Ideology in the EU's Second Chamber: A New Understanding of the Character and Impact of the Council on EU Policy Making[1]

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Abstract: This paper examines both the presence and the impact of ideology on the Council of the European Union. It argues that Member States within the Council should not be treated as unitary actors given that in fact, member states are represented by delegations of national ministers who often have very diverse ideological beliefs and preferences regarding EU integration. Through the analysis of an original database of all national ministers from all member states between 2000 and 2012 in conjunction with existing data on ideological and EU positions (Chapel Hill Expert Surveys) and the policy positions of EU actors, member states on a set of policy proposals as well as final outcomes (Decision Making in the European Union –DEU II data). This analysis demonstrates that there are statistically significant differences between the different Council formations and the median positions of the prime ministers of the member states supporting the need to disaggregate analyses of the Council and rejecting member states as unitary actors. Moreover, the research provides insights into the relative impact of prime ministers versus ministers on EU policy outcomes, as well as the role of the other branch of the EU legislative branch, the EP. While not conclusive, this research suggests that we need a more nuanced understanding of the Council to accurately evaluate the role of ideology in EU policy making and the impact of different national and EU level actors in the process.

The Council of the European Union (Council) has played a pivotal role in the European Union (EU) since the days of the European Economic Community. It has long been recognized as the most directly powerful institution within the EU policy process, and indeed for much of the EU's history it was central in both the executive and legislative arenas. However, successive treaty revisions, including the creation of the European Council and the gradual empowerment of the European Parliament (EP), have dramatically altered the Council and transformed its role within the EU policy-making process. Despite these transformations there has been little attempt to rethink how we interpret the Council within the institutional structure of the EU or the opportunity the Council offers for national political actors to pursue their ideological preferences at the supranational level, even when those preferences diverge from the positions of the prime minister. This research attempts to introduce ideology into the Council by disaggregating its membership and re-conceptualizing it as part of the EU legislative branch, as suggested by the Lisbon Treaty reforms. The goal is not only to gain greater insight into the potential role of ideology within the Council, but also to better understand the broader role of ideology and bicameralism within the EU policy process.

To fully comprehend the impact of ideology on decision making within the Council of the European Union, and through the Council on legislative outcomes, we need to accomplish several things.[2] The first task is to improve the theoretical framework shaping our interpretation of the Council as a political institution. The history of the Council (previously

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[2] Throughout this paper the Council of the European Union is referred to simply as the Council unless discussing specifically the historical incarnation of the Council as the Council of Ministers.

the Council of Ministers) is one of evolution and change as its role within the EU has shifted from a mixture of quasi-executive functions and legislative dominance to minimal executive roles and co-legislator with the European Parliament. The gradual evolution of the European Council has shifted the Council to an increasingly legislative role, as was recognized formally in the Lisbon Treaty, which placed it squarely within the legislative branch as part of a bicameral system (TEU, Articles 14 and 16). This transformation requires that we re-conceptualize the Council from the perspective of a legislative chamber and work to develop a theoretical framework that takes account of its particularities.

Next, we need to gain a more complete understanding of the membership of the Council. Most studies of the Council treat member states as unitary actors and consider the countries to be the relevant actors (often with the identity/preferences of the prime minister used a representative of the country as a whole). However, member state delegations to the Council actually consist of multiple different people working through the various Council configurations and managing the work of the Committee of Permanent Representatives (Coreper) that prepares Council draft legislation. Moreover, as a result of coalition governments, in most cases these individuals are from a variety of different national political parties. Thus, I argue that the actors within the Council should be understood as individuals who have the task of representing their national/member state's interests, but whose interpretation of those interests may vary substantially based on their individual ideological positions. As such it is imperative that we pay attention to the individual characteristics of the various national ministers, including a consideration of their likely ideological differences based on the portfolio allocation norms that exist in most parliamentary systems.[3]

Finally, it is necessary to connect the lessons learned in the first and second points to the EU legislative process itself. This will permit us to develop a more comprehensive understanding of the potential impact of the Council, and ideology within the Council in particular, on the EU policy-making. This analysis should include the relative and cumulative influence of both chambers of the legislative branch. Looking only at the coalition formation process in the Council does not make sense in a post-Lisbon EU in which the Council is no longer the dominant legislative actor. Indeed, for the majority of policy areas the EP is a co-legislator and policy outcomes in the EU will reflect the priorities and preferences of both the Council and the EP.[4]

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[3] Other variations between countries that should also be examined include the level of centralization within the coalition and the integration of EU policy into domestic policy management (through for example the existence of a Minister for Europe). These variables will be included in future iterations of this research.
[4] Of course the impact of other actors may also be important depending on the policy area. The Commission, in particular, is important because of its formal control of the initiation of all proposals. However, the ability of the Council and the EP to amend Commission original proposals means that outcomes are most likely to reflect the positions of the pivotal actors in these two institutions regardless of what the Commission introduces initially. It can make strategic proposals that reflect these preferences (and are in the win-set of the Council and EP) or it can see its proposals substantially altered to reflect Council and EP preferences.

What Kind of Legislative Chamber?

Like most institutions of the European Union the Council has evolved substantially since it was first introduced as the Council of Ministers in the European Economic Community (EEC).[5] Despite the changes it has experienced, there has been comparatively little attention to the institutional development of the Council. While the literature on the evolution of the European Parliament has been prolific, most analyses of the Council focus on descriptions of its core tasks and operating procedures (Westlake and Galloway, 2006; Wallace and Renshaw, 1997) and/or the character of coalition formation within it (Hagemann and Hoyland, 2008; Blavoukos and Pagoulatos, 2011; Elgstrom et al, 2001; Hosli et al, 2011)). The actual institutional role of the Council within the EU political system has received little attention and its historical and current roles are often conflated.

When the EEC was created there was no clear political executive for the new organization. Indeed, the powerful role the Commission had held (as the High Authority) in the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC) had been downgraded and the powers of the Council of Ministers remained vague at best. There was no alternative political executive within the EEC structure initially; even informal summitry between national leaders outside of the Council of Ministers did not begin until the 1970s. As a result most political leadership came from the Council of Ministers. At this point it was also the Council of Ministers that controlled the legislative process since the powers of the EP were consultative only. Thus, the Council (of Ministers) played a dual role, serving both as the political leadership of the EEC and as its primary legislative actor. However, over time other EU institutions being created or gaining new powers have transformed both of these roles.

In the executive realm the gradual creation and then formalization of summitry since the 1970s has provided an alternative source of executive political guidance for the EU.[6] The formal introduction of the European Council in the Maastricht Treaty provided an effective and democratically legitimate source of executive political guidance for the EU. In doing so it freed the Council from the majority of its executive roles, as witnessed by the gradual reform and reduction in the task of the General Affairs configuration within the Council.[7] The introduction and development of the European Council effectively pushed the Council toward a more concentrated focus on its role as a second chamber within the EU's legislative branch. However, here as well there have been significant changes over time.

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[5] The Council of Ministers was also present in the European Coal and Steel Community that preceded the EEC, however with the introduction of the EEC the Council of Ministers began to take on the central leadership role that defined it for much of the subsequent history of the EU.

[6] There are many who consider the Commission to be the executive branch of the EU. While it is certainly part of the executive branch, its technocratic structure, unelected character and formal rejection of ideological or national partisanship effectively preclude the Commission from serving as the political executive of the EU. It is instead the administrative or bureaucratic arm of the executive branch. This is not to suggest that it is not an important component of policy making, but rather to clarify its bureaucratic and administrative character.

[7] The creation of a High Representative for Foreign Affairs (Amsterdam and Lisbon Treaties) and the creation of the External Action Service also shift this executive function further from the Council and more towards the European Council.

Indeed, in the legislative realm it is by now well understood that since the 1970s the powers of the EP have been steadily expanding (Kreppel, 2002; Rittberger, 2007). This process, which began with the acquisition of partial budgetary powers for the EP in the 1970s, expanded to amendment and veto powers in the 1980s and 1990s and culminated with the introduction of the ordinary legislative procedure (OLP) in the Lisbon Treaty (TEU articles 289 and 294).[8] The OLP effectively puts the EP on equal footing in legislative decision making with the Council in the vast majority of policy arenas. Thus, at the same time as the Council shifted toward a primarily legislative role, it also increasingly had to share that role with an emergent EP.

The result is a Council that should now be understood as a legislative chamber within a bicameral system. Indeed, the Lisbon Treaty clarifies both the legislative character of the Council and the bicameral structure of the EU legislative branch (TEU, Articles 14 and 16) Thus, the impact of ideology, and ideological variation between the ministers that constitute the Council can only be understood within this broader institutional context. This requires that we pause to re-conceptualize the Council as a legislature. This will then allow us to apply existing theories of legislative behavior and the impact of ideology and bicameralism to the Council and EU policy making more generally.

The Council itself is a complex and often confusing institution. In part, this is because it is organized functionally as multiple Councils rather than a single unitary body. In fact, it is not possible to create a list of all members of the Council, though a list of all *potential* members would include all national ministers of the member states. The Council is organized into 'configurations' according to specific policy arenas. Currently there are ten different configurations including the general affairs and foreign affairs configurations.[9] One way to conceptualize the Council is to think of it as a legislature that meeting in committee only – never in full plenary (Kreppel, 2013). From this perspective the various configurations can be understood as committees, many of which effectively have sub-committees for specific policy areas. This is because most of the formal configurations include several diverse policy areas (such as youth, culture and sport) and different national ministers serve within these configurations depending of the specific policy being addressed. As a result the national ministers tasked with cultural policy are involved when the topic is culture, while the ministers for education participate when the policy under consideration is related to education etc. In some cases these may be the same person, in others it will not.

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[8] The EP gained approval over discretionary spending in the 1970 and 1975 Budgetary Treaty reforms. The Isoglucose European Court of Justice case (*Roquette Frères* v. *Council*, 138/79) indirectly granted the EP a limited power of delay while the Single European Act and the Maastricht Treaties gave the EP direct legislative authority with the introduction of the cooperation and co-decision procedures respectively. See Rittberger, 2007 for additional details.

[9]   The ten current configurations include General affairs, Foreign affairs, Economic and financial affairs (including budget), Justice and home affairs (including civil protection), Employment, social policy, health and consumer affairs, Competitiveness (internal market, industry, research and space), Transport, telecommunications and energy, Agriculture and fisheries, Environment and Education, youth, culture and sport (including audiovisual).

At the same time, because the Council legally is a single institution, formally any configuration can vote on any policy proposal. In practice little attention is given to which configuration deals with a proposal *only* if the policy proposal is tabled as an 'A' point on the agenda, indicating that an agreement has already been reached in the preparatory stages by the relevant actors representing the position and preferences of the national ministry in Coreper.[10] When there are still substantive policy relevant issues to be negotiated, resulting in the proposal being tabled as a 'B' point on the agenda, only the appropriate configuration will take up the issue.[11] Regardless of which configuration ultimately amends and adopts or rejects a proposal, that decision is *never* taken up by the full plenary because there is no mechanism for a meeting of the full Council. Thus, proposals are discussed, debated and amended by national representatives for the relevant policy area and/or the appropriate ministers themselves. While others may officially adopt these proposals (as 'A' points), they do so only as a formal rubber stamp for what has been agreed to in advance by those working to represent the various member states' interests within the appropriate policy arena. There is no effective oversight by those not working within the specific policy arena. Thus, the Council can be understood as a legislature that only meets in committee. This interpretation allows us to apply existing theories of legislative committee behavior to the Council to gain insight into the potential role of ideology and its impact on the policy process.

There are two ways to interpret the role of committees in terms of the ideological identity of their members relative to the full plenary. They can be either informational or distributive in character, and a single legislature may include committees of both types (Shepsle and Weingast, 1995; Gilligan and Krehbiel, 1990). Informational committees serve primarily as a source of information for the legislature as a whole. Service on the committee may be a reflection of pre-existing expertise and/or it may foster expertise through increased experience in a specific policy area. The core assumption of this perspective is that committee members accurately reflect the policy preferences of the full legislature. As a result, the committee will adopt a proposal that represents the preferences of the median Member of the legislature as a whole.[12] According to this interpretation the role of committees is to gather and digest information to aid the plenary in its decision-making. This is required by the complex character of most modern legislation and the limited amount of time available to most members of legislatures, which makes it

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[10] Coreper, or the Committee of Permanent Representatives is made up of national 'Heads of Mission' (who hold ambassadorial rank), and Deputy Heads of Mission and their staff. It encompasses approximately 250 working groups and committees divided into two groups – Coreper I and Coreper II. The first is tasked with items dealing with social and economic issues and staffed by Deputy Heads of Mission while the second is tasked primarily with political, financial and foreign policy issues and staffed by the Heads of Mission (TFEU, Article 240). These divisions reflect what are considered to be "technical matters" (Coreper I) and those items that are "political, economic or institutional" matters (http://europa.eu/legislation_summaries/glossary/coreper_en.htm).

[11] Although B items may be discussed and debated within Council formations they will generally not be voted upon as B points. Instead, following these discussions they will be referred back to Coreper for further negotiation based on the additional information and/or compromises resulting from the Council formation meeting. Eventually, once a compromise has been achieved they will generally be placed on the Council agenda as an A point.

[12] Within the context of the EU, where decisions are not made by simple majority in most cases, but by qualified majority (under the ordinary procedure) the expected outcome would not be the median, but the QMV outcome of the full membership – i.e. all ministers of all national governments.

impossible for all members to effectively evaluate all legislation. As a result, members of the chamber choose to delegate much of the decision-making authority they possess to the committees, which carefully review policy proposals and revise them to maximize the utility of the proposal to as many members as possible.[13] Within the context of the EU this would suggest that the Council configurations adopt policies that accurately reflect the QMV position of the Member State governments ideologically and in terms of their preferences on EU integration.

An alternative interpretation of role of committees posits that they are *distributive* in character, rather than simply informational. This interpretation of committees does not dispute the need for specialization and the impossibility of all members being experts on all legislation. Instead, it suggests that participation in committees is more instrumental, with committee members selected on the basis of their interests or policy preferences (saliency of policy arenas). Thus, members who care more about agriculture (or whose constituents/voters do) will try to serve on the agriculture committee where they will be best placed to have the most influence on the policies that are most relevant to them. In this case members of the committees are not expected to be reflective of the median of the full plenary because the committee members are preference outliers relative to the average member of the chamber. If committees are distributive in character then the proposals they report out will not reflect the median position of all members, but rather those of the committee members themselves. Despite this deviation from the overall median such proposals would still likely be adopted because of the institutionally enhanced position of committees and the desire of all members to have their own committee proposals adopted without significant revision or other hurdles (logrolling).

If applied to the Council this understanding of committees would suggest that at least some Council configurations are developing proposals that are not reflective of what the QMV outcome of all Member State governments would be, but instead reflect the preferences of the specific ministers serving in the Council configuration. This is a particularly relevant possibility in the EU context given that there is no opportunity for review of the proposal by the 'full plenary.' Furthermore, the Council considers the majority of proposals as 'A' points with little public scrutiny or careful review prior to official adoption, but with significant input from national ministries through formal and informal networks.[14] Thus, the Council committees (configurations) are institutionally capable of adopting proposals that deviate substantially from the EU QMV outcome that would result were all national

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[13] In most national legislatures committees report a proposal to the full plenary which then has the ultimate vote on adopting or rejecting and may also amend the committee proposal. In legislatures with powerful committees (such as the USA, Italy or Germany) committee proposals are rarely significantly amended on the floor as compromises between interested parties have been sought at committee stage. The fact that in the case of the Council there is no full floor to provide final approval is significant, but not entirely unique as in Italy committees are also empowered to adopt legislation without floor approval when meeting in *sede legislativa*.

[14] The extent to which policies can vary will also depend on the existence of national mechanisms to hold individual ministers to a shared national policy (Kassim, 2003). However, even in those cases where such mechanisms exist, they are unlikely to be foolproof given the implicit agency problem within the Council and the lack of transparency within Coreper and the Council working groups. Agency loss is almost inevitable for all but the most salient and well-monitored issues.

governments to decide together (in some form of plenary). The question is should we expect this deviation given the ideological/partisan character of their members?

The first interpretation suggests that Council formations are accurate reflections of the Member State government preferences and that the use of configurations (and the Coreper structures that support them) as forums of expertise and specializations is merely a mechanism to efficiently achieve policy compromises that would be easily agreed to if discussed by all members of all national governments. The second interpretation, however, suggests that Council configurations may have a bigger impact on policy outcomes than this, especially if at least some of their members are preference outliers. This would be an unlikely outcome if all Member States had single party Governments controlled by an internally unified and ideologically cohesive party such that all Council formation members from each Member State, regardless of portfolio, were from the same national party and ideological background. However, as will be discussed below, this is not the case. The question is to what extent are these differences statistically significant and in which policy areas should we expect to find distributive versus informational Council committees (configurations)?

A Council of Ministers not Member States

It is generally accepted that the institutional role of the Council is to represent the 'interests' of the Member States of the EU (Hix and Hoyland, 2011). However, *what* exactly those interests are will undoubtedly vary depending on *who* is representing them. For this reason we expect the position of member states within the EU to vary depending on the character of the government in office. Indeed changes in government, especially in big member states, have been known to have a significant impact on the evolution of the EU as a whole – for example: Charles de Gaulle versus George Pompidou in France or Margret Thatcher/John Major versus Tony Blair in the UK. Thus, the idea that ideology and EU position matter for member state representation in the EU is not new or particularly innovative. Yet when analyzing decision making in the Council the potential impact of ideology is either ignored, in favor of other possible motivations such as economic, geopolitical, etc., or limited by a focus solely on the partisan identity of the Prime Minister.[15]

This may be a result of the fact that since its inception the Council has always been referred to in the singular, despite the fact that in fact there are many Councils or "configurations" of the Council. The use of the singular together with the focus on national interest has led to the norm of treating member state representation within the Council as unitary. While it is certainly true that within any specific Council formation each member state is represented by a single individual, it is not necessarily the case that the ideological positions of all of a member state's representatives across all Council configurations will share the same ideological position, either in terms of their position on the left-right spectrum or as regards their position on EU integration. Neither is it evident that prime ministers in all

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[15] This practice is especially disconcerting when we recall that in fact the prime ministers themselves never participate in the Council, serving instead as the membership of the European Council.

member states and at all times are able (or even interested) in controlling the decisions/negotiations of the national ministers that represent their country within the Council.

Since 2000 there have consistently been only about one third of EU member states with single-party governments.[16] It is important to take into consideration the fact that that most member states have coalition governments when analyzing the functioning of the Council. Fundamentally it means that there will be a variety of individuals with diverse ideological positions and levels of support for EU integration representing a single country. Thus, at least in these cases, treating member states as unitary actors within the Council is potentially a seriously flawed interpretation of reality that likely under-estimates the role of ideology in decision making in both the Council and the EU as a whole.

To understand the importance of the existence of coalition governments at the national level it is necessary to remember the selection mechanism for Members of the Council (MCs) at the member state level. The national Minister tasked with the relevant policy arena represents each country in the various Council configurations. Thus, when EU education policies are being negotiated it is the Minister of Education (or minister tasked with education policy) at the national level who represents the member state. Since members of the Council are effectively selected at the same time as national governments are formed it will be useful to review some of what we know about the portfolio allocation process in parliamentary democracies – as it is this national process that determines the membership of the various Council configurations.

There are a number of different models of parliamentary government, differentiated largely by the relative balance of power between the various actors involved. The ideal type of parliamentary government (now largely historical) is defined by its collegial character and relative equality between ministers (Müller, 2013). In this type of "cabinet government" the prime minister is a "leader among equals." The distribution of specific policy portfolios (ministries) is relatively unimportant in this model, since all policies are discussed and decided collectively by the government as a whole. However, the workload and complexity of issues managed by governments today have made this highly discursive and collegial mode of parliamentary government difficult, if not impossible. An alternative model is one of prime ministerial dominance or prime ministerial government. This model of parliamentary government focuses on the central role played by the Prime Minister – particularly in single party governments with strong hierarchically organized party structures (Crossman, 1972; Muller, 2013). In prime ministerial governments it is the prime minister who determines the core policies from which most other policy actions flow, thus bestowing a relatively minor policy role on the other ministers in the government (Dunleavy and Rhodes, 1990). However, this type of parliamentary governance structure requires a level of prime ministerial dominance that is difficult to

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[16] Of the 24 countries included in this analysis (Luxembourg, Malta and Cyprus are not included) the percentage of single party governments has varied from a low of 23% in 2004 to a high of 36% in 2012 with the average at 29%.

achieve in most coalition governments by virtue of the need to compromise across party lines and usually between party leaders to form successful coalitions.

A third model of parliamentary government, known as "ministerial" or "fragmented" government (Andweg, 1997) is anticipated when there is a need to form a governing coalition. In ministerial government the individual ministers are understood to have greater autonomy and policy control over their respective policy domains, even to the point of becoming "policy dictators" (Laver and Shepsle, 1990, 1996). This model envisions a kind of internal government logrolling in which ministers are likely to support the policy proposals of others in return for support for their own initiatives. This is viable because coalition partners negotiate over portfolio allocation to ensure that each is given control over policy areas likely to be of particular interest to their electoral base (Laver and Schofield, 1998). Thus, the norm of Green parties holding environmental ministries and Socialist or Labor parties holding employment ministries within coalition governments.

It is this third model of ministerial government that suggests the importance of possible variation between Council configurations within the EU. Since more than two-thirds of the national governments are coalitions they must distribute portfolios (ministries) across political parties. It is rational to expect that as a result we should find patterns of ideological differentiation across the various Council configurations and EU policy areas and that this has the potential to impact policy outcomes if Council configuration are understood to be (even partially) distributive rather than informational.

Finding Ideology in the Council

To test the extent to which we see evidence of ideological skew in various policy arenas a new dataset has been created which collects party information on the individual ministers in each member state between 2000 and 2012. A total of 13 different ministries were selected based in part on areas of likely EU competence, as well as commonality between member states and with the goal of reflecting the policy areas represented in other analyses of EU decision-making.[17] These 13 ministries were agriculture, communication-technology*, culture, economy, employment/labor, foreign affairs, interior/home affairs, justice*, maritime-fisheries, prime minister, taxation-customs* and transport.[18]
The data on the party affiliation for each minister for each year was taken from the European Journal of Political Research (EJPR) annual country studies covering the years 2000-2012 (publications from 1999-2013 were used). For 2000-2003 only data for "old" member states were collected, from 2004 (2007 for Bulgaria and Romania) data was collected for all member states. Information was collected on an annual basis. For changes

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[17] In particular, the primary policy areas represented in the DEU II dataset were collected, although in some cases there were very few countries with specific ministries in the relevant area making the data too incomplete to be useful for further statistical analysis (discussed below).
[18] Ministries marked with an asterisk (*) were included to better match with the DEU II dataset (discussed below), although in some cases there were not enough cases to allow for full utilization of the data. Other possible future additions that are represented in a large number of governments include health, women, sports, education, and development.

of government or individual ministers within a particular year the minister/government in place for the majority of the year was used.[19]

Because the exact names of ministries vary, both within individual countries over time and between countries, specific assignments were made only when the title of the ministry included one of the above words. In some cases one ministry dealt with multiple topics (Agriculture and Transport). In these instances the same individual was assigned to both ministries. Where a specific key word was not used in the titles of any ministries, or where the person assigned was officially designated as non-partisan or independent the data was coded as missing.[20] The total dataset (for prime ministers) is 2066, with 185, or just under 9% missing data points for the various ministries.[21]

Once the full set of national ministers and their political party affiliations in these 13 policy areas was collected information about their ideological position was added using the Chapel Hill Expert Surveys (CHES) for 1999, 2002, 2006 and 2010.[22] Although the CHES surveys include a broad variety of measure of ideological position, comparatively few are available across all four surveys. To ensure comparability only four measures were used for this analysis. Two measures focused on the general ideological positions of the parties – the traditional left-right axis (scored 1-10) and the GAL-TAN position (scored 1-10).[23] In addition, two measures of EU position were used, one measuring relative support of integration (EU-position scored 1-7) and EU saliency (scored 1-4).

The goal of building this dataset was to gather information about the individuals representing the member states within the Council, and in particular to determine the extent to which there are *differences* between the various individuals representing the member states. Given the manner in which portfolio allocation occurs at the member state level it is possible to anticipate certain patterns in party identity and ministry assignments. For example, where a Green party is a member of the coalition it is generally given the Environment portfolio, and often the Agriculture portfolio. Liberal parties tend to get the Economics portfolio and Socialist and Social Democratic parties are often assigned to the Employment or Labor ministry. To determine if these sorts of patterns are evident at the

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[19] Ideally this data would be collected monthly, but that would be extremely difficult as many of the entries are not detailed enough. It may be possible in future iterations to divide years in two and use semester entries (Jan-June and July-December) for greater accuracy.

[20] This strategy was followed even when there was a single party government to avoid any biases in the data. While it is possible to infer the partisan identity in a single party government, the fact that single party governments would have no missing data while coalition governments would randomly have missing data would generate an artificial bias in the data and exaggerate the impact of single party governments.

[21] This includes several "technical" governments (coded as non-partisan) that took office in the midst of the Euro crisis.

[22] The CHES data aggregates responses by country experts to a series of questions regarding the ideological positions of the political parties within a country. Detailed information on both the surveys and the compilation of the responses can be found at http://www.unc.edu/~hooghe/data_pp.php.

[23] The GAL-TAN axis measures ideological positional along an alternative ideological spectrum running from Green-Alternative-Left (GAL) to Traditional-Authoritarian-Nationalist (TAN). Although there is generally a high level of correlation between the left-right and GAL-TAN spectrums, there are some significant variations for particular parties (Green parties for example). See Marks et al, 2006 for additional details.

aggregate level in the EU average ideological scores were calculated for each ministry/policy topic. An additional analysis considered differences between old and new member states (Table 1).

While a table of averages cannot tell us much it does provide some initial insights. For example it is note worthy that while new and old member states have Prime Ministers that are very similar along the left-right and GAL-TAN ideological spectrums, they differ substantially in terms of their support for and the saliency of the EU, with the EU being both more salient and more highly supported by Prime Ministers in the newer member states on average (Table 1). Indeed, with the exceptions of agriculture, environment and to a lesser degree interior, most ministers in the new member states have higher levels of support for the EU regardless of their left-right and GAL-TAN positions. In addition, the EU is universally, and often substantially more salient in the new member states. Other differences are less consistent. While on average ministers from new member states appear to fall more to the right-TAN side of the spectrum it is not true across all ministries (for example agriculture and interior). A graphic representation of these trends is also provided through the use of boxplots to more readily compare across ministries (Figures 1 and 2).

Table 1: Average Ideology and EU Scores[24] by Minister/Policy Area (2000-2012)*

Minister	Left-Right	LR-New	GAL-TAN	GT-New	EU-POS	EUPOS-New	EU-SAL	EUSAL-New
Agriculture Avg.	6.03	5.29	5.74	6.04	8.29	8.03	7.36	7.52
Comm-Tech Avg.	5.96	5.90	5.53	5.12	8.28	8.77	7.54	7.99
Culture Avg.	5.48	5.58	5.34	5.16	8.33	8.82	7.30	7.93
Economy Avg.	5.90	5.62	5.50	5.62	8.45	8.51	7.44	7.80
Employment Avg.	5.47	5.37	5.22	5.51	8.29	8.31	7.42	7.68
Environment Avg.	5.44	5.70	5.13	5.82	8.24	7.93	7.37	7.40
For. Affairs Avg.	5.71	5.59	5.37	5.45	8.47	8.89	7.40	8.10
Interior Avg.	5.91	5.50	5.36	5.48	8.43	8.33	7.61	7.73
Justice Avg.	5.79	5.96	5.46	5.44	8.06	8.33	7.32	7.76
Mari-Fish Avg. [25]	5.37	***	4.86	***	8.58	***	7.62	***
PM Avg.	**5.66**	**5.68**	**5.42**	**5.42**	**8.48**	**8.67**	**7.48**	**8.21**
Transport Avg.	5.69	5.78	5.62	5.44	8.12	8.41	7.38	7.80
Overall Averages	*5.70*	*5.85*	*5.38*	*5.74*	*8.33*	*8.12*	*7.44*	*7.85*

*Taxation and Customs not reported because there were too few entries

Figure 1 presents the median and quartile positions for each ministry for all member states. The PM is highlighted for ease of comparison to the other ministries and horizontal markers for the PM median have been added. The most obvious finding is that in a number of policy areas the ideological positions of the ministers in the Council formations regularly deviate from the median position of the Prime Ministers. Moreover, these deviations are

[24] For the purposes of easy comparison both EU scores have been rescaled to range from 1-10 like the left-right and GAL-TAN measures.
[25] The results for this arena for the new member states are not included as they are driven overwhelmingly by the presence of the Polish LPR in this ministry. Most new member states do not include a specific ministry for maritime and fisheries policy resulting in these entries have an undue weight on the average results of the new member states.

not consistently to the left (GAL) or right (TAN) sides of the ideological spectrum. Rather, some policy arenas tend to have ministers who fall to the right of the prime minister (justice, interior, economics) while others are more likely to have ministers that fall to the left of the prime minister (transport, environment, employment). Similarly, in most cases these same ministers are further towards the TAN side of the GAL-TAN spectrum, but not always (see transport for example). There are also ministries that tend to fall very close to the ideological positions of the prime ministers (justice and foreign affairs in particular).

Figure 1: Box plot All Member States Left Right and GAL-TAN (2000-2012)
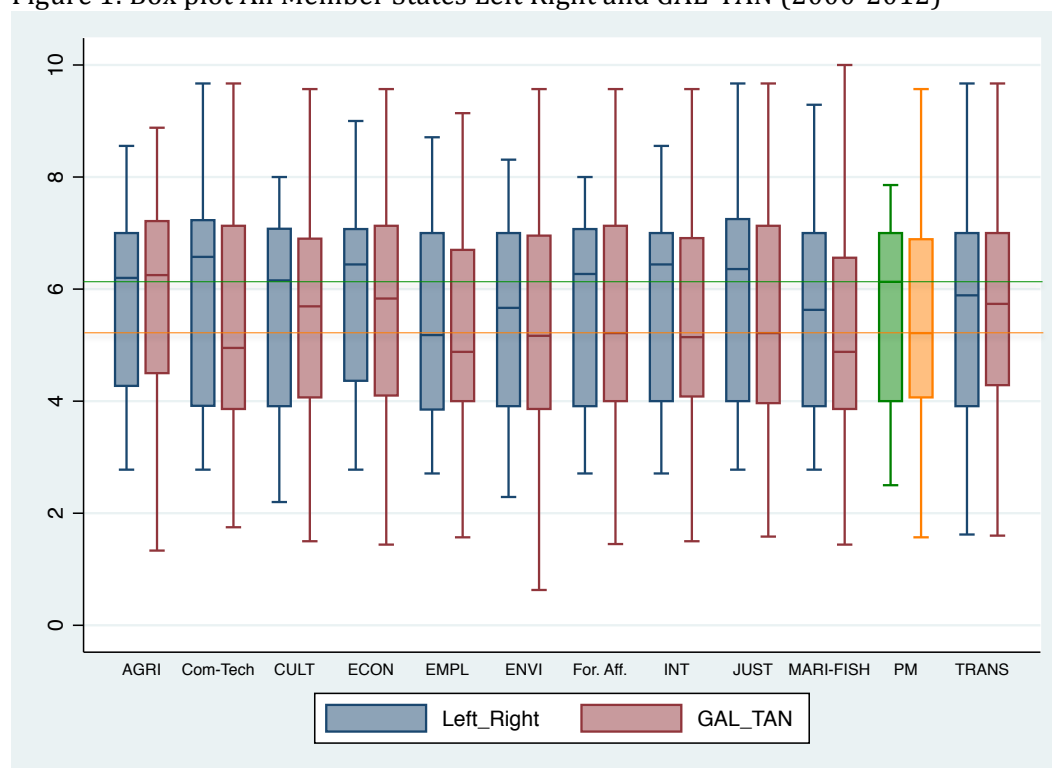

It is also clear that some policy arenas are more prone to wide dispersion of positions (agriculture and environment again stand out). Though here there is greater variation between the two measures of ideology. Overall there is a greater tendency toward broad dispersion with the GAL-TAN scale than with the traditional left-right ideological scale. This is especially true for those policy areas that are more directly linked to the GAL-TAN measure such as culture, environment and foreign affairs, although there are also substantial differences for more traditionally left-right issues such as economics. Interestingly, while along the traditional left-right scale there is relatively little variation among prime ministers (narrow quartiles), there is far more variation among prime ministers along the GAL-TAN spectrum, though again, there is substantial variation in the medians/quartiles between policy areas.

The patterns shift somewhat when looking at the two measures specifically related to the European Union: EU position and EU saliency (Figure 2). Across both measures (rescaled to run from 1-10 to facilitate comparisons) there is far less variation overall and especially for

the measure of overall EU position. Across all policy areas there is a very high median position on EU integration and comparatively few instances of substantial differentiation from the average position of the prime ministers, with again the exception of agriculture, environment and transport, which all show notably lower levels of EU support. There is even less variation for EU saliency, although the general level of EU saliency is low compared to overall position on the EU.[26]

Figure 2: Box plot New Data- EU-POS and EU-SAL (rescaled 1-10)
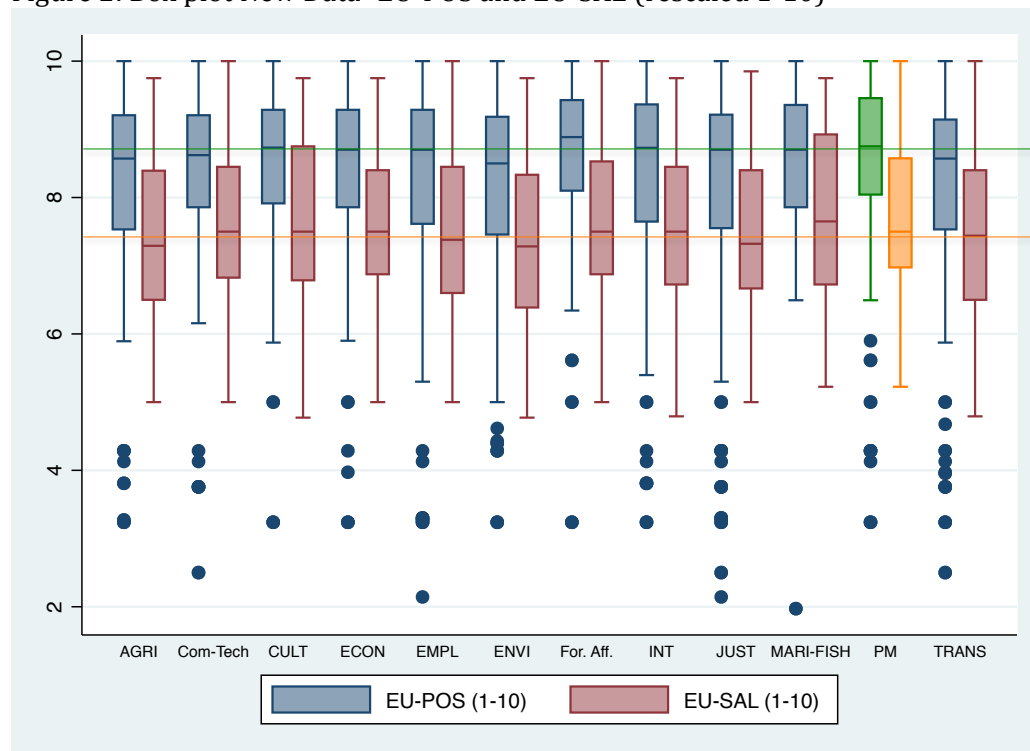
Most notable in Figure 2 is the very high number of outliers along the EU position measure (though not for EU saliency). All of these are at the low end of the measure and denote substantial deviation from the median (less than 1.5 times the lower quartile).[27] There are significant outliers across all policy areas, but the number is particularly high for justice and transport, with employment and interior also numerous. Unlike the other measures, there are also a substantially higher number of outliers among the prime ministers.

While these descriptive data suggest that there are indeed substantive differences in the ideological positions of some of the Council configurations, they do not provide an assessment of statistical significance or a clear indication of which configurations are most likely to follow a distributive rather than an informational path. Determining this will serve

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[26] It should be noted that the potential amount of variation for both measures is artificially constrained to some extent by the original scales used in the surveys. The original CHES questions asked for EU positions to be ranked from 1-7 (least to most favorable) while EU saliency was scored from 1-4 only (least to most salient). The smaller number of options necessarily constrains the possible variation in responses.
[27] There were actually a number of countries (Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Portugal, Slovakia and Spain) that had one or more parties scored as a 7 (the highest possible) on the EU position scale.

as an initial test of the potential impact of ideology on Council decision-making and the EU policy process. Once we have established which configurations (committees) are most likely to deviate from the EU QMV outcome we can test these predictions on existing data regarding EU member state positions and policy outcomes from the DEU II dataset (below).

The first step is to determine if the variations between the median ideological and EU positions of the various configurations are statistically significant. To this end a Kruskal-Wallis rank test was run for each of the four measures of ideological/EU position (Table 2).[28] The results of this test demonstrate that for all four measures of ideology there are statistically significant variations between the various configurations, most notably for the measure of support for the EU. While this is useful, it does not provide information on *which* configurations deviate most from the positions of the prime ministers (and the likely official member state position).

Table 2: Kruskal-Wallis Rank Tests

Variable	Chi-Squared	Probability	DF
Left-Right	26.849	0.0081	12
GAL-TAN	20.141	0.0645	12
EU-Position	35.492	0.0004	12
EU-Saliency	25.71	0.0118	12

To gain greater insight into the variations between configurations it is possible to use simple OLS regressions using the ideology scores as the dependent variables and prime minister as the omitted category. These tests are not being used to test the ability of the various configurations to predict the ideology and EU position scores, but rather as a indicators of which configurations deviate significantly from the prime minister along the four measures and in which direction. For this reason the poor explanatory power/fit of the models presented (R-squared and Adj. R-squared scores) are not a concern. The results of the four analyses are presented in Table 3.

Insert Table 3 Here

The results of the regressions underscore the variations across policy areas and across measures of ideology and EU position. Along the left-right ideological spectrum just two configurations stand out as notably significant, employment and justice. On the whole employment ministers tend to be further to the left than their prime ministers, a finding that supports the expectation that socialist and social democratic parties will tend to hold this portfolio when included in coalition governments. In contrast, ministers of justice tend

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[28] An alternative test would be to run one-way ANOVA tests of significance. However, ANOVA assumes that the underlying data is normally distributed, and thus tests the statistical difference of the means. Since we do not expect a normal distribution of the underlying data, the Kruskal–Wallis test, which is designed for non-parametric data, is a better choice. To double check, multivariate means tests were also conducted and these provided very similar results.

to be further to the right than prime ministers, suggesting that this post is often held by "law and order" oriented parties of the center-right. The only policy arena to show significant deviation from prime ministers along the GAL-TAN measure is agriculture. In this case agricultural ministers appear to be significantly further towards the "traditional–authoritarian-nationalist side of the spectrum.

The EU position and EU saliency measures show a higher level of differentiation between ministers and prime ministers. For EU position agriculture, communication and technology, employment, environment, justice and transport are all highly significant. Perhaps more interesting is that all of these policy areas have negative coefficients meaning that the ministers are *less* supportive of EU integration than the prime ministers. This pattern reflects the distribution of support for the EU along the left-right/GAL-TAN spectrums. In general, parties of the center (social-democrats, liberals, Christian democrats) have a higher level of support for the EU than do those of either the right (nationalist parties, conservative parties) of the left (communist, socialist, green parties). Since most prime ministers in coalition governments are drawn from the centrist parties the tendency will be for their ministers (representing less moderate coalition parties of the right or left) will be less supportive of EU integration.

The EU saliency results are largely similar to the EU position outcomes (although communication and technology is not significant while economy is) and once again the coefficients are all negative. This outcome is somewhat more surprising, as many of the parties of the left and right actually campaign on EU-related issues, while the more main stream parties tend to try to avoid directly addressing the EU as a topic of political debate. This should suggest that the EU is more, not less salient for these parties. The negative outcomes reported in Table 3 may be a result of the underlying character of the CHES survey data and the manner in which the questions were posed to experts.

Does Ideology Matter?

The results found thus far suggest that there are statistically significant differences between ministries (Table 2) and between some policy areas and the prime ministers as a group (Table 3). Over all employment ministers fall to the left and justice ministers fall to the right of prime ministers, while agricultural ministers tend toward to be more traditional-authoritarian-nationalist than prime ministers. In addition, ministers in many policy areas tend to be far more euro-skeptic than prime ministers (especially agriculture, employment, environment, justice and transport). The question is what difference does this make, if any, on EU policy outcomes? Are ministers able to use Council configurations as distributive committees to shift policy outcomes in their preferred direction?

This is a difficult question to answer because there are few measures of official national positions on policies in the EU. Ideally we would have a measure of the preferences of all national ministers and prime ministers for policies and then be able to compare these positions to actual outcomes to determine which were more influential in determining the outcomes. Alas, this type of information is rarely available for a specific policy in a single country and certainly not for multiple policies across all EU member states. However, the

Decision-making in Europe (DEU II) dataset does provide a possible substitute, though not without some reservations.[29]

The DEU II dataset was designed to evaluate the impact of decision rules on policy-making in the EU. It uses 349 semi-structured interviews with non-elected actors directly engaged in the policy making process to approximate measures for member state and institution positions on 331 contentious issues within 125 legislative initiatives between 1995 and 2008. Those interviewed included member-state representatives (permanent representatives), EU level actors (various institutional secretariats) as well as some interest group representatives (Thompson et al, 2012: Table 2: 609). Participants were asked to identify the policy positions of the relevant actors on key controversial issues within the broader policy initiatives. Individual actor positions were placed on a scale from 0-100 (ostensibly from least to most pro-integrationist). These scores were aggregated to produce individual scores for each issue for each member states, as well as the European Parliament and Commission (Thomson et al, 2012).[30]

The overlap between the DEU II dataset and the national minister dataset utilized here is somewhat limited. Only those policies initiated after 2000 and only those for which national ministers could be reliably and comprehensively identified can be included.[31] This reduces the overall DEU II dataset analyzed here to just 100 policy issues. Moreover, because the DEU II project specifically targeted contentious issues the policy spectrum is relatively limited and biased in favor of those policy areas where there is a large differentiation between ministers and prime ministers. In particular, agriculture, environment and transport, though the dataset also includes issues from the employment and external affairs Council configurations.

In addition, while providing extremely useful information, the DEU II dataset does not permit an analysis of the individual interview responses to allow for an analysis of the differences between institutional and member state representatives.[32] Such an analysis might provide insight into the political origin of the DEU II country position scores. More specifically, the extent to which the measured country scores represent an 'official' member state position or the position of the specific ministry, and in particular the individual minister in charge of the policy area is not clear. As has been demonstrated above, there may be substantial (statistically significant) differences between these positions. Moreover,

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[29] The DEU II dataset built upon a previous research project (DEU) that examined proposals that were introduced or pending between 1999 and 2000 (Thomson, Stokman, Achen and Konig (eds), 2006)

[30] The dataset and codebook are available at: http://www.robertthomson.info/research/resolving-controversy-in-the-eu.

[31] Information for Justice Ministers was only recently added to the database used here and has not yet been fully integrated with the DEU II data set. This is in progress and will add an additional 22 issues. Unfortunately there is not enough data on national ministers to also allow for the inclusion of data for communication-technology, maritime-fisheries or taxation and customs as few countries consistently had national ministries with these words in their titles so it is not possible to know reliably which ministers were tasked with these policy arenas,

[32] In addition, there were only nine members of the Council secretariat interviewed in total (both the original DEU and the DEU II data collection waves) as compared to 236 permanent representatives of the member states (Thomson et al, 2012: 609)

to fully understand the impact of these differences it is necessary to understand which actors are driving the country position assigned in the DEU II study to be able to use this data to evaluate the relative impact of the various actors on the final policy outcomes.

As a result, it is necessary to try to intuit the origin of these scores on the basis of the information available about the ideological identity and EU position of the ministers and prime ministers of the member states. Though far from ideal this approach does provide some information regarding the correlation between actor ideology/EU position and the DEU II country position scores. To facilitate the interpretation of the DEU II country scores the original scale of 0-100 was reduced to a scale ranging from 0-10. The original data clusters around several key points (0, 20, 40, 50, 50 and 100) and does not permit the use of an OLS regression analysis (Annex 1a). The creation of a scale from 1-10 makes it possible to evaluate the data using ordered regression analysis (Freese and Long, 1997) The results are presented in Table 4.[33]

Table 4: Ordered Logit analysis of DEU II Country Position Scores (0-10 scale)[34]

	Left-Right		GAL-TAN		EU-POS	
	Coef.	t(P>|t|)	Coef.	t(P>|t|)	Coef.	t(P>|t|)
PM	0.035205	0.92 (0.358)	-0.060242	-1.54 (0.122)	0.1443695	**1.89 (0.058)**
Minister	-0.0741224	**-1.93 (0.053)**	0.0048733	0.14 (0.886)	-0.0918256	-1.42 (0.154)
# of obs.	1650		1650		1650	
LR chi2(2)	3.95		4.63		3.64	
Prob > chi2	0.1391		0.0989		0.1619	
Pseudo R2	0.0007		0.0008		0.0006	

While the relative GAL-TAN scores for ministers and prime ministers do not appear to have a significant correlation with the DEU II country scores both left-right scores and EU positions do.[35] As should be expected given the initial analysis of minister and prime minister scores on these two measures of ideology the signs of the coefficients are opposite in all cases. Thus, ministers are negatively associated with DEU II country scores on the left-right and EU position axes and positively along the GAL-TAN axis, while prime minsters are the opposite. Only in the case of the left-right axis is the result statistically significant for ministers, while the EU position is the only significant measure for prime ministers.

Substantively these results can be interpreted in terms of the percentage changes in the odds of the predicted outcomes. Using this measure, a one-unit increase in the left-right ideology score for ministers decreases the odds of a country having the highest DEU II (scaled) country score by 7.1%. In other words, as ministers move towards the right on the

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[33] Ordered logit regressions employ a maximum likelihood model and treat the dependent variable as an ordinal variable rather than a continuous variable as assumed in OLS analysis.

[34] The analysis for EU saliency is not reported here as saliency is not in o=and of itself a measure of ideological position. It is not significant for either ministers or prime ministers however.

[35] It is important to note again that this analysis is not attempting to build a comprehensive model to explain the DEU II country scores and thus the relatively weak goodness of fit for the model as a whole is not troublesome.

left-right spectrum the DEU II country score will be lower, or less integrationist. In contrast, a one-unit increase in the EU position score of the prime minister increases the odds of the highest DEU II country score by 15.5% (see Annex II A and B for odds ratios).

What these results suggest is that there is no easy answer regarding the origin of the DEU II country scores. The ideological and EU positions of both ministers and prime ministers appear to have an impact. The difference in that while the EU positions of prime ministers are positively correlated with high DEU II country scores; the left-right ideological positions of the ministers are negatively correlated with them. This is not surprising given that the DEU II dataset is skewed towards those policy arenas in which the ministers tend towards the extremes on the left-right spectrum and are thus notably less supportive of the EU.[36] Given that the DEU II country scores are loosely measuring the relative support for increased integration of the member states it is likely that it is the measure of EU position is most informative, but by no means determinative of reported DEU II country position. It remains to be seen, however, to what extent either influences final EU policy outcomes, particularly in the context of a bicameral system.

The Origins of Legislative Outcomes

Thus far this research has demonstrated that there are statistically significant variations between national ministers and prime ministers, in terms of their ideological positions and especially their support for EU integration; and that these conform to expectations based on specific policy issues. On the whole ministers tend to be further to the extremes of the left-right and GAL-TAN ideological spectrums and less supportive of EU integration than their prime ministers. This is reflected both in figures 1 and 2 and in the ordered logit regressions presented in Table 4, which finds a positive correlation between the EU position of the prime minister and the DEU II Country position and a negative correlation between the left-right ideological score of ministers and the DEU II country positions. These findings suggest that if there is conflict between prime ministers and their ministers over policy at the EU level prime ministers will tend to support increased integration, while ministers will support lower levels of integration or no change. These differences should be particularly evident in agricultural, communications-technology, employment, environmental, justice and transport policy (Table 3).

Though it is not possible to determine with certainty the origin of the DEU II country position scores (and it is possible that their origins vary between member states), it is possible to investigate the relative impact of minister and prime minister ideological and EU positions, as well as policy area on policy outcomes. The goal is to determine whether or not the eventual policy outcomes are influenced by the differences between prime ministers and ministers in EU support and ideological position as measured by the CHES surveys. To this end a new variable was created measuring the distance between these two

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[36] It is worth recalling that both the far left (GAL) and right (TAN) are associated with lower levels of support for EU integration

scores for all three measure of ideological position.[37] The impact of this new variable is then tested on its own and including dummy variables for the various policy areas. As with the DEU II Country positions there is a good deal of clustering of the policy outcomes making it necessary to once again convert to a 1-10 scale and use ordered logit analysis (Annex 1b).[38] This approach also facilitates comparisons with the earlier analysis of country positions. The results are presented in Table 5.

Table 5: Ordered Logit Analysis Ministers Vs. PM for DEU II Policy Outcomes (0-10 scale)

	Left-Right		GAL-TAN		EU-Position	
	Coef.	t(P>|t|)	Coef.	t(P>|t|)	Coef.	t(P>|t|)
Diff. M-PM	0.0178503	0.57 (0.571)	0.0233093	0.76 (0.685)	**-.0984253**	**-1.88 (0.060)**
Agriculture	-0.5938907	**-3.74 (0.000)**	**-0.6050906**	**-3.81 (0.000)**	-0.6121259	**-3.86 (0.000)**
Employment	0.1837488	0.79 (0.427)	0.1831655	0.79 (0.428)	0.170996	0.74 (0.460)
Environment	0.2706941	**1,71 (0.087)**	**0.2631658**	**1.68 (0.094)**	0.2412137	1.53 (0.126)
Transport	0.3814387	**2.26 (0.024)**	**0.3710585**	**2.21 (0.027)**	0.3499232	**2.08 (0.038)**
Number of obs.	1880		1880		1880	
LR chi2(5)	99.47		99.73		101.44	
Prob > chi2	0.0000		0.0000		0.000	
Pseudo R2	0.0118		0.0118		0.012	

The most important result from this analysis is the significant role that the relative support for EU integration has on policy outcomes. For each unit increase in the difference between a prime minister and a minister in level of support for EU integration the likelihood of the highest policy outcome score decreases by 9.5% (Annex II C, D and E). However, neither differences in the left-right or GAL-TAN positions were statistically significant. This is like a result of the character of the DEU II dataset as the policy positions and outcomes are measured in terms of level of EU integration (more or less change) rather than left-right or ideological positions. This creates a poor fit with left-right and GAL-TAN measures as these are not linearly related to levels of EU support, instead both high and low values of these scales tend to have low values of EU support, while those in the center of the spectrum tend to be most supportive of EU integration.[39]

The impact of policy arena is also quite clear. In particular, the heavily negative correlation between agricultural policies and the level of integration achieved in the final outcome is evident. In all three models agriculture is strongly significant, with agricultural policies approximately 45% less likely to achieve policy outcomes that reflect the highest level of EU integration as compared to the reserve policy area - external affairs (Annex II C, D, and

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[37] The measure for EU saliency is not used both because this is not a measure of ideological position per se, but also because the original 1-4 scale significantly constrains the level of possible differentiation.
[38] Although clustered, it is worth pointing out that the outcomes are much more normally distributed aside form a large concentration at the "0" end of the scale (i.e. no change or least possible level of integration). This will be discussed further below.
[39] As a result high and low values are essentially cancelling each other out for these two measures. Future analyses will investigate the utility of utilizing an appropriate transformation of these measures.

E).[40] In contrast, both environmental and transport policies are positively correlated with more integrationist outcomes. Indeed, transport and environmental policies are 42% and 27% more likely to have the highest outcome score than policies in the reserve category respectively (Annex II C, D and E).

The very different result for agricultural versus environmental and transport policies is initially puzzling given that in all three of these policy areas ministers were notably less supportive of integration than prime ministers (Figure 2). This raises the question – why were agricultural ministers better able to defend their positions (achieve less integrationist policy outcomes) than environmental and transport ministers? The answer may lie not within the Council itself, but rather in the character of the EU legislative branch. In other words, because policy outcomes are not determined solely by the member states via their ministers in the Council it is important to also include the other legislative player in the analysis. Especially once we consider that during the time period covered by the DEU II dataset there was a fundamental difference between agricultural policies on the one side and environmental and transport policies on the other. While all of the decisions regarding environmental and transport issues in the DEU II dataset were dealt with under the codecision procedure during this period, agricultural policies fell almost exclusively under the consultation procedure.[41] This difference fundamentally changes the role of the EP in the decision making process – shifting the character of EU bicameralism from largely symmetrical to asymmetrical (Lijphart, 1999; Heller and Branduse, 2014). The significance of this shift depends in large part on the effective role of the EP in shaping legislative outcomes when empowered to do so.

Whenever there is a bicameral system it is necessary to consider two characteristics of the legislative branch: the relative powers of the two chambers (their symmetry) and the extent to which they have similar partisan identities (their congruence). In the case of the EU these two characteristics have varied substantially across time. For most of the EU's history the legislative branch was starkly asymmetrical with the EP having substantially less policy influence than the Council. This began to change as early as the 1970s when the EP gained some powers over the budget, but did not fundamentally shift until the cooperation and codecision procedures were introduced in the Single European Act and Maastricht Treaty respectively. Even after these procedures were introduced, however, there was substantial fluctuation in the role of the EP as it codecision powers were initially quite narrowly defined. Thus, it is only after the implementation of the Lisbon Treaty that the EU fully adopted a primarily symmetrical bicameral structure through the broad use of the ordinary legislative procedure.[42]

In terms of congruence, the EP and Council have also varied substantially as the electoral mechanisms of the two chambers are not directly linked. Moreover, while the partisan

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[40] External affairs is used as the reserve category because it is the policy area with the least difference between ministers and prime ministers and is thus the most 'neutral' of those included in the DEU II dataset.
[41] The same is true for the policies within the area of external affairs.
[42] Though there are still some policy arenas in which the EP lacks codecision powers, including most aspects of external affairs.

character of the EP is essentially fixed for five years following an election, the members of the Council may change substantially at any time as a result of national elections and government changes. Nonetheless, more often that not the EP and the Council have had comparatively low levels of ideological congruence with one tending toward the center left while the other tended toward the center right in terms of overall composition (though not always largest party).[43] Where the issue of congruence is most dramatic, however is on the question of support for EU integration. The EU has consistently been understood to be one of the actors most supportive of increased integration, while the Council is generally modeled as the least supportive (Tsebelis, 2013; Tsebelis et al, 2001; Kreppel, 2001).

Table 6: Impact of Council and EP on Policy Outcomes

	Outcomes by Issue	
	Coef.	t(P>|t|)
Country Average	**0.5064009**	**4.21 (0.00)**
EP Position	**0.1596303**	**1.92 (0.059)**
Agriculture	**-21.03421**	**-2.01 (.048)**
Employment	4.048743	0.22 (.829)
Environment	-4.19746	-0.40 (69.9)
Transport	3.082448	0.28 (0.781)
Constant	22.21826	2.15 (0.034)
Number of obs.	88	
F (6, 81)	5.35	
R-squared	0.2836	
Adj. R-squared	0.2306	

This raises the question of whether or not the differences witnessed between agricultural policy outcomes and those in other policy areas might be explained by the ability of the EP to influence policy outcomes. One way to evaluate the relative impact of the two legislative chambers (as opposed to the individual representatives within them) is to examine their impact on the DEU II outcomes. This can be accomplished by using the average country position as a proxy for the Council position and the DEU II European Parliament position data for the EP.[44] The results demonstrate that the impact of the EP is indeed both positive and statistically significant. In fact once it is included the impact of the individual policy areas almost disappears for environment and transport - the two policy arenas in which the EP is able to have a direct impact on policy outcomes. In contrast, even after the inclusion of the EP in the model, agricultural policy remains both negative and significant in terms of the extent of EU integration achieved (Table 6). These results highlight the importance of including the influence and preferences of the EP – as these effectively constrain the ability of members of the Council to achieve their preferred policy outcomes.

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[43] It is worth noting that this was not the case for much of the period covered here in which both chambers had a clear center-right majority.

[44] Using the average country position as a proxy for the Council ignores the reality of weighted voting on the Council. It is also possible to use a weighted country position average to reflect this but the results are not substantially different and many recent analyses suggest that institutional norm of consensual decision making within the Council makes the average an appropriate proxy (Kreppel and Oztas, 2014)

Conclusions

The results of this analysis are mixed. On the one hand it is clear that there are statistically significant differences in the ideological make up of the different Council configurations. Moreover, these follow the patterns anticipated with ministers on the whole falling to the left and right of prime ministers in predictable patterns. The more extreme ideological positions of ministers relative to prime ministers are also reflected in their substantially lower levels of support for EU integration. Again, these findings should not be surprising as it is well known that parties of the center tend to have the highest levels of support for EU integration and support declines as ideologies move to the left and right.
Moreover, as occurs in most legislatures only some committees (configurations) present substantial deviations from the mean. These tend to be those committees tasked with policies that have a direct distributional character (agriculture, industry, infrastructure) – thus, it is not surprising to find that it is the agriculture, environment and transport configurations that deviate most strongly and consistently throughout this analysis. In contrast, interior, justice and external affairs ministers mirror the ideological and EU positions of the prime minister to a much greater extent.

These results support the call for disaggregated analyses of coalition formation and decision-making in the Council that move away from treating member state representation in the Council as unitary. They also support the use of a committee-based model for understanding the Council as a legislature. However, they do not provide any information as to the actual impact of these ideological differences on policy outcomes. Unfortunately this is a much more difficult phenomenon to assess directly because of the lack of consistent relevant data on prime minister and minister policy positions across member states and policy areas.

Attempts to utilize the existing data within the DEU II data set to answer this question is somewhat mixed – in large part because it is not possible to know with any certainty whether the DEU II country position scores reflect the position of the national prime minster or the relevant policy minister, and thus there is no way to use these to try to measure policy drift directly. The analysis conducted here suggests that both have an impact on country position, though they run in opposite directions with ministers associated with lower levels of EU integration and prime ministers positively correlated with higher levels of EU integration (which is in line with the characteristics discovered in the first section). The alternative strategy of examining the impact of the *difference* between the prime minister and ministers ideological positions suggested that the lower levels of support for EU integration of ministers is able to slow integration to a certain degree, but also that the policy area itself is also significant.

In this case, however the results were mixed with policies in the agricultural arena generally achieving less integrationist outcomes compared to the base category (external affairs), while environmental and transport polices were more integrationist. This presented a puzzle initially as national ministers in all three policy-arenas were significantly less supportive of EU integration. However, this puzzle was solved once the role of the EP and its differentiated potential to impact policy in these areas was

incorporated into the analysis. Indeed, inclusion of the EP into the model negated the positive effects of environment and transport (where the EP had substantial influence) while agricultural policies (where the EP was relegated to consultative powers only) remained significant and negatively correlated with the level of EU integration achieved. This result in particular is important for understanding the original question posed by this research: does differentiated ideology within the Council impact EU Policy outcomes? The answer it appears it that it can, but only when the Council is able to act largely independently of the EP. Particularly as the EP acts as a critical balance to the Council in terms of support for EU integration – While the Council (regardless of a left or right ideological tendencies) is less supportive than the member state prime ministers of increased EU integration, the general consensus is that the EP is more support of increased EU integration than either. Thus, when the EP is able to effectively participate in legislative decision making it is able to pull the policy outcomes toward a higher level of EU integration, in a sense negating the opportunity presented by the character of the Council as an institution for policy drift and reducing the potential impact of ideology within the Council on EU Policy outcomes. Given the changes wrought by the introduction of the Ordinary Legislative Procedure in the Lisbon Treaty, these results suggest that the Council will be more constrained by a powerful EP in the future than it was by distant prime ministers in the past.