.85	0.08
	Attendance	227	0.56	1	0.88	0.09
	Reports Drafted	227	0	46	3.81	5.64
	Written Declarations	227	0	18	1.13	2.08
	Speeches in Plenary	227	0	695	67.66	74.92
	Motions for Resolutions	227	0	267	11.95	30.36
	Opinions	227	0	10	2.04	2.24
	Parliamentary Questions	227	0	353	37.17	57.38
	Reports Amended	227	0	223	32.39	31.07
<i>PES</i>						
	Loyalty to EPG	166	0.74	0.99	0.94	0.03
	Loyalty to National Group	150	0.80	1	0.97	0.02
	Loyalty to Country					
	Majority	166	0.53	0.96	0.82	0.10
	Attendance	166	0.55	0.99	0.87	0.09
	Reports Drafted	166	0	23	3.21	3.83
	Written Declarations	166	0	10	1.58	2.01
	Speeches in Plenary	166	0	787	72.30	82.89
	Motions for Resolutions	166	0	384	11.99	35.83
	Opinions	166	0	10	2.28	2.49
	Parliamentary Questions	166	1	1067	45.34	95.17
	Reports Amended	166	0	127	32.69	24.09
<i>ALDE</i>						
	Loyalty to EPG	68	0.83	0.98	0.92	0.04
	Loyalty to National Group	53	0.89	0.98	0.95	0.02
	Loyalty to Country					
	Majority	68	0.76	0.95	0.82	0.05
	Attendance	68	0.61	0.99	0.86	0.10
	Reports Drafted	68	0	22	3.24	3.65
	Written Declarations	68	0	12	1.87	2.01
	Speeches in Plenary	68	9	357	65.94	58.29
	Motions for Resolutions	68	0	236	23.69	36.12
	Opinions	68	0	10	2.47	2.65
	Parliamentary Questions	68	1	460	50.03	81.56
	Reports Amended	68	1	138	34.66	29.51
<i>UEN</i>						
	Loyalty to EPG	36	0.60	0.91	0.83	0.07
	Loyalty to National Group	26	0.71	0.98	0.91	0.07
	Loyalty to Country					
	Majority	36	0.52	0.91	0.80	0.08
	Attendance	36	0.59	0.99	0.88	0.10
	Reports Drafted	36	0	10	1.28	1.88
	Written Declarations	36	0	11	2.39	3.21
	Speeches in Plenary	36	8	266	83.92	58.71
	Motions for Resolutions	36	2	241	51.58	64.35
	Opinions	36	0	8	1.17	1.90
	Parliamentary Questions	36	2	595	76.00	128.16
	Reports Amended	36	0	59	12.86	12.75

<i>Greens-EFA</i>					
Loyalty to EPG	43	0.06	0.98	0.93	0.14
Loyalty to National Group	25	0.92	0.99	0.97	0.02
Loyalty to Country					
Majority	43	0.03	0.80	0.61	0.12
Attendance	43	0.67	0.99	0.87	0.08
Reports Drafted	43	0	10	2.33	2.09
Written Declarations	43	0	19	3.12	3.56
Speeches in Plenary	43	9	228	76.26	52.37
Motions for Resolutions	43	1	216	48.98	49.61
Opinions	43	0	10	2.84	2.40
Parliamentary Questions	43	6	407	85.88	106.23
Reports Amended	43	0	125	48.58	29.60
<i>Ind-Dem</i>					
Loyalty to EPG	19	0.50	0.73	0.65	0.06
Loyalty to National Group	10	0.95	0.99	0.98	0.01
Loyalty to Country					
Majority	20	0.27	0.66	0.47	0.11
Attendance	20	0.52	0.99	0.81	0.13
Reports Drafted	20	0	14	1.55	4.29
Written Declarations	20	0	10	2.20	2.78
Speeches in Plenary	20	18	706	151.95	194.57
Motions for Resolutions	20	1	23	3.55	5.55
Opinions	20	0	4	0.70	1.30
Parliamentary Questions	20	1	213	37.50	55.60
Reports Amended	20	0	161	21.40	42.97
<i>EUL</i>					
Loyalty to EPG	36	0.61	0.97	0.91	0.08
Loyalty to National Group	20	0.92	0.99	0.96	0.02
Loyalty to Country					
Majority	36	0.35	0.65	0.52	0.07
Attendance	36	0.67	0.98	0.87	0.08
Reports Drafted	36	0	17	3.00	4.13
Written Declarations	36	0	20	2.53	3.45
Speeches in Plenary	36	4	728	119.58	147.23
Motions for Resolutions	36	2	219	44.42	50.88
Opinions	36	0	9	2.22	2.03
Parliamentary Questions	36	5	979	120.19	191.70
Reports Amended	36	0	97	32.19	23.00
<i>NI</i>					
Loyalty to EPG	5	0.65	0.77	0.72	0.05
Loyalty to National Group	5	0.76	0.97	0.87	0.08
Loyalty to Country					
Majority	25	0.16	0.71	0.47	0.14
Attendance	25	0.54	0.98	0.85	0.12
Reports Drafted	25	0	23	1.08	4.61
Written Declarations	25	0	24	5.40	7.18
Speeches in Plenary	25	7	426	124.44	114.58
Motions for Resolutions	25	0	15	2.68	3.89
Opinions	25	0	6	0.40	1.41
Parliamentary Questions	25	0	1921	184.08	409.51
Reports Amended	25	0	26	4.84	7.22

Notes: Part-term MEPs, EP presidents and vice-presidents, and Bulgarian and Romanian MEPs are not included. Source: European Parliament (2010) and Votewatch (2011).

Table 3 presents the MEP parliamentary output divided according to EPG. The most salient finding is that the average number of reports is indeed higher for the EPP-ED and PES MEPs, in line with what hypothesis H3 maintains. Similarly, MEPs from the smaller EPGs tend to engage more in asking questions and delivering speeches in the plenary than MEPs from EPP-ED or the PES. The contrast is starkest between the EPP-ED MEPs and the independent (NI) MEPs. The mean number of speeches and questions for the latter is 184 and 124 respectively, whereas for the EPP-ED MEPs it is only 37 and 68 (Table 3). MEPs from the UEN, the Greens-EFA and the EUL also produced more speeches and questions than the two largest EPGs. However, the ALDE MEPs delivered fewer speeches and asked fewer questions than the EPP-ED, but still more questions compared to the PES. The Independent Democrats spoke in the plenary more often than MEPs forming the great coalition in the EP, but they asked fewer questions than either the EPP-ED or the PES MEPs.

**Table 4:** Mean Performance and Demographics of Re-elected and Not Re-elected MEPs (Independent Sample T-Tests).

	Not Re-elected	Re-elected	Not Re-elected	Re-elected	
<i>Attendance</i>			<i>Speeches in Plenary</i>		
Mean	0.86	0.88	73.88	82.73	
Std. Dev.	0.11	0.08	93.44	84.41	
N	314	307	314	307	
<i>Reports Drafted</i>			<i>Motions for Resolutions</i>		
Mean	2.61	3.62***	18.64	20.07	
Std. Dev.	4.08	4.89	38.74	40.82	
N	314	307	314	307	
<i>Written Declarations</i>			<i>Opinions</i>		
Mean	1.74	1.92	1.93	2.19	
Std. Dev.	2.59	3.15	2.35	2.32	
N	314	307	314	307	
<i>Parliamentary Questions</i>					
Mean	57.22	57.03			
Std. Dev.	145.66	101.95			
N	314	307			
<i>Reports Amended</i>			<i>Loyalty to EPG</i>		
Mean	27.84	34.70***	0.90	0.91	
Std. Dev.	28.52	28.79	0.10	0.08	
N	314	307	304	297	
<i>Loyalty to National Group</i>			<i>Loyalty to Country Majority</i>		
Mean	0.956	0.963**	0.76	0.78	
Std. Dev.	0.05	0.03	0.16	0.15	
N	250	249	314	307	
<i>Age</i>			<i>Years in EP</i>		
Mean	57.35	53.65***	8.47	8.49	
Std. Dev.	9.65	9.22	5.21	5.00	
N	314	307	300	295	

Notes: \*:  $p < .10$ ., \*\*:  $p < .05$ ., \*\*\*:  $p < .01$ . Part-term MEPs, EP presidents and vice-presidents, and Bulgarian and Romanian MEPs are not included. Source: European Parliament (2010) and Votewatch (2011).



As noted earlier, 307 (49 percent) of the sixth term MEPs in the sample were re-elected in the seventh EP. The re-elected MEPs were, on average, younger (Table 4) which contradicts the alternative hypothesis H5. The same can be said about the length of previous experience in the EP. As Table 4 shows, the difference in years in the EP between re-elected and not re-elected MEPs is not statistically significant. Voting loyalty to the EPG or taking the cue from the majority of one's own country does not appear to be related to re-election either. Both re-elected and not re-elected MEPs were equally loyal to their EPG and to their country's majority. However, loyalty towards the national group seems to be influential. The non re-elected MEPs followed their national party group line in 95.6 percent of the roll call votes, while the re-elected 96.3 percent (Table 4). Although the difference is not large, it is statistically significant at the five percent level.

In accordance with the main hypothesis (H1), re-elected MEPs were more productive than their peers who did not strive for or achieve re-election. The mean output for all forms of measurable MEP activity, including attendance in the plenary sessions but excluding parliamentary questions, is higher among the re-elected group of MEPs. The increase, though, is statistically significant only in the drafted and amended reports variables (Table 4). The relative weight of each form of parliamentary activity and the contribution of voting loyalty and of the other alternative variables is better depicted in Table 5, which portrays the results of a binary logistic regression analysis where MEP re-election is the dependent variable.

**Table 5:** MEP Re-Election and Performance (Binary Logistic Regression).

	<b>B</b>	<b>S.E.</b>	<b>Wald</b>	<b>df</b>	<b>Sig.</b>	<b>Exp(B)</b>
Attendance	2.35	1.15	4.15	1	0.04	10.50
Reports Drafted	0.05	0.02	5.37	1	0.02	1.05
Written Declarations	0.03	0.04	0.62	1	0.43	1.03
Speeches in Plenary	0.00	0.00	0.00	1	0.96	1.00
Motions for Resolutions	0.00	0.00	0.23	1	0.63	1.00
Opinions	-0.02	0.04	0.18	1	0.67	0.98
Parliamentary Questions	0.00	0.00	0.00	1	0.95	1.00
Reports Amended	0.00	0.00	1.21	1	0.27	1.00
Loyalty to EPG	-2.12	1.49	2.03	1	0.15	0.12
Loyalty to National Group	5.40	2.93	3.40	1	0.07	220.65
Loyalty to Country Majority	1.12	0.81	1.89	1	0.17	3.05
Age	-0.05	0.01	18.66	1	0.00	0.95
Years in EP	0.00	0.02	0.01	1	0.92	1.00
Constant	-3.87	2.90	1.79	1	0.18	0.02
Nagelkerke R <sup>2</sup>	0.12					
-2 Log likelihood	607.39					
Hosmer and Lemeshow $\chi^2$	12.75			8	0.12	
N	470					

*Notes:* Reference value of the dependent variable is MEP re-election ( $Y_i=1$ ). List-wise deletion of missing data. Part-term MEPs, EP presidents and vice-presidents, Bulgarian and Romanian MEPs and MEPs with Questions>500, Speeches>400 or Motions>300 are not included. *Source:* European Parliament (2010) and Votewatch (2011).

The logistic regression reveals that both higher attendance rates and drafted reports are positively linked to re-election. Even after controlling for voting loyalty, a rich portfolio of reports and a better attendance rate are associated with higher chances for re-election. The coefficients for all the other forms of MEP activity did not pass the statistical significance threshold. Yet before we can dismiss the other forms of parliamentary output as irrelevant for re-election, it is necessary to control for differences in the parliamentary behaviour of small and large EPGs MEPs and for closed and open party list countries MEPs.

**Table 6:** MEP Re-Election and Performance in the EPP and the PES (Binary Logistic Regression).

	<b>B</b>	<b>S.E.</b>	<b>Wald</b>	<b>df</b>	<b>Sig.</b>	<b>Exp(B)</b>
Attendance	4.30	1.45	8.81	1	0.00	74.04
Reports Drafted	0.07	0.03	7.16	1	0.01	1.08
Written Declarations	-0.03	0.06	0.26	1	0.61	0.97
Speeches in Plenary	-0.00	0.00	1.08	1	0.30	1.00
Motions for Resolutions	0.01	0.01	3.76	1	0.05	1.01
Opinions	-0.06	0.06	1.08	1	0.30	0.95
Parliamentary Questions	-0.00	0.00	1.64	1	0.20	1.00
Reports Amended	0.01	0.01	1.18	1	0.28	1.00
Loyalty to EPG	-1.88	1.86	1.02	1	0.31	0.15
Loyalty to National Group	5.67	3.97	2.04	1	0.15	290.99
Loyalty to Country Majority	0.18	1.40	0.02	1	0.90	1.20
Age	-0.07	0.01	21.27	1	0.00	0.94
EP_Years_2009	-0.03	0.02	1.18	1	0.28	0.97
Constant	-3.76	4.04	0.87	1	0.35	0.02
Nagelkerke R <sup>2</sup>	0.19					
-2 Log likelihood	419.78					
Hosmer and Lemeshow $\chi^2$	3.20			8	0.92	
N	342					

Notes: Reference value of the dependent variable is MEP re-election ( $Y_i=1$ ). List-wise deletion of missing data. Part-term MEPs, EP presidents and vice-presidents, Bulgarian and Romanian MEPs and MEPs with Questions>500, Speeches>400 or Motions>300 are not included. Source: European Parliament (2010) and Votewatch (2011).

**Table 7:** MEP Re-Election and Performance in ALDE, UEN, Greens-EFA, Ind-Dem, EUL and NI (Binary Logistic Regression).

	<b>B</b>	<b>S.E.</b>	<b>Wald</b>	<b>df</b>	<b>Sig.</b>	<b>Exp(B)</b>
Attendance	-2.65	3.05	0.08	1	0.78	0.42
Reports Drafted	-0.01	0.06	0.01	1	0.94	1.00
Written Declarations	0.12	0.07	2.95	1	0.09	1.13
Speeches in Plenary	0.01	0.01	4.15	1	0.04	1.01
Motions for Resolutions	-0.00	0.01	0.77	1	0.38	1.00
Opinions	0.07	0.09	0.61	1	0.44	1.07
Parliamentary Questions	0.00	0.00	0.70	1	0.40	1.00
Reports Amended	0.01	0.01	0.48	1	0.49	1.01
Loyalty to EPG	-0.86	3.05	0.08	1	0.78	0.43
Loyalty to National Group	2.15	5.56	0.15	1	0.70	8.57
Loyalty to Country Majority	0.01	1.37	0.00	1	0.99	1.01
Age	-0.02	0.02	0.79	1	0.38	98
Years in EP	0.06	0.06	0.98	1	0.32	1.06
Constant	0.03	5.63	0.00	1	1.00	1.03
Nagelkerke R <sup>2</sup>	0.18					
-2 Log likelihood	156.38					
Hosmer and Lemeshow $\chi^2$	4.06			8	0.85	
N	128					

Notes: Reference value of the dependent variable is MEP re-election ( $Y_i=1$ ). List-wise deletion of missing data. Part-term MEPs, EP presidents and vice-presidents, Bulgarian and Romanian MEPs and MEPs with Questions>500, Speeches>400 or Motions>300 are not included. Source: European Parliament (2010) and Votewatch (2011).

Table 6 shows that MEPs of the EPP-ED and PES groups are indeed more likely to achieve re-election if they have drafted an increased number of reports. Attendance in the plenary is also highly significant, and the motions for resolutions coefficient is significant at five percent. None of the remaining parliamentary activity coefficients are statistically significant, and neither loyalty to the national group nor to the EPG appears to be important. The results reported in Table 6, therefore, confirm hypotheses H1, H2 and H3, while they contradict the alternative hypotheses H5 and H6. The same can be said for the small EPG findings (Table 7). The re-election of MEPs from smaller European groups and of the independent MEPs is not associated with how many reports they drafted in the sixth EP. What matters more is how many times they spoke in the plenary and how many declarations they have written. Hypothesis H3 maintained that all types of MEP activity other than report drafting would be more useful to smaller EPGs MEPs, but the questions, opinions and amended reports coefficients in Table 7 are not statistically significant, and neither is the attendance coefficient. This means that for reasons which are not fully clear yet speeches and written declarations are more effective than questions or motions for resolutions for independent and smaller group MEPs. Nonetheless, the main point of hypothesis H3, that the various parliamentary instruments are of different usefulness for MEPs in the larger political groups than in the smaller, holds.

**Table 8:** MEP Re-Election and Performance in Closed Party-List Countries (Binary Logistic Regression).

	<b>B</b>	<b>S.E.</b>	<b>Wald</b>	<b>df</b>	<b>Sig.</b>	<b>Exp(B)</b>
Attendance	5.90	1.66	12.69	1	0.00	365.79
Reports Drafted	0.06	0.03	3.95	1	0.05	1.07
Written Declarations	-0.01	0.06	0.05	1	0.83	0.99
Speeches in Plenary	0.00	0.00	0.33	1	0.57	1.00
Motions for Resolutions	0.00	0.01	0.89	1	0.35	1.00
Opinions	-0.09	0.06	2.38	1	0.12	0.91
Parliamentary Questions	-0.00	0.00	1.69	1	0.19	1.00
Reports Amended	0.00	0.01	0.02	1	0.88	1.00
Loyalty to EPG	-1.62	1.91	0.72	1	0.40	0.20
Loyalty to National Group	4.11	7.29	0.32	1	0.57	61.18
Loyalty to Country Majority	-0.11	1.02	0.01	1	0.91	0.89
Age	-0.06	0.02	17.74	1	0.00	0.94
Years in EP	-0.01	0.03	0.07	1	0.79	0.99
Constant	-3.85	6.93	0.31	1	0.58	0.02
Nagelkerke R <sup>2</sup>	0.17					
-2 Log likelihood	362.25					
Hosmer and Lemeshow $\chi^2$	6.21			8	0.62	
N	291					

*Notes:* Reference value of the dependent variable is MEP re-election ( $Y_i=1$ ). List-wise deletion of missing data. Closed party-list (i.e., no preferential voting allowed) countries are France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Portugal, Spain and the UK (excl. Northern Ireland) (Corbett et al. 2007). Part-term MEPs, EP presidents and vice-presidents, Bulgarian and Romanian MEPs and MEPs with Questions>500, Speeches>400 or Motions>300 are not included. *Source:* European Parliament (2010) and Votewatch (2011).

The results of the analysis of MEPs from countries where re-election rests on closed party lists resemble the results of the larger EPGs regression. In addition to age, only the number of reports and the attendance rate are statistically significant. Even though one would expect national party discipline to be much more effective among this group of MEPs, there is no supporting evidence. Thus, MEPs from closed party list countries rely much more on drafting reports and on attending the EP plenary sessions than on other forms of parliamentary activity. The first part of hypothesis H4 is confirmed, indicating that legislative work is more important for MEPs who are less concerned about the personal vote. The opposite holds for MEPs who need the personal vote to get re-elected thus confirming the second party of hypothesis H4. As Table 9 illustrates, the number of reports they drafted played no role in their re-election. An increased number of parliamentary questions and opinions, and voting the same way as the majority of their co-nationals, are far better predictors of re-election. Parliamentary questions have greater chances to be picked up by the national media, especially if they relate to contested domestic matters. It is all too sensible then that MEPs who seek to maximise their personal vote tend to value parliamentary questions more than they value rapporteurships.

**Table 9:** MEP Re-Election and Performance in Open Party-List Countries (Binary Logistic Regression).

	<b>B</b>	<b>S.E.</b>	<b>Wald</b>	<b>df</b>	<b>Sig.</b>	<b>Exp(B)</b>
Attendance	-0.84	1.84	0.21	1	0.65	0.43
Reports Drafted	0.02	0.04	0.17	1	0.68	1.02
Written Declarations	0.10	0.07	1.79	1	0.18	1.10
Speeches in Plenary	0.00	0.00	0.12	1	0.73	1.00
Motions for Resolutions	-0.00	0.01	0.83	1	0.36	1.00
Opinions	0.14	0.08	2.99	1	0.08	1.15
Parliamentary Questions	0.01	0.00	4.80	1	0.03	1.01
Reports Amended	0.01	0.01	2.09	1	0.15	1.01
Loyalty to EPG	-3.83	2.69	2.03	1	0.16	0.02
Loyalty to National Group	5.39	3.79	2.02	1	0.16	218.61
Loyalty to Country Majority	4.24	1.76	5.77	1	0.02	69.26
Age	-0.04	0.02	5.15	1	0.02	0.96
Years in EP	-0.07	0.05	1.94	1	0.16	0.93
Constant	-2.78	3.78	0.54	1	0.46	0.06
Nagelkerke R <sup>2</sup>	0.23					
-2 Log likelihood	211.93					
Hosmer and Lemeshow $\chi^2$	9.97			8	0.27	
N	179					

*Notes:* Reference value of the dependent variable is MEP re-election ( $Y_i=1$ ). List-wise deletion of missing data. Open party-list (i.e., some form of preferential voting is allowed) countries are Austria, Belgium, Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Republic of Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, the Netherlands, Poland, Slovakia, Slovenia, Sweden and Northern Ireland (Corbett et al. 2007). Part-term MEPs, EP presidents and vice-presidents, Bulgarian and Romanian MEPs and MEPs with Questions>500, Speeches>400 or Motions>300 are not included. *Source:* European Parliament (2010) and Votewatch (2011).

## Conclusion

The empirical findings on the relationship between MEP activity level and re-election show that the link between performance and the electoral fortune of the MEPs is more pronounced than what is generally assumed. Even if the European citizens have no direct say on policy choice at the European level, and even if the European elections attract limited interest compared to the national ones, there is a connection between MEPs' work and their re-nomination and re-election. The present study focused on the quantitative dimension of MEPs' work for two reasons. First, in the run up to the European elections citizens are more likely to hear about the quantity of their MEPs' work rather than the quality. This in turn is the result of the inexpensive processing of EP data on MEP activity by a number of websites and, more importantly, by the national media. MEPs who had very little to show in terms of number of reports, questions, speeches, written declarations, opinions, motions for resolutions and who had a poor record of attendance in the EP plenary sessions were labelled by some national media as 'lazy' and 'under-performers'. This negative publicity did not go

unnoticed by the affected MEPs, and it neither went unnoticed by the so-called top-performer MEPs.

The second reason why quantity of MEP activity is important is because it serves as a rough indicator of political experience and capital. National parties have an obvious interest to send their best men and women in the EP to serve and promote their interests and views. To the extent that past numerical performance reflects, however crudely, expertise and familiarity with the EP affairs, national parties may choose to nominate candidates with a richer EP work portfolio. Based on these two premises I developed and tested six hypotheses relating to the activities, or lack thereof, of MEPs in the EP. The empirical analysis confirmed that more active MEPs were more likely to be re-elected, that EP attendance and rapporteurships are particularly important for MEPs of the two largest European political groups and MEPs from closed party list electoral systems, and that open party list MEPs, deputies in smaller EPGs and non-attached MEPs are more likely to focus on parliamentary questions or speeches. In contrast, the alternative hypotheses linking re-election to voting loyalty, years of service in the EP and an older age went largely unconfirmed. I say largely, because voting loyalty to the national party group proved important in the whole sample analysis, but failed to reach the statistical significance threshold when the sample was divided to small/large EPG and open/closed party sub-samples. This may indicate that voting loyalty may be more important in some national parties than in others. Nevertheless, the findings suggest that activity level is more important for predicting re-election than roll-call voting loyalty.

Whilst I demonstrated that there is a connection between MEP activity level and re-election, I do not go as far as to claim that increased activity in the EP necessarily leads to candidate re-nomination and electoral success. It remains unclear what exactly the leaderships of national parties think of the work of their MEPs, and how much they value it. Similarly, electoral success depends also on a number of micro and macro level variables that may have little, if anything, to do with the work that takes place inside the EP. This is no reason, however, to dismiss a priori a potential connection between MEP performance and re-election which is both theoretically and empirically defensible. In this sense I hope my study is yet another step towards a better understanding of the democratic connection between European citizens and their representatives.

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## Appendix: Figures

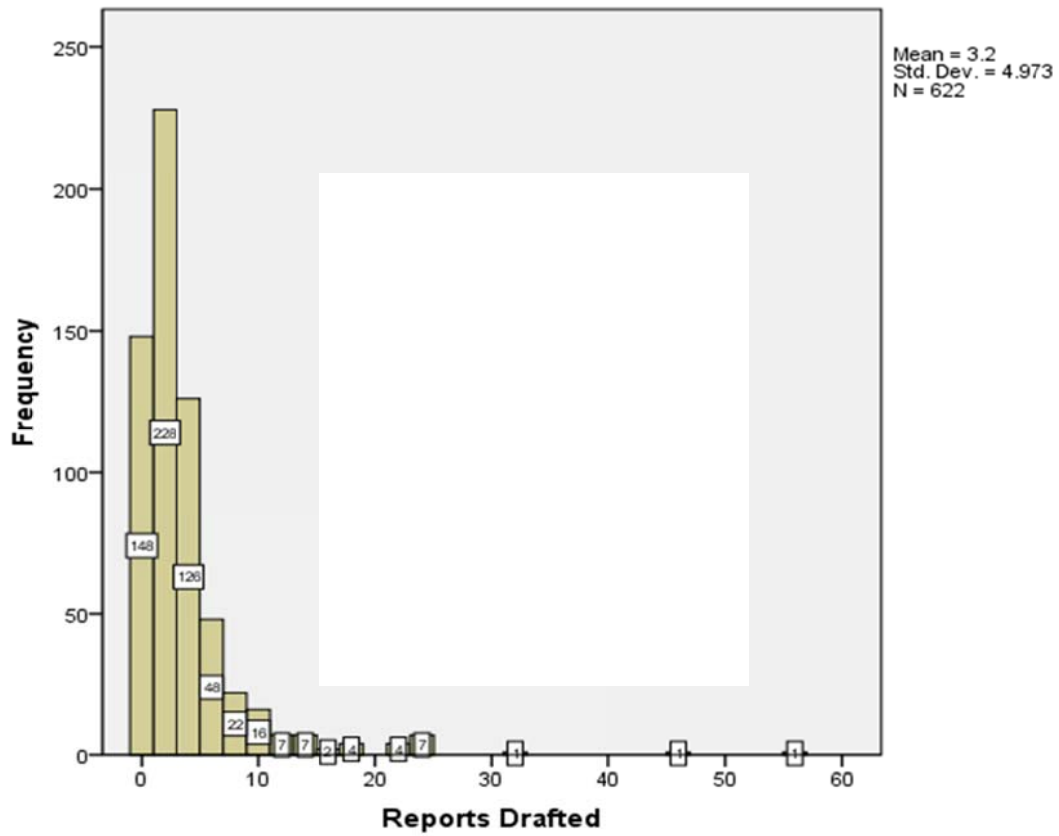


Figure 1: Distribution of Reports.

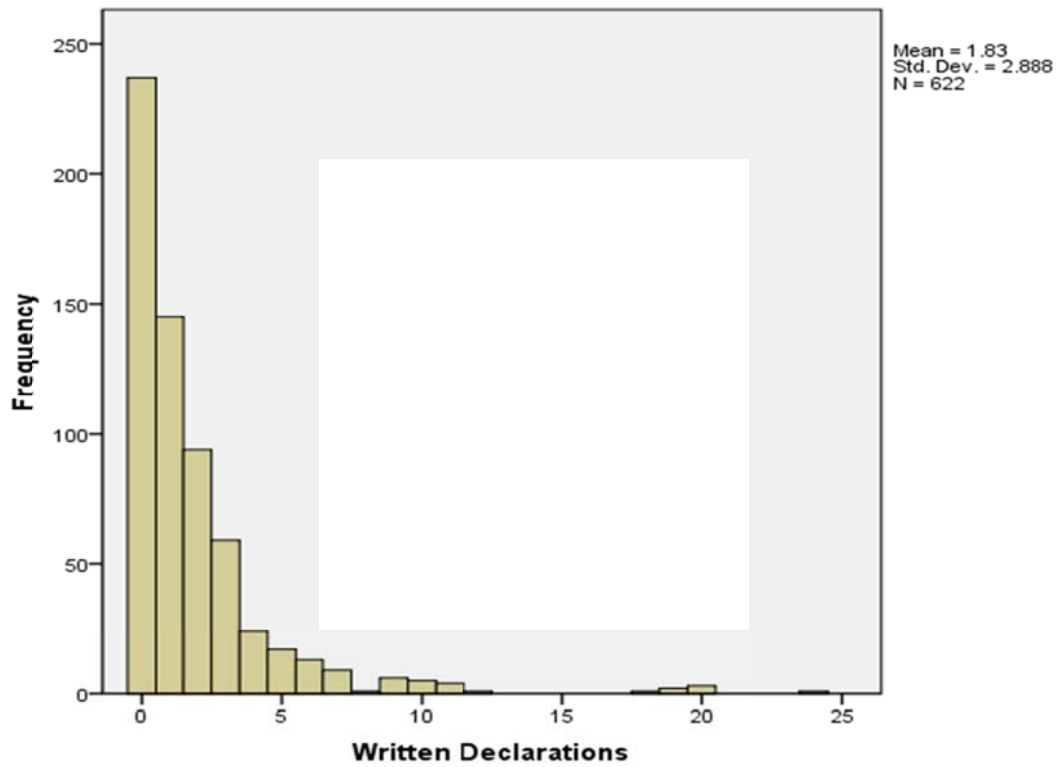


Figure 2: Distribution of Written Declarations.

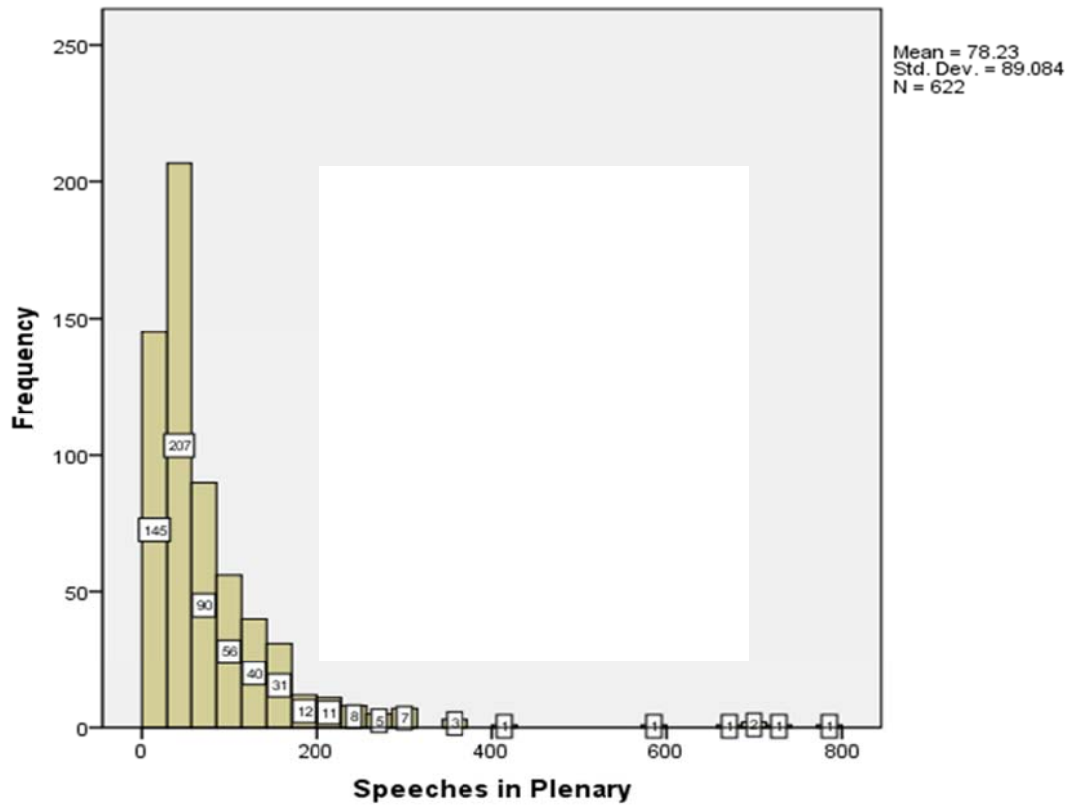


Figure 3: Distribution of Speeches in the Plenary.

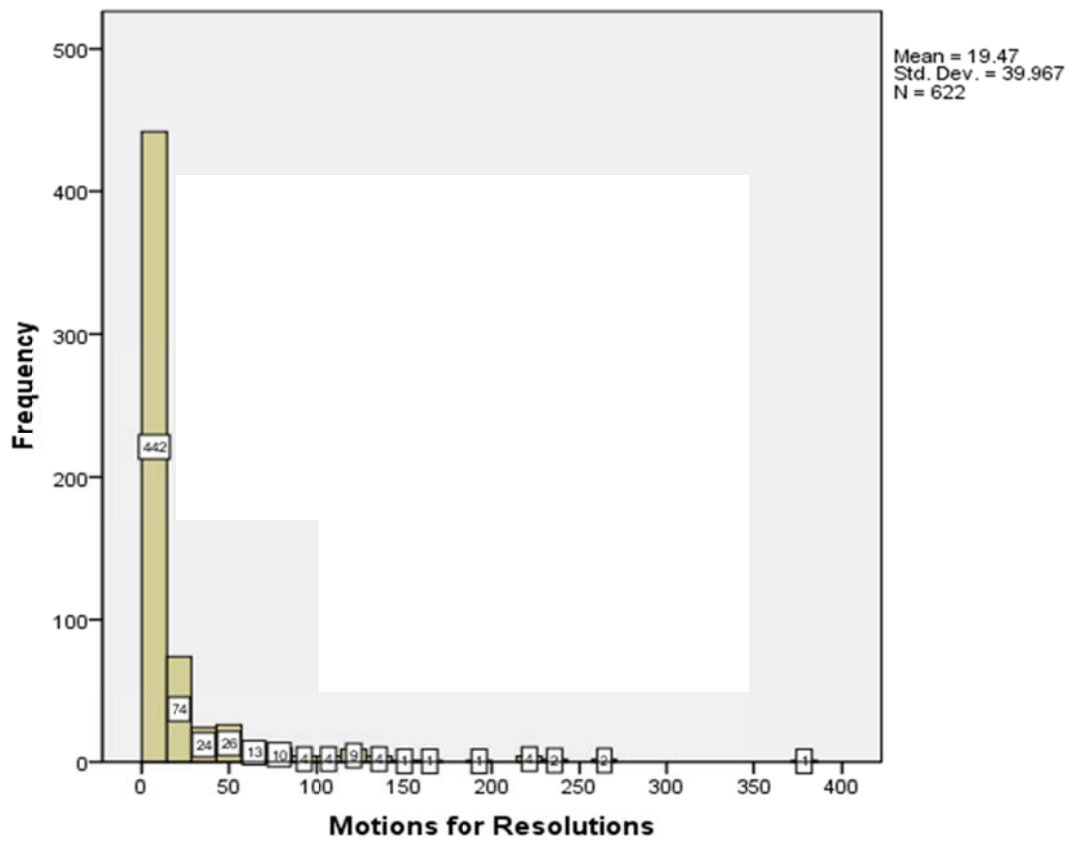


Figure 4: Distribution of Motions for Resolutions.

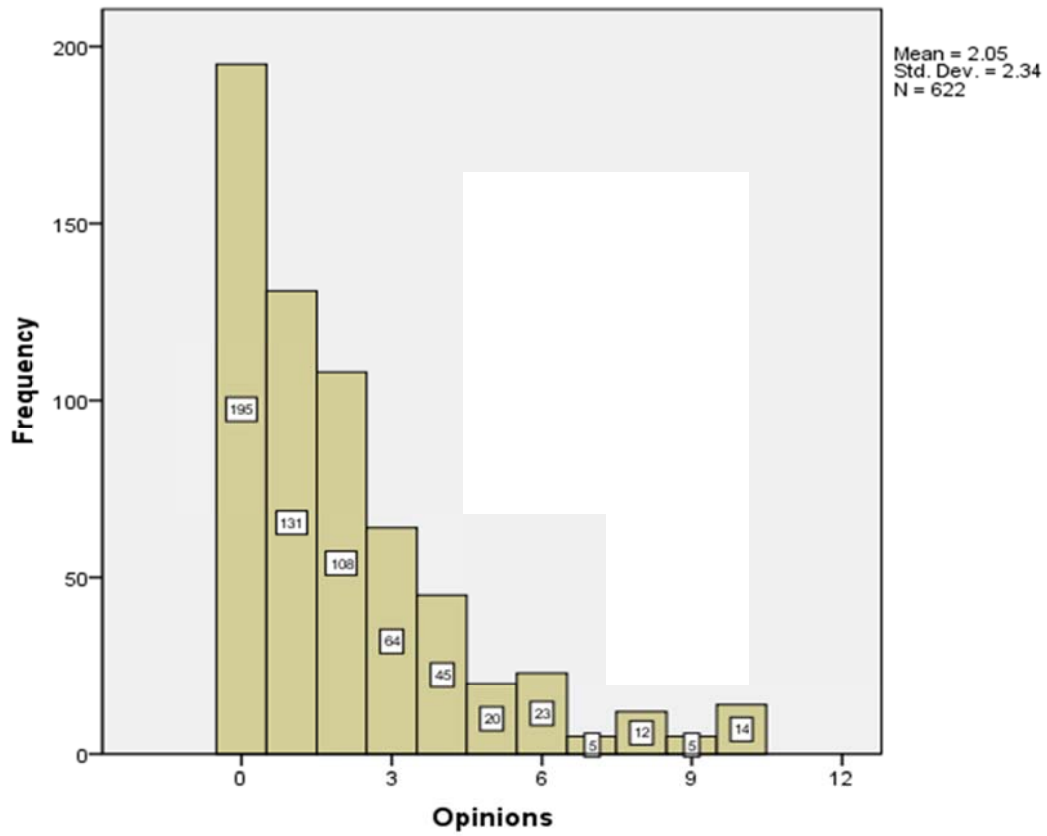


Figure 5: Distribution of Opinions.

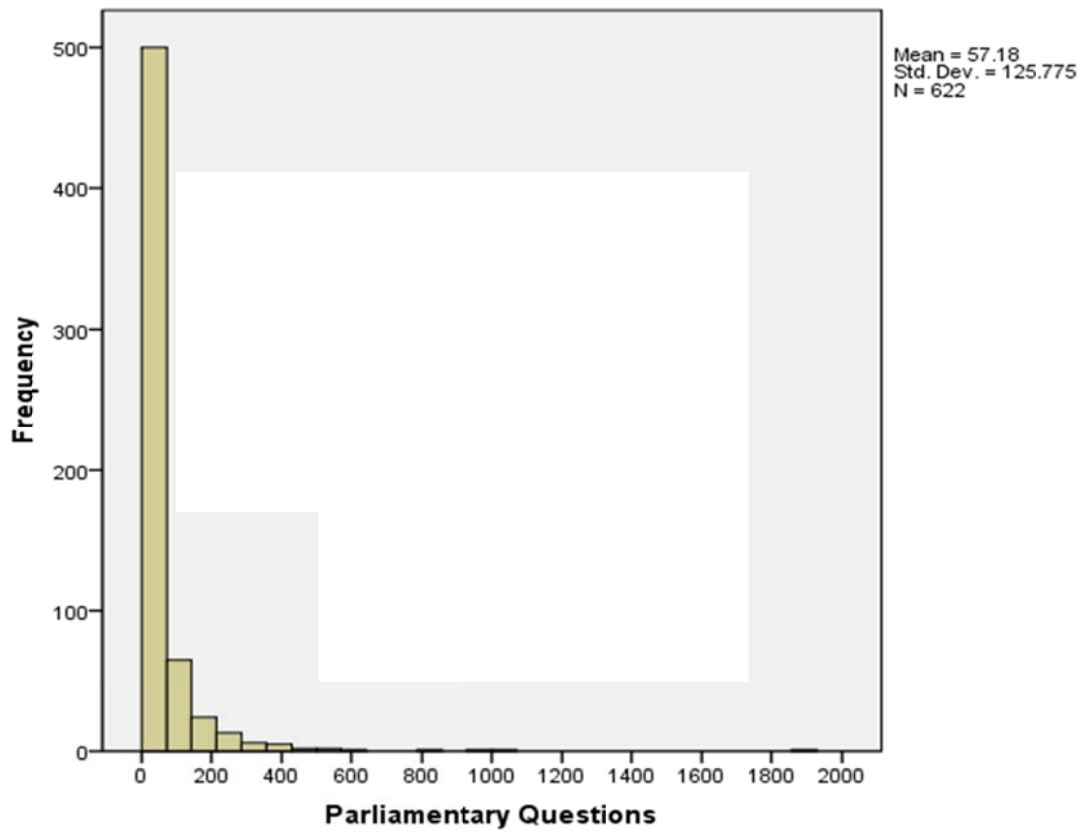


Figure 6: Distribution of Questions.

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